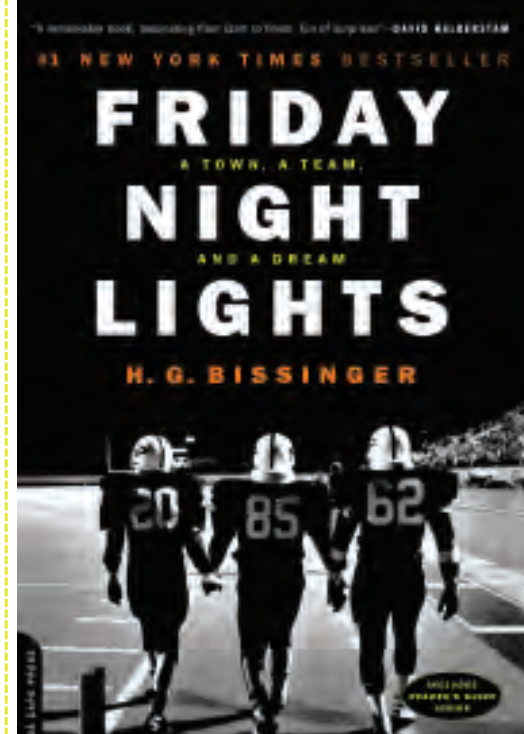


## SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Consider the experiences of Brian Chavez and Boobie Miles. What role does football play in their lives and in the lives of the people of Odessa? Does football play a similar role in your own community? To what extent do Boobie and Brian's ambitions and experiences prepare each of them differently for life after football?
2. Of the Odessa team preparing for the game against Midland Lee, Bissinger writes that "the perfection of their equipment ... the solemn ritual that was attached to almost everything, made them seem like boys going off to fight a war for the benefit of someone else, unwitting sacrifices to a strange and powerful god." (p 11) In what ways might they be viewed as "unwitting sacrifices"? How would you describe the "strange and powerful god" to whom they were being sacrificed?
3. Bissinger notes that the tradition of Odessa's Permian Panthers "was enshrined on a wall of the field house" (p 24) and also "in the county library, where the 235-page history that had been written about Permian football was more detailed than any of the histories about the town itself." What conclusions concerning Odessa might be drawn from the fact that its high school football program is valued more highly than the town's history? What value does your community place on high school sports?
4. How does what Bissinger characterizes as "the hearty, hair-trigger temperament of the place" affect our view of Odessa and its residents' attitudes and behavior? What examples of this "hair-trigger temperament" do you observe in your own community or on the national level? In what ways might it be seen as characteristically American?
5. In what ways does race influence the attitudes and behavior of Odessa's high-school athletes, coaches, teachers, parents, and fans? What examples of, and explanations for, continuing racism in Odessa does Bissinger provide? Do you see similar examples in your own community?
6. Of Boobie Miles, Bissinger writes, "He had the rawness, the abandon, the unbridled meanness." Bissinger makes much of the orneriness, fearlessness, and aggressiveness of many of Odessa's football players, past and present-and of many of the town's other citizens. What value do those attributes have for the football players and the community? What other personal qualities might be of equal or greater value?
7. What do Bissinger's descriptions of classroom activity and teachers' behavior at Permian High School reveal about the role of education in the lives of the students and adults of Odessa? To what extent are those descriptions pertinent to your own school and community? What might explain, and who is responsible for, the "devastating erosion in standards" (p 131) that many of the teachers cite? Why do you agree or disagree with Bissinger's statement that the school's "problems didn't make Permian a bad school at all, just a very typically American one"? (p 132)
8. What differences exist between the two communities of Odessa and Midland, and how do those differences affect each community's view of itself and the other? How does social class inform those views?



**ONE  
BOOK  
ONE  
COMMUNITY**



FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ALL OF  
SOUTHWESTERN INDIANA READS

# FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

BY **BUZZ BISSINGER**

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8, VICTORY THEATRE, 7:30 P.M.

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READING AND GROWING  
TOGETHER IN  
SOUTHWESTERN INDIANA

## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

One Book/One Community is a grassroots reading program to develop a community built around the shared experience of people reading and talking about the same book. Bringing people together to discuss ideas in books can play an important role in breaking down barriers between people, cultures, and economic and educational backgrounds.

The Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library is joining with the Evansville media, local schools and universities, book stores, and businesses to promote a culture of reading in the Evansville community.

## WHAT CAN I DO AFTER I'VE READ THE BOOK?

- Visit the One Book/One Community website at [www.evpl.org/onebook](http://www.evpl.org/onebook)
- Join a book discussion group.
- Use "Suggested Questions for Discussion" in the back of this booklet.
- Listen to special "One Book/One Community" programming on WNIN FM 88.3.
- Share the book with others.
- Attend the special author event on Thursday, November 8 at 7:30 p.m.

## HOW CAN YOU PARTICIPATE?

Participation is free and open to the public – everyone is encouraged to join. You can call or stop by any Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library to borrow a copy of Friday Night Lights.

### PARTICIPATING LIBRARIES & BOOK DISCUSSION DATES:

<b>CENTRAL</b>	200 SE MLK Jr. Blvd. <b>YA</b> Oct. 24 – 6:30 pm <b>Adult</b> Oct. 9 – 6:30 pm
<b>EAST</b>	840 E. Chandler Ave. Oct. 30 – 6:30
<b>MCCOLLOUGH</b>	5115 Washington Ave. Oct. 24 – 3:00
<b>NORTH PARK</b>	960 Koehler Dr. Oct. 18 – 6:30
<b>OAKLYN</b>	3001 Oaklyn Dr. Oct. 29 – 6:30
<b>RED BANK</b>	120 S. Red Bank Rd. Nov. 7 – noon
<b>STRINGTOWN</b>	2100 Stringtown Rd. Oct 18 – 3:30
<b>WEST</b>	2000 W. Franklin St. Oct. 16 – 6:30

Check other area libraries & book stores for dates.

## ABOUT FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

Return once again to the enduring account of life in the Mojo lane, to the Permian Panthers of Odessa – the winningest high school football team in Texas history. Odessa is not known to be a town big on dreams, but the Panthers help keep the hopes and dreams of this small, dusty town going. Socially and racially divided, its fragile economy follows the treacherous boom-bust path of the oil business.

In bad times, the unemployment rate barrels out of control; in good times, its murder rate skyrockets. But every Friday night from September to December, when the Permian High School Panthers play football, this West Texas town becomes a place where dreams can come true. With frankness and compassion, Bissinger chronicles one of the Panthers' dramatic seasons and shows how single-minded devotion to the team shapes the community and inspires-and sometimes shatters-the teenagers who wear the Panthers' uniforms.

— **HarperCollins**

"Friday Night Lights offers a biting indictment of the sports craziness that grips . . . most of American society, while at the same time providing a moving evocation of its powerful allure."

— **New York Times Book Review**

## JOIN US

Buzz Bissinger will come to the Victory Theatre to discuss his book, FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS, answer questions, and autograph books on:

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8  
7:30 P.M.**

**THE VICTORY THEATRE  
ADMISSION IS FREE AND  
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.**

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Buzz Bissinger is one of the nation's most honored and distinguished writers. A native of New York City, Bissinger has been the winner of such prestigious awards as the Pulitzer Prize, the Livingston Award, the American Bar Association Silver Gavel Award, the National Headliners Award. He has also been a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University. Bissinger lives in Philadelphia with his wife Lisa Smith. He is the father of three children, Gerry, Zachary and Caleb.

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