



# LINCOLN STREET: Coming of Age in Fly-Over Country

*Don Burgess*

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Challenged by a life-long friend to tell the story of growing up in America's mid-western fly-over country in the late '50s and early '60s, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Billy Howard admits his reluctance to do so because "it was such a different time" than the mid-1980s when the challenge is offered.

Billy tells his childhood pal: "For all the good times we had growing up, for all the influence our families, friends, teachers, and Coffeyville, Kansas, had upon us, we were, nevertheless, provincial, naïve, ignorant, clueless, and grossly unaware of the ways of the world."

However, Billy's elm-shrouded Lincoln Street neighborhood was anything but humdrum. Billy, his teenage classmates, and adult neighbors confronted life challenges that included adolescent fun, young love, marital reality, racial tension, Sputnik, dreams of success and murder. These maturing influences are woven together as Billy unpacks his gripping and redemptive memories, both as a teenager and as an adult.

Among Lincoln Street's fascinating characters are:

WWII veteran Captain Jack, the neighborhood mentor.

Motherless Molly Madigan, the wild teen "hottie" who takes care of her alcoholic father plus her hellion younger brothers.

Harley Powell, wanting to attend West Point, who courageously defuses racial tensions.

Former major league baseball player Dusty Lang coping with two kids and his runaway wife.

Carly Delgreco, Billy's young love, whose family suddenly must move to Chicago.

LINCOLN STREET follows in the tradition of MAIN STREET, MIDAQ ALLEY, and ON GREEN DOLPHIN STREET.

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