



Introduction to Les Standiford. 1:35 min. Editor: Jessica Barrios. Music: Julie Maxwell, *Memories of Mars*. Photo & Design: Raymond Elman.

Les Standiford: Author, Educator

By Elman + Barrios

LES STANDIFORD is the author of 23 books, including the critically acclaimed works of non-fiction, *Last Train to Paradise: Henry Flagler and the Spectacular Rise and Fall of the Railroad that Crossed an Ocean*—a History Channel Top Ten Pick & the One Read choice of more than a dozen public library systems; *Meet You in Hell: Andrew Carnegie, Henry Clay Frick and the Bitter Partnership that Transformed America*, and *Washington Burning: How a Frenchman’s Vision for Our Nation’s Capital Survived Congress, the Founding Fathers, and the Invading British Army*—both publisher’s nominees for the Pulitzer Prize and National Book Awards; *The Man Who Invented Christmas: How Charles Dickens’s A Christmas Carol Rescued His Career and Revived our Holiday Spirits* (a New York Times Editors Choice); *Bringing Adam Home: The Abduction that Changed America* (a New York Times best-seller); and most recently, *Water to the Angels: William Mulholland, His Monumental Aqueduct, and the Rise of Los Angeles*, a featured alternate of the History Book Club.

He is also the author of ten novels, including the acclaimed John Deal mystery series as well as the stand-alone thrillers *Black Mountain* and *Spill* (adapted as a feature film).

He has received the Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers Award, the Frank O’Connor Award for Short Fiction, and Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. He is Founding Director of the Creative Writing Program at Florida International University in Miami and was appointed holder of the Peter Meinke Chair in Creative Writing at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg for the Spring of 2016.

He and his wife Kimberly, a psychotherapist and artist, are the parents of three children, Jeremy, Hannah, and Alexander. They live in Pinecrest, Florida, in a home built of native Florida pine and maintained by the spirit of John Deal.

The videos below are organized by topic and run between 30 seconds and 5 minutes. Click on any video. You must be connected to the Internet to view the videos.

OVERCOMES CHALLENGES TO SUCCEED: 1:36 min.



Where did you grow up and what was your first awareness of art of any discipline?

SEIZES OPPORTUNITIES: 3:58 min.



What was it like growing up in the small town of Cambridge, Ohio?

DEVELOP A VOICE: 0:37 sec.



How did your idyllic childhood impact your writing??

INSIGHT & INSPIRATION: 3:17 min.



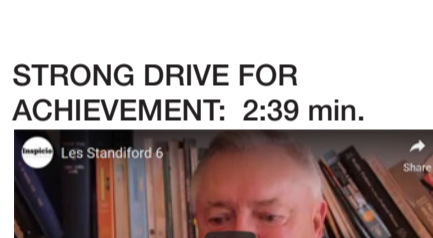
At the end of your college days were you confident that you had a facility for writing?

CRITICAL THINKING: 1:24 min.



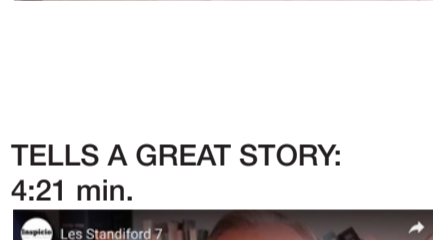
What did you learn in school that still informs you today?

STRONG DRIVE FOR ACHIEVEMENT: 2:39 min.



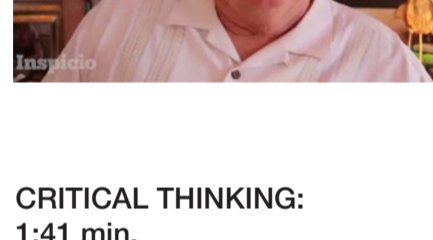
You have written a lot of books, and you seem like a very organized person. How do you self-manage when you’re writing a book?

TELLS A GREAT STORY: 4:21 min.



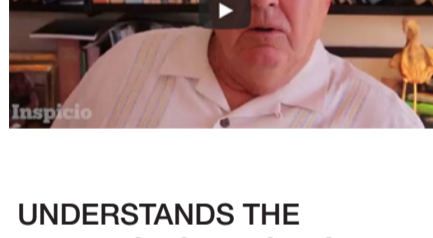
When you are writing a book, do you also have a movie script in the back of your mind?

CRITICAL THINKING: 1:41 min.



What is key to a successful book or short story?

UNDERSTANDS THE AUDIENCE’S PERSPECTIVE: 1:35 min.



When you are writing dialogue, do you read it aloud to hear how it sounds?

INSIGHT & INSPIRATION: 0:49 sec.



How did moving to Miami impact your writing?

COMMUNITY CONFIDENCE: 2:58 min.



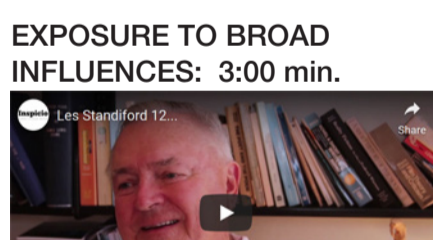
Do you think that the Miami literary community is much deeper than people outside of Miami realize?

EXPOSURE TO BROAD INFLUENCES: 3:00 min.



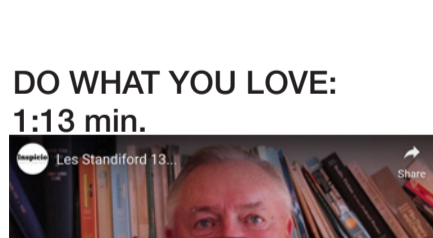
Who were your role models when you first started your career, and how did that change over time?

DO WHAT YOU LOVE: 1:13 min.



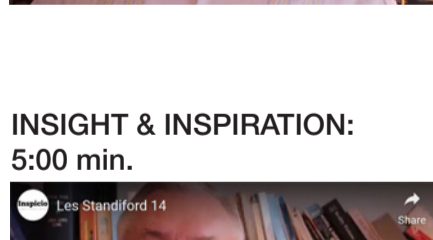
What does your typical day look like?

INSIGHT & INSPIRATION: 5:00 min.



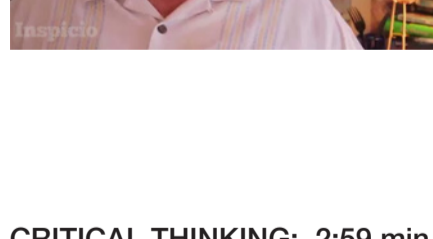
You moderated a discussion with Bill Clinton and James Patterson about their new novel. How did the evening go for you? Did politics color the event?

CRITICAL THINKING: 2:59 min.



Why did you write a book about the development of the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts?

INSIGHT & INSPIRATION: 0:42 sec.



What are you working on now?

CREATES A UNIQUE PERSONAL BRAND: 1:03 min.



What don’t people get about you that you wish they understood?

EXPOSURE TO BROAD INFLUENCES: 1:54 min.



When you communicate or hang out with your friends who are writers, do you discuss each other’s work?

UNDERSTANDS THE BUSINESS OF ART: 1:26 min.



Do you actively pursue having your books made into films?

INSIGHT & INSPIRATION: 1:52 min.



In an Inspicio interview, Billy Corben said, “Florida is a sunny place for shady people.” Does that concept find a home in your books set in Florida?