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# GUEST POST AND GIVEAWAY OF DAVID SCHMAHMANN, AUTHOR OF "THE DOUBLE LIFE OF ALFRED BUBER"...

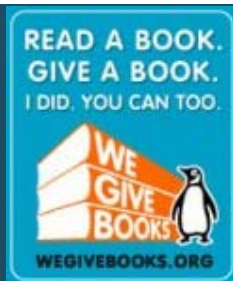
Posted on May 23, 2011 by tarenn98

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WE AT MY BOOK ADDICTION AND MORE WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME DAVID SCHMAHMANN, AUTHOR OF "THE DOUBLE LIFE OF ALFRED BUBER" TODAY.....



**Biography of David Schmahmann:**



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David Schmahmann was born in Durban, South Africa. He is a graduate of Dartmouth College and Cornell Law School, and has studied in India and Israel and worked in Burma. His first novel, *Empire Settings*, received the **John Gardner Book Award**, and his publications include a short story in *The Yale Review* and articles on legal issues. Other books include *Nibble & Kuhn*, *Ivory from Paradise*, and [\*The Double Life of Alfred Buber\*](#).

For more information please visit: [www.davidschmahmann.com](http://www.davidschmahmann.com)

In *Walden* Thoreau writes, “*The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation.*” A similar theme – an almost palpable ennui with life – is beautifully articulated in David’s upcoming fictional narrative and is a topic that I feel will resonate deeply with your audience.

Author David Schmahmann’s fourth novel, *The Double Life of Alfred Buber* (pub date June as a \$28, 198 page hardcover) is a spellbinding literary novel with overtones likened to that of Vladimir Nabokov’s famed *Lolita*. It is a book that touches upon something dark and lonely within each of us – with the central character’s passion for women matched only by his inability to relate to them. Funny, sad, lonely, and redemptive, it blurs the line between reality and fantasy as middle-aged Alfred Buber, a respectable New Englander, spins out his secret life. The cover art captures many of these elements while providing both the drama and mystery of the story. Flap copy provides more plot information.

Schmahmann’s first novel, *Empire Settings* (published by Plume in 2002) won the SUNY John Gardner Book Award. His second, *Nibble & Kuhn*, was published by Academy Chicago in 2009. Born and raised in South Africa, he eventually settled in Boston where he practices law. A naturalized American citizen, he also worked closely with a law firm in Burma and visited Rangoon often. Given his visits to Southeast Asia and that his protagonist, Alfie Buber, another respected attorney, claims he is writing a memoir, it should be stated again that *The Double Life of Alfred* is a novel and not a diary, though given its clear and urgent voice it would be easy to think otherwise.

As Arthur Golden (*Memoirs of a Geisha*) writes on the back cover, Schmahmann “*has created a character with the vividness of J. Alfred Prufrock or Humbert Humbert,*” a sentiment echoed by Daphne Kalotay who calls Buber “*as great a comic character as Nok is a tragic one, and their intertwined story recalls truths about poverty, loneliness, and our often misguided attempts at love.*” I concur, believing this remarkable and wholly original work to be a serious contender for the major literary awards next year.

## WITHOUT FURTHER ADO, WELCOME, DAVID TO MY BOOK ADDICTION AND MORE...

**MBA:** What inspired you to write “*The Double Life of Alfred Buber*” if anything?

Several years ago, when I was still a lawyer in Boston and bored beyond description, I talked my wife into joining me on an adventure: spending time with me in Rangoon while I attached myself to an old Dartmouth friend who was running the Rangoon office of a Thai law firm.

Rangoon, which we’ve now visited many times, is a magical city: lush and swampy, and mostly because of its regressive political system, largely unchanged since Kipling’s time. But it is also very quiet for expats, and on some weekends we would take the short flight to Bangkok for a change of pace.

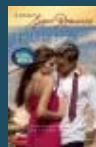
Now Bangkok is anything but quiet. It’s raucous and colorful, the food is spectacular, and the entertainment is unstoppable. It’s something else too, of course. I don’t want to call it the brothel of Asia because I know it too well and I like it too much, but it is a destination for many western men in search of sexual adventures. It is also, so I discovered, home to more than a few decent

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and likeable men on an unlikely, misguided, doomed quest to find love.

We made friends there, almost all men, and I came to see that most of them led perfectly conventional lives and that it was quite likely that people at home had no idea where they were or what they were doing. It got me thinking quite a lot about this business of male loneliness, especially when I heard, as I sometimes did, that a new friend's plans included taking a young woman he'd met – often semi-literate, rural, and whom he barely knew – home, back to London, to Chicago, to live the masquerade of domestic suburban life.

I knew I had to write a book about this: What had brought them there. What would happen after the moment they took off from Don Muang Airport. So I started writing a memoir for my creation, Alfred Buber: he's cultured, funny, self-deprecating, and he is also, silently, bitterly lonely. At home in Boston he is liked and respected, yes, but he wants love, sensual love, romantic love, and yet he feels himself to be sexually invisible to women. And thus his own, one could say delusional, Quixotic, quest to southeast Asia.

What I didn't realize when I started this faux memoir was how much I would come to like my Alfred Buber, how much of my sensibilities I would give him, and in the end how much I would want him to be happy. I also didn't realize when I started out how much I'd come to like and respect Nok, his young and debased love interest. In the end, she's lovely, and in my view completely transcends her horrible circumstances.

There is a chance at finding love, I've come to think, even in the least likely of places. Buber could have found it in a jaw-droppingly inappropriate place. Love is love. The rest is detail.

MBA: Can you tell your readers why you enjoy writing *this type of story*?

It's the chance to live out the "what ifs" of things, to go on an adventure and to play out how something might evolve without actually making the mistakes, or being as deluded, as some of the characters you create. Take Alfred Buber. As I say, somewhat to my surprise I really came to like him. As a person he's as flawed as all get out, but he's smart, and funny, and under no illusions about his shortcomings. I like to think I wouldn't mislead myself in some of the ways he does, or make quite as many mistakes in sizing up people and situations as he does, but I can still endow him with traits that I think might deepen the tension, or the interest, of a situation and then, honestly, watch it play out almost alongside my readers.

And at my desk, where I can leave hot, uncomfortable, supercharged, noisy Bangkok with all its allure and temptations at the end of each day and sleep in my own bed. That's the great charm, the addiction I think, in writing fiction.

**MBA: Do you feel a deep connection to your characters and if so why?**

Alfred Buber, as I say, became something of an alter ego. Every misgiving I've had, every insecurity about women, every piece of desire I've ever felt, whether acted on or not, I lent to my character as he wrote his memoir. I expect many writers do likewise, but in the end, somewhat to my surprise, and notwithstanding that I lead him on a quest that almost by definition has to end badly for him, I did want him to redeem himself. And I think he does, if realization of your own flaws, a new and powerful insight into your own obsessions and mistakes, is a kind of redemption. When you meet Nok, the Thai woman he falls in love with, I expect you may recoil in distaste at the circumstances in which she finds herself. But she's a person too, a desperate young woman trying to make the most of circumstances. In the end, I think, I hope, a reader will see her as thoroughly decent, a real person, not even a victim.

**MBA: What do you hope your readers will come away with reading "The Double Life of Alfred Buber" and why?**

I believe that novels are about story: I hope that the story itself catches a reader's imagination,

- 5-- Outstanding
- 4 1/2--a great read, must have
- 4---a good story, well worth reading
- 3---a decent story, something didn't work
- 2---really didn't care for, may not finish
- 1---not worth looking at to me

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keeps her reading, and leaves her with a satisfying sense that the dilemmas and secrets all come to rest in a manner that is complete and elegant. I think I know the part of the world where this takes place well, and that the setting too, the sight and taste of things, leaves a reader with a feeling that she's actually lived through some of the things I've written about. And I hope my readers will like Alfred Buber as much as I do: perhaps they'll want to give him a good talking to, but in the end gain some insight into an inner life that I think may not be as rare as people's facades (Buber's too) might make you think.

### **MBA: Can you give your readers any tidbits on your next project?**

I'm working on a novel I've called for now "*The Color of Skin*." I was born and raised in South Africa under apartheid (my first novel, *Empire Settings*, and my third, *Ivory from Paradise*, are set in part in South Africa), and of course skin color, ethnicity, and all that goes along with it, was been a dominant theme in my youth, and to a great extent remains a powerful interest. When I was young, so my mixed race friends have told me, dark-skinned mixed race people marrying lighter-colored people was referred to as "improving the strain."

Tough subject matter, but it will make for an engrossing novel to write, and I hope also to read. I also think, quite frankly, that some of the early white adventurers in Africa were inordinately motivated by their interest in African women. They didn't write about it, and never admitted it, but they certainly left a lot of mixed race children behind.

*Skin* is the story of a white man in South Africa in the 1800s. He had over forty Zulu wives, and he moved between the settlement in southern Zululand where they lived, and the white city, Durban, where I grew up, with ease. But his legacy is mixed, somewhat sad, and often schizophrenic.

My novel, as do many novels, starts with the question: What if? What if a present day descendant of that early settler, the dark skinned son of a fair skinned family, immigrants from South Africa to America, were to set out to understand his unease in his own skin, literally, by retracing the path and thoughts of his family's progenitor?

The rest would be telling too much, too early.

### **MBA: What is one thing readers would be suprised to learn about you and your readers?**

I saw a comment on one of the websites where readers were debating the merits of *The Double Life of Alfred Buber*, that the book had made the reviewer really curious about what kind of person I am, and what kind of life I lead. Given the general raciness of some of the themes of *The Double Life*, I'll surprise you: I do lead a double life of sorts. On the one hand I'm a deadly serious, highly combative, well-paid trial lawyer working on behalf of some fairly major corporations. Inside my imagination? I'm a writer, always a writer, with little interest and concern for business, and not a whole lot of respect for money. I'd like to sit in a book lined study and never come out. I used to dream of going on what I called My Great Adventure, leaving my law firm, packing a bag, getting lost in Europe and Asia, having one adventure after another, falling in love again and again.

I didn't do it. I got married, and had kids, and for a long time – somewhat to my wife's chagrin – I think I considered I was going with Plan B, the conservative one. And then, recently, I've realized something. My kids, my inventive, funny, always surprising kids, my unusual wife, my law practice jumbled in with writing and book tours and being a neurotic father of daughters, all together are a Great Adventure. This is Plan A. I just didn't realize it.

WHAT A GREAT AND INTERESTING POST...THANK YOU, DAVID,FOR TAKING THE TIME OUT OF YOUR BUSY SCEDULE TO VISIT WITH US TODAY....

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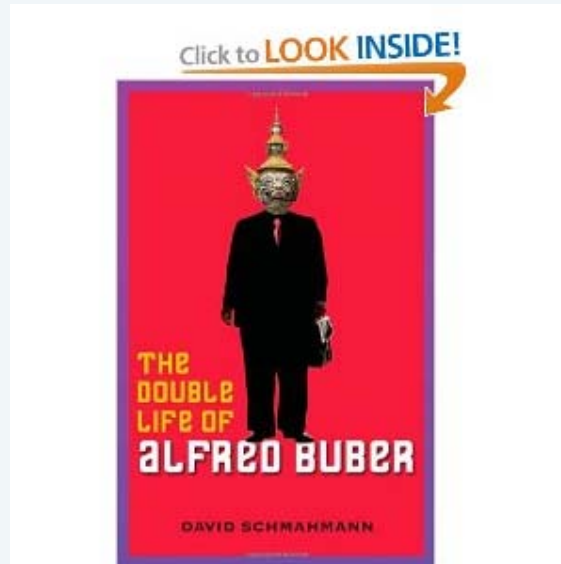
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- o Pub. Date: June 2011
- o Publisher: Permanent Press, The
- o ISBN-13: [9781579622183](#)
- o ISBN: [1579622186](#)

## THE DOUBLE LIFE OF ALFRED BUBER

The Double Life of Alfred Buber is a fictional “memoir” about an illicit love affair that one gradually begins to realize is rather different than the author confesses. Alfred Buber is a pillar of his community, a respected man with a secret, and a secret life, until one day the two cross over and even he can no longer tell which is real and which is not. Buber’s passion for women is matched only by his inability to relate to them, and after years of bruising attempts to find love he seeks his escape in an illegitimate and all encompassing romance with a Bangkok bargirl. She may reciprocate. She may not. Buber’s dilemma—to believe in her, and in what he is doing, or not, to bring her home to Boston, or not, to continue a wholly respectable life that is bringing him no happiness, or not—is the premise of this truly unforgettable love story, and its equally unforgettable, completely flawed, lovers.

[Read a Sample Chapter](#)

### MY THOUGHTS:

**SOURCE: THIS BOOK WAS RECEIVED FOR THE PURPOSE OF REVIEW FROM RMS PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR MY HONEST OPINION!!**

**THE DOUBLE LIFE OF ALFRED BUBER** by David Schmahmann an fictional “memoir”.It is an intense,complex,emotional poignant story of an illicit affair between a middle-aged man and a teenage Asian girl. Alfred is self described as old fashioned,formal,a little prissy,has a dry sense of wit,has a fetish for Asian girls,and enjoys sex with very young prostitutes. For the young prostitutes he travels to Asia,Europe,Boston, and Bangkok.This fetish leads him to a double life. He eventually falls in in love with one of his young teenage prostitutes,Nok,who is

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beautiful, young, and may or may not care for him. As he travels to Boston, Europe, and Bangkok for his fetish, he soon learns that while he is trying to sort out his life, his life is coming unraveled and he must face the consequence of his fetish. This is an emotional story of teenage prostitutes, a middle aged man, fetishes, leading a double life, as he does not want people to know about his other life. If you enjoy very complex stories with a different theme. Alfred a pillar of the community having an illegitimate romance with a teenager and a man who is flawed in so many ways than you will enjoy this one. This book was received for the purpose of review from RMS Public Relations and details can be found at The Permanent Press.

**RATING: 4**

**REVIEWED BY: April Renn**

**\*\*\*GIVEAWAY\*\***

**Thanks to Jason and Betsy at RMS PUBLIC RELATIONS,** we can offer five (5) of the sneak peak galleys and five (5) additional of the hardcover when it prints end of May .... of **"The Double Life of Alfred Buber"** to 5-10 lucky commenters. This giveaway will run from May 23 until May 30 and is open to US and Canada residents only. No PO boxes please. To win you need to comment..

**GOOD LUCK EVERYONE!!**

**\*All winners are chosen through random.org and we are now sending emails to the winners and posting on site\*\*\***

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# One Response to *GUEST POST AND GIVEAWAY OF DAVID SCHMAHMANN, AUTHOR OF "THE DOUBLE LIFE OF ALFRED BUBER"...*

I am captivated with this unique and compelling novel. What an adventure this author has lived with his travels and outlook. This has been a fascinating glimpse into his life. This novel interests me greatly. Thanks for this enthralling feature.



**pearl**  
May 23, 2011 at 10:46 am