

The sun is horizontal, so the flesh of the near-naked girl bouncing a ball is netted in its light, an orange mesh waving beneath her and the shadowed wall. She kisses the hand beside her mouth. I know the sun is flashing everything in its path, the blue-grey rocks that are so many of the islands. The sun is flashing everything in its path, the blue-grey rocks that are so many of the islands. The sun is flashing everything in its path, the blue-grey rocks that are so many of the islands. The sun is flashing everything in its path, the blue-grey rocks that are so many of the islands.

Quote of the Week:

It is the duty of intellectuals to tell the truth and expose lies.

Noam Chomsky

**Vivid images and strikingly real characters dominate acclaimed work**  
**Featured Author: David Guterson**

ELISE CRAFT

THE BRUNSWICKAN

David Guterson grew up in the Pacific Northwest and still resides on an island in Puget Sound with his family. His first novel, *Snow Falling on Cedars*, was published in 1994. It was widely recognised as an incredibly well-wrought novel, and received the Pen/Faulkner Award in 1995. A second book, *The Country Ahead of Us*, *The Country Behind* is a collection of short stories and has just been released. The rich images and powerful characterization that Guterson employs have culminated in remarkable works, that at one strike the reader as incredibly insightful and stunningly beautiful.

At thirty nine, Guterson cites *To Kill a Mockingbird* as his favourite book. An English teacher until recently, he is presently planning a third work of fiction. He says, "I get really serious when I sit down to write. It's a brooding melancholy that haunts me." (Source: *Boston Book Review*).

*Snow Falling On Cedars*

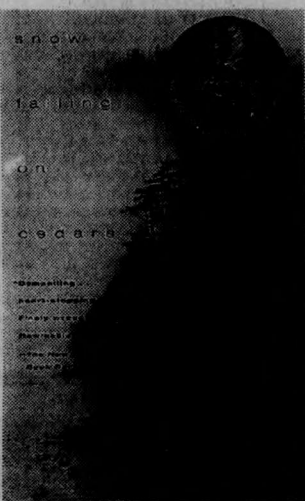
By David Guterson  
(Vintage Books)  
460 pages

Set against the backdrop of an island in Puget Sound, *Snow falling On Cedars* is a novel of many levels. It is a courtroom drama, a murder mystery, a story of racial tension and the history of a community all in one.

The novel begins at the trial of Kabuo Miyamoto, an American of Japanese heritage accused of the murder of a fellow fisherman. Set in 1954, the story eloquently analyses the interplay between Japanese and non-Japanese islanders within this small community. As the plot progresses a love story emerges, and Guterson exposes hidden passions, secret animosities and powerful jealousies as the characterisation unfolds.

As a narrative of war and its ravages, Guterson's powers of observation provide each of his characters with depth and subtlety. As the trial progresses, *Snow Falling on Cedars* becomes more and more the story of a community torn between commitment to one of its own, and memories of the Japanese enemy of the Second World War.

Kabuo Miyamoto is a first generation Japanese American. Interred when the US enters the war, he enlists to fight against the country of his family because he feels so much a part of his community. Returning an honoured veteran, he is instantly suspected when a fisherman is found, apparently drowned in his own net under suspicious circumstances.



Throughout this novel, Guterson narrates the common history of the community bound on all sides by the sea and inside by the tension of mistrust and suspicion. Yet finally, the story is about none of this. Against the backdrop of a snowstorm that envelops the island, the conclusion of the novel comes as both an unforeseen and natural extension of the plot.

*Snow Falling on Cedars* is one of the most overwhelming and rewarding books I have read in a long time. It is beautifully imagined and breathtakingly written. A wonderful gift for the holidays, and a great book to curl up with when the snow howls around your own personal island.

*The Country Ahead of Us, The Country Behind*

By David Guterson  
(Vintage Books)  
164 pages

This collection of short stories was first published in 1989. It is a varied and stimulating set of tales. Again Guterson has captured on paper the lifeblood of his characters as they experience things that are both familiar and comforting.

The strength of the images of family and human interaction that he constructs makes one yearn for the same kind of clarity in ones own life. Snapshots of moments hang suspended in perfect detail, and the characters become larger than the short stories that hold them.

While Guterson uses similar techniques as those employed in *Snow falling on Cedars*, this collection is a brilliant contrast and companion to his full length novel.



JILL SABELLA PHOTO

**Famous New Brunswick photographer releases new book, ShadowLight**

PAT FITZPATRICK

THE BRUNSWICKAN

World renowned photographer and writer Freeman Patterson has recently released a retrospective book on his career. He spoke with Brunswickan staff photographer Pat FitzPatrick about the book and his approach to his craft.

BRUNS: This seems to be a much more personal work than many of your previous books, at least in the sense that there seems to be more emotion, more insightful analysis, more of you as a human being — not only in the autobiographical sections but particularly as you explain how you came to the photos and concepts of visual design, of what you drew from each photograph.

FP: Well, four of the other books were instructional, then there were others which had a different purpose. I'm not really keen on autobiographies. So when my editor suggested calling it a retrospective, it sounded a lot better to me. In the end, we decided it was a kind of self-portrait, complete with wrinkles. The whole point of this book, fundamentally, is to show that my life and work are not separate entities. I don't compartmentalize them, and from the beginning, photography has meant a great deal to me and it is also how I have made my living. I have been one of the fortunate people to be able to do that.

The wonderful thing about it is that not only as I photograph and teach and so on, but also as I go back over my work, I've come to realize that the photographs are like my life history. In two ways — one in the kind of things I chose to photograph and choose now to photograph. More importantly, I have been able to trace certain changes that took place over the period of my life that showed up in the photographs very clearly. I wasn't aware of them, at least to the same degree, until I started looking at thousands of images to make selections for the book and then I could see the periods and see the changes.

That gave me an opportunity to take a good, hard look at myself and say here is where I have grown, here is where I am stuck and so on. And I think one of the reasons I put in the chapter on dreams is that I began to see recurring symbols in my photographs which came and perhaps lasted for years and then disappeared. Very much in the same sense that we have recurring dreams — until we deal with the issue it is trying to force on our consciousness, it will recur.

BRUNS: Who would you consider to be influences or favorite photographers? Obviously, Helen Manzer fits in there, so perhaps we could start with her and go on from there...

FP: Well, she was a very gifted teacher and a very good photographer as well. I'm going to mention one photographer. He's Japanese and would be quite elderly now if he is still living — Shinzo Maeda. But rather than one person or two people, I get my inspiration just as much from painting, from modern dance, from fine fiction. In other words, there's a real cross-fertilization. You can't compartmentalize photography.

Music is another very obvious influence. I'm still on this book tour, and one of the things I have to do is spend nights in hotel rooms from one end of the country to another. I've watched more television in the past month than I usually do in a year. One of the things I find myself doing is tuning in to MuchMusic. I find that so

many of the videos are highly creative and I get turned on by what they are doing visually, the juxtaposition of images and the quick cuts. Some of the music I like a lot and some I don't nearly as much, but I certainly do get turned on by what they're doing in so many of these. Most of them are very up-front and they're either very in your face or very subtle, and I like them both.

the darks, around the tones. This is why I think of myself as a black and white photographer who works in colour. Now, some people do 8x10 (inch) negatives with incredible landscapes in black and white and I love them. But I know that if I was standing side by side with that person, I could not bring myself to use black and white because, particularly in the spring scenes, it's the gentle gradation from yellow into green as the grass is coming in and all those subtle shadings of colour which drive me to make the photograph. Those nuances really get me.

I guess you might say that the colour is the right brain part and the structure of the picture, the tonal part, is the left brain portion. In that sense, I'm just like any black and white photographer, paying attention to the tones.

BRUNS: Would you care to have the last word about your upcoming Fredericton show?

FP: The thing worth mentioning is that this particular evening is for everybody. It's not just for photographers. People who compose music — everyone listens, few compose. The same is true of the photographs. I don't take photographs just for other photographers. It's a great blending of music and photography, a beautiful exploration of the two media. I try not to get music which is merely sound effects but rather soul-effects. The music has to generate in me the same emotion that the photographs are generating. I've been saying it's for Aunt Minnie and Uncle George, your cousin doing a course in design. It's for anyone who wants to explore.

Freeman Patterson will be appearing in Fredericton at the Centre Communautaire Sainte-Anne this coming Tuesday, Nov. 19. Tickets are available at most photo outlets and the UNB Bookstore.

The complete text of this interview is available through the BRUNS Online. FIND US AT <http://www.unb.ca/web/bruns/>. We would also love to hear your comments on the new books section.

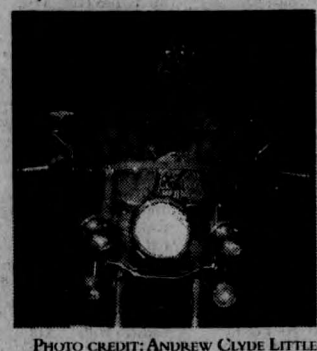


PHOTO CREDIT: ANDREW CLYDE LITTLE  
Freeman Patterson on his Harley, 1993.

*ShadowLands* is a "self-portrait, complete with wrinkles."

BRUNS: In examining your work stemming back to the early 1960's, it seems to me that you shoot almost exclusively in colour. Although "personal" photos in your books often appear in black & white, the meat of your work is rarely so. Why did you decide to work in colour for nature photography?

FP: It's an emotional thing. I love black & white when other people shoot it well, but when I use it myself, it's invariably for people. If you go through the book, you will notice that a very, very large number of the images are only one colour. For some reason or another, that colour has been the emotional stimulus which drove me to make the picture — but the picture is actually organized around the lights and

**From book to movie: the "happy ending" transformation**

ELISE CRAFT

THE BRUNSWICKAN

One of the fastest growing genres of movie in recent years has been that of the "woman's movie." That is, movies that are either about women or feature primarily female casts depicting an aspect of women's lives. Whether this is because moviemakers have realised that women's experiences are interesting movie material, or that women have disposable income to spend on movies, it raises an interesting question: when books are made over into screenplays, why are the endings often changed to happy ones?

Recent examples of popular movies in which this has happened are easy to find. *City of Friends*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *Disney's Pocahontas* and *The Hitchhiker Of Notre Dame* are but a few. What makes them so popular? If the idea is to present a story that was good as a book and everything else is film-worthy, why do original endings morph into happy ones?

The first book that comes to mind is *Circle of Friends*. The woman in this book is characterized as plain and socially awkward. She falls in love with the most handsome man in her class and he in turn looks beyond what is socially expected of him to see her true beauty. They become involved, but her Irish Catholic background prevents them from becoming lovers. He sleeps with her best friend and long-story-short, they break up.

In the book, he begs for her to take him back, but she refuses him because he has betrayed her trust and love. In the movie however, he grovels for a moment and then she accepts him, albeit reservedly. Perhaps this ending is more emotionally rewarding for the moviegoer. For one who has enjoyed the book, it falls flat.

Another book turned movie that does the same thing is *How To Make an American Quilt*. In this book, a young woman spends the summer with her grandmother and her grandmother's quilting circle while working on her thesis. She is also engaged, and having

doubts as to whether she has made a good decision. Through the course of the book, a series of flashbacks provide insight into the lives of the women who quilt at the house, each of whom has become stronger through their experiences. Meanwhile the young woman meets and develops an attraction to a local man. This causes her to realise that she is not ready for marriage. She decides not to marry her fiance but rather to take the time to experience life on her own.

In contrast, the movie ends with the heroine realising that she loves her fiance, not the local man. Again, the ending of the book is consistent with the characters within it but the movie ending seems out of place and hollow.

So why do great books like this undergo the happy ending transformation? The result is not simply happy women, but rather women who are happy because they have chosen the right man. Whether this is what happens in the real world or not, changes like this are only valid when supported by the characters they apply to. In the cases here, and many more, the happy ending is neither supported by nor consistent with the book.

This transformation is not limited to movies about female characters. Many books with sad or harsh endings get reworked for the movies, whatever the subject matter. Is it because we, as the audience, don't like unhappy endings? Perhaps our concept of "happy" is the issue. We are all supposed to believe that happiness is achievable for each of us. When a movie creates happiness where we don't expect it, it reinforces this notion.

Strong books often change into very different stories for film. Challenge yourself — read the book.

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