

2026 FALL/WINTER CATALOG



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Thank You!

In a profile last summer, *Cleveland Magazine* called Kent State University Press one of “the region’s most committed champions,” saying we’re “grounded in a belief that Northeast Ohio has stories worth telling, and audiences eager to read them.” We’re grateful for the kind words and want to thank some of the other media outlets and literary organizations that have recently helped celebrate Kent State’s books and authors. They include:



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... and many more.

We're thankful for the opportunity to participate in supportive networks across Ohio, the Rust Belt, and the wider world. Keep up with the latest on your favorite social media platforms and at *The Book Starts Here*, our new blog. Or sign up for email updates at kentstateuniversitypress.com.



MEMOIR / REGIONAL INTEREST

February 2027, 240 pages, 6 x 9

Paperback \$24.95t, ISBN 978-1-60635-516-9



JEN SCHWANKE, EdD, is an educator and the author of five books on school leadership. A rural Ohio native, she has spent her career sharing her expertise on school culture through speaking, consulting, podcasting, and her popular education newsletter, *Principal Problems*. This is her debut memoir.

Related Interest ▼



**The First 649 Days:
Essays and Other Acts of Love**
Eric LeMay

Paperback \$26.95t

ISBN 978-1-60635-506-0



hover over her
Leah Poole Osowski

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ISBN 978-1-60635-297-7

Just Some Girl

Growing Up in the Rural Midwest

JEN SCHWANKE

"An elegant and deeply felt commentary on the making of a woman"—Melissa Petro

Set against the backdrop of rural Ohio, *Just Some Girl* lyrically unpacks what it means to become a woman. While the author is initially nurtured by loving parents and strong sibling bonds, adolescence finds Schwanke lacking a sense of identity and feeling deeply insecure, like so many other teenage girls. To cope, she simultaneously reaches toward—and eventually fights against—disordered eating, alcohol abuse, painful relationships with men, and self-sabotage.

As Schwanke interrogates her experiences and choices, she makes connections between her life and the lives of other women: her mother, her sisters, a trusted professor, and the women she encounters in town, at church, or at work. This through line captures the universal struggle—told from Schwanke's unique perspective—to reject the deep roots of a patriarchal world.

In these essays, Schwanke proves herself to be an emerging literary voice, reminiscent of great essayists like Jo Ann Beard and Melissa Febos. She renders her life—difficulties and triumphs alike—with stark honesty, compassion, and curiosity. *Just Some Girl* is a powerful coming-of-age memoir about how place, family, and our own choices shape us into wise yet imperfect adults.

Oil Courses

CAROLYN WILLIAMS-NOREN

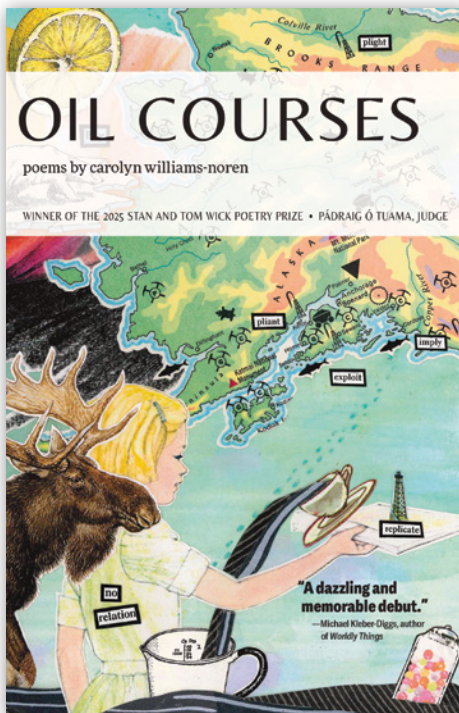
Pádraig Ó Tuama, Judge

Winner of the 2025 Stan and Tom Wick Poetry Prize

Grounded in deep concern about the climate crisis, Carolyn Williams-Noren's *Oil Courses* recalls a family reliant on the oil industry—her father worked for British Petroleum in Anchorage, Alaska—and a summer spent in its service on Endicott Island. What “curriculum” has oil offered each of us? To answer, *Oil Courses* turns to strange happenings in the changing landscape and in our interior lives, magnifying odd scenes that once seemed ordinary and filing them under the names of school subjects such as physics, economics, and history.

In these poems, the absurd, the beautiful, and the alarming collide. Tiny fish begin to swim sideways, poisoned. The permafrost melts. Whales are hunted and skinned. The high school yearbook features students who have hit moose with their cars. The speaker of one poem wins a trophy for an essay on the subject “What Petroleum Means to Me,” presented by a group of women called the “Petroleum Wives.”

Oil Courses speaks to our collective reliance on exploitative industries and questions our responsibilities and relationships to the natural world. These poems are droll, revealing, and ultimately haunting.



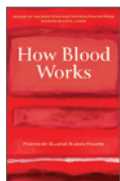
**WICK FIRST BOOK
POETRY**

September 2026, 82 pages, 5½ x 8½

Paperback \$18.95t, ISBN 978-1-60635-511-4

CAROLYN WILLIAMS-NOREN has published two poetry chapbooks, and her work has been in *AGNI*, *Prairie Schooner*, *The Iowa Review*, *Willow Springs*, and many other journals. She's earned Pushcart nominations and a Best American Essays notables mention, plus support from the McKnight Foundation, among other honors. See more at williams-noren.com.

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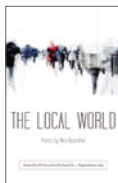


How Blood Works

Ellene Glenn Moore

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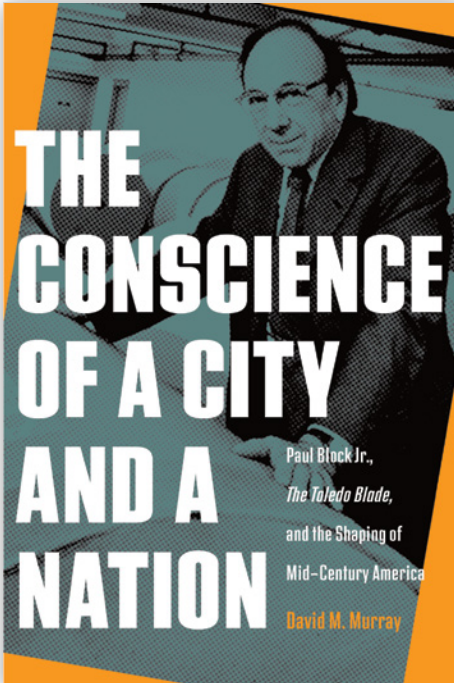


The Local World

Mira Rosenthal

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The Conscience of a City and a Nation

Paul Block Jr., The Toledo Blade, and the Shaping of Mid-Century America

DAVID M. MURRAY

The pioneering career and fascinating life of one of Toledo's most notable citizens

The Conscience of a City and a Nation is the first comprehensive biography of Paul Block Jr., son of a publishing giant who owned newspapers across the United States. Although Block was passionate about studying chemistry, after his father's death, he stepped in to help run papers the Blocks owned in Pittsburgh and Toledo. Eventually, Block and his family relocated to Toledo, one of Ohio's up-and-coming cities.

After working to gain respect from his colleagues at *The Blade*, Block became well known for his commitment to unbiased journalism. This book traces his long career—his work on the Toledo Tomorrow project, educating the nation about the dangers of atomic secrecy, and his advocacy for civil rights and social justice. During a turbulent time in American history, Block was unafraid to champion causes he believed in.

Making use of archival materials—including Block's letters, records, reports, clippings, and photographs—Murray traces Block's unlikely trajectory and his philosophy about the role journalism should have in influencing change at the local, national, and even global levels. Meticulously researched and engagingly written, *The Conscience of a City and a Nation* is an important biography about one of Ohio's most influential figures in the 20th century.

BIOGRAPHY / JOURNALISM / REGIONAL INTEREST

January 2027, 272 pages, 6 x 9

Paperback \$32.95t, ISBN 978-1-60635-515-2



DAVID M. MURRAY is a former newspaper reporter and retired managing editor of *The Blade*, a daily newspaper in Toledo, Ohio.

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Behind the White House Curtain:
A Senior Journalist's Story of
Covering the President—
and Why It Matters

Steven L. Herman

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Front-Page Girl

Doris O'Donnell

Hardback \$29.95s

ISBN 978-0-87338-846-7

The View from Havana

Searching for Ernest Hemingway

MARK BURRELL

A journalist's passion for cars and boats becomes a story that's part travelogue, part personal adventure, and part literary study

It began with a simple question: Was Ernest Hemingway a "car guy"? For journalist Mark Burrell, this initial curiosity turned into a decades-long quest to learn more about Hemingway by finding the people who knew him best in Italy, Cuba, and Key West. With every interview and meeting, more questions arose. Was an old boat at Hemingway's Cuban estate, *Finca Vigía*, the real *Pilar* or a replica? Were Hemingway's furniture, art, and 9,000-book library still inside the *Finca*? How did Cubans feel about the American writer, and what role did he have in his community there? Was Hemingway's son, Patrick, right that losing his hilltop villa after 20 years was the "last straw" that led to his father's suicide?

Through a captivating blend of memoir and personal journalism, Burrell's explorations reveal a shy, sensitive artist who never recovered from losing *Finca Vigía*, Havana, Cojimar, and the "good natured people of the northern shore" to the Cold War. As Burrell got to know Patrick and those closest to Ernest Hemingway, he formed a novel view of "the bronze God of Literature," as he's known in Cuba. Burrell's adventures took him from dodging freighters at night in the Gulf Stream to racing vintage cars in Italy, all in pursuit of better understanding a literary giant.



CREATIVE NONFICTION / HEMINGWAY STUDIES / TRAVEL WRITING

November 2026, 228 pages, 6 x 9

Paperback \$27.95t, ISBN 978-1-60635-513-8

MARK BURRELL is a journalist with bylines in *Autoweek*, *Ruoteclassiche*, *Inland Architect*, and *The Miami Herald's* Sunday magazine *Tropic*. Burrell's areas of professional experience span architecture, photojournalism, cars, boats, and Cuba.

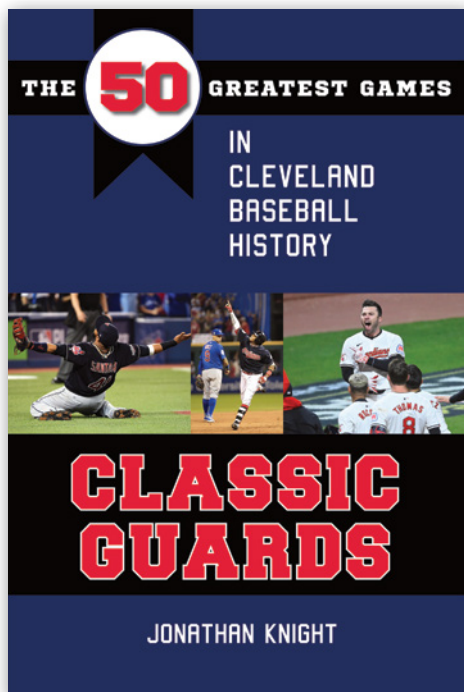
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SPORTS / REGIONAL INTEREST

October 2026, 242 pages, 6 x 9

Paperback \$21.95t, ISBN 978-1-60635-514-5



JONATHAN KNIGHT is the author of ten books on Cleveland sports. Knight has also served as an online columnist for TheClevelandFan.com and Football.com, as well as a contributor for ClevelandBrowns.com. Learn more about Jonathan and his books at jknightwriter.com.

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Classic Guards

The 50 Greatest Games in Cleveland Baseball History

JONATHAN KNIGHT

A countdown of the greatest games in Cleveland baseball history

Classic Guards counts down the 50 greatest Cleveland Guardians games, from wild ninth-inning comebacks to dazzling pitching performances to spellbinding playoff encounters. The storied history of Cleveland's endearing baseball franchise is sprinkled throughout these tales, from weekday matinees at cozy League Park at the dawn of the 20th century to unforgettable autumn nights at Progressive Field. This updated, revised edition of *Classic Tribe* highlights the team's achievements over the past 17 years and discusses their bold name change and rebranding.

Jonathan Knight ranks World Series masterpieces alongside incredible individual performances and historic achievements: two perfect games 73 years apart, the most memorable of the 1954 team's record 111 victories, and the greatest comeback in baseball history. Included in these pages are the heroics of Cleveland legends like Bob Feller, Lou Boudreau, Rocky Colavito, Omar Vizquel, and José Ramírez, to name just a few. Whether played on a balmy summer night on the lakefront or on a golden October afternoon at the corner of Carnegie and Ontario, each game included in *Classic Guards* is worth remembering and revisiting.

Cuyahoga Valley National Park Handbook, Third Edition

A Photographic Tour

CAROLYN V. PLATT AND
BOB DOWNING

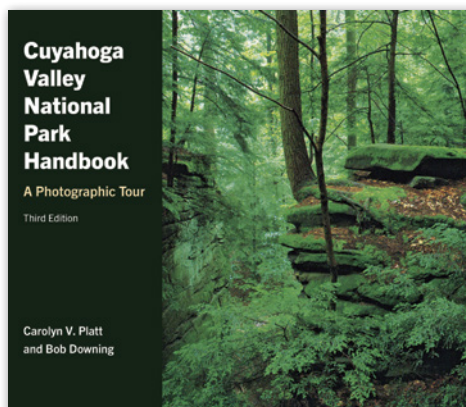
Foreword by Jennie Vasarhelyi

Exploring Ohio's only national park,
50 years later

In 1969, the polluted Cuyahoga River burned, attracting negative national media attention. As a response, what is now Cuyahoga Valley National Park was established to protect a section of the lower Cuyahoga. Then, only three fish were found to be living in those contaminated waters. Now, over 50 years later, in 2026, 77 fish species are thriving. Otter, beaver, and blue heron have also returned to the river's banks. And people, too, are benefiting from the cleaner waters, enjoying water sports like canoeing, kayaking, and paddling.

This new edition of an essential resource for visitors to Cuyahoga Valley National Park features stunning photos of the park from its past and present, showcasing its geology and rich history—including early interactions between the First Peoples and European colonists. Also prominently featured is the Ohio & Erie Canal, which was established 200 years ago. Located between Akron and Cleveland, the CVNP's metropolitan setting makes it unique and accessible to area residents and tourists alike.

At its heart, *Cuyahoga Valley National Park Handbook, Third Edition: A Photographic Tour* is both practical and poetic, updated to present a more robust account of the river's renewal and how plants, animals, and people alike have benefited from a healthier Crooked River.



REGIONAL INTEREST / NATURE

September 2026, 64 pages, 10½ x 9

Paperback \$19.95t, ISBN 978-1-60635-504-6



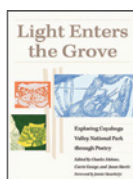
CAROLYN V. PLATT is a former professor of English at Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland. She is the author of *Birds of the Lake Erie Region* and *Ohio Hill Country: A Rewoven Landscape*, both published by Kent State University Press.

BOB DOWNING was the environment reporter at *The Akron Beacon Journal* from 1990 to 2016. He won numerous awards from the Cleveland Press Club, the Society of Professional Journalists, and the Associated Press, and contributed to *Canal Fever: The Ohio & Erie Canal from Waterway to Canalway* (Kent State University Press) and *Akron's Daily Miracle: Reporting the News in the Rubber City*.

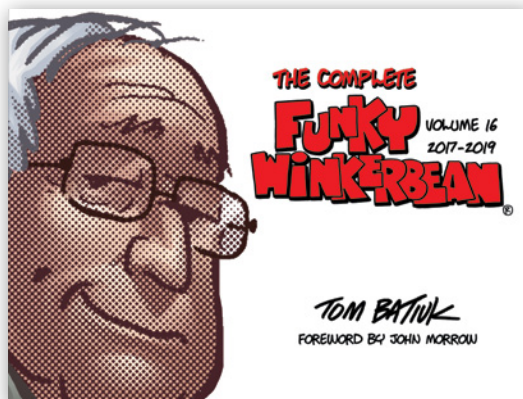
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The Complete Funky Winkerbean

Volume 16, 2017-2019

TOM BATIUK

Foreword by John Morrow

The slice-of-life comic strip tackles real-world issues as its conclusion looms



BLACK SQUIRREL BOOKS

COMICS / GRAPHIC NOVELS

November 2026, 510 pages, 9½ x 7½

Hardback \$45.00t, ISBN 978-1-60635-508-4

TOM BATIUK is a graduate of Kent State University. His celebrated *Funky Winkerbean* comic strip concluded its 50-year run on December 31, 2022. Its spinoff, *Crankshaft*, is still carried in hundreds of newspapers throughout the United States. Batiuk was a finalist in the cartooning category of the 2008 Pulitzer Prize awards for the series of daily comic strips that chronicled the death of longtime character Lisa Moore, which were collected in the *Lisa's Legacy Trilogy*. His *Funky Winkerbean* series and *Roses in December* were finalists for the 2016 Eisner Awards.

In this penultimate volume of *The Complete Funky Winkerbean*, creator Tom Batiuk gives unique insight into his creative process and explains why he made the difficult decision to end the strip after 50 years. But even with the strip's conclusion in sight, Batiuk still takes risks, including introducing dramatic new storylines.

Volume 16 covers the birth of Atomix Komix, a small comic book publishing company. Band leader Harry L. Dinkle and the Bedside Manorisms visit Memphis to cut some sides at Sun Studios. One of the most compelling character arcs is Bull Bushka's. In high school, he had been the star football player—but he was also a bully. Years later, he apologized for his behavior and made amends. Despite this transformation, in this volume, Bull remains troubled, is diagnosed with chronic traumatic encephalopathy, and subsequently dies by disease-related suicide. As always, *Funky* is shaped by current events—this time national conversations about sports injuries, athletes' well-being, and concussion protocol.

In his foreword, John Morrow writes, "The strip is touching, even melancholy at times . . . I think it's a misnomer to call *Funky Winkerbean* a 'comic strip'; it may've started out that way, but now it's more of a 'cartoon epic drama,' and totally deserving of all its critical praise." As the conclusion to *Funky Winkerbean* draws closer, readers are reminded of why the strip has such a devoted following—why its stories and characters continue to resonate with readers of all ages.

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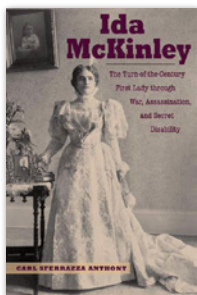


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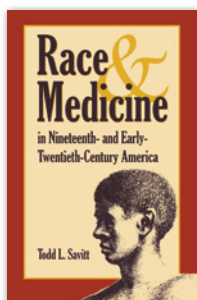
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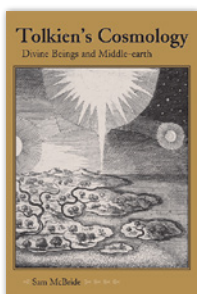
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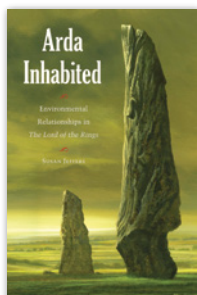
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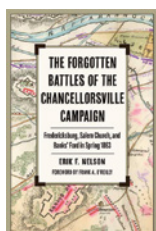


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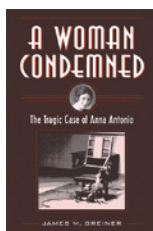


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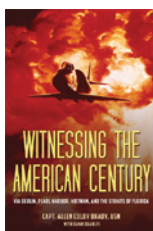


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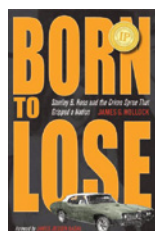


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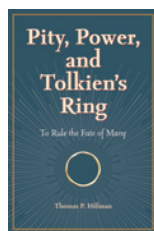


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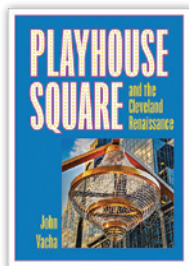
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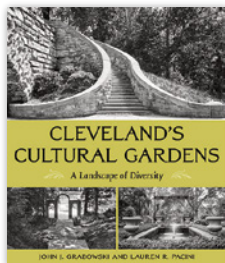


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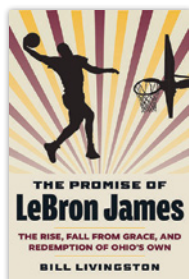
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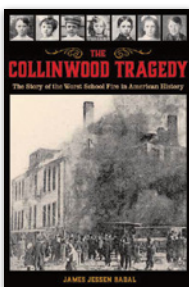
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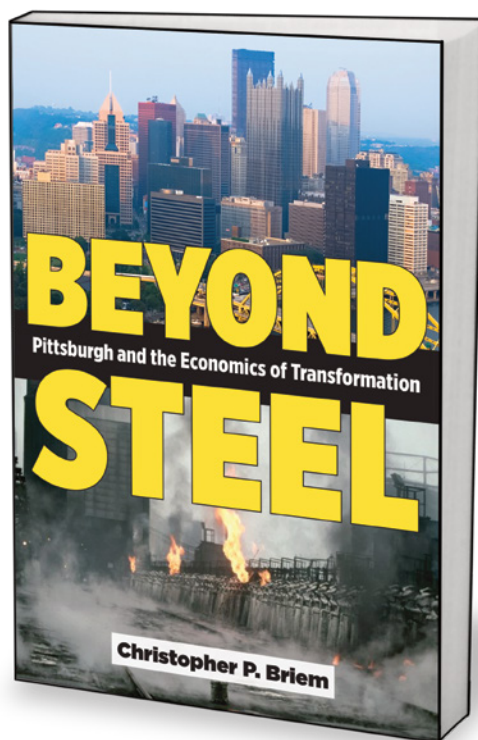
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