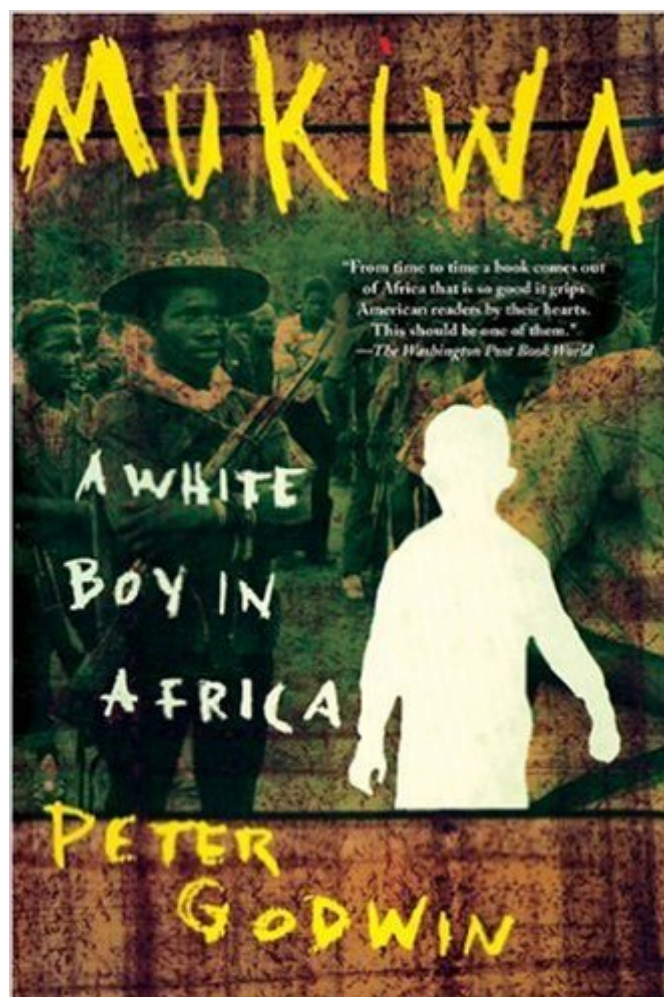


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Mukiwa: A White Boy In Africa



Synopsis

Mukiwa opens with Peter Godwin, six years old, describing the murder of his neighbor by African guerillas, in 1964, pre-war Rhodesia. Godwin's parents are liberal whites, his mother a government-employed doctor, his father an engineer. Through his innocent, young eyes, the story of the beginning of the end of white rule in Africa unfolds. The memoir follows Godwin's personal journey from the eve of war in Rhodesia to his experience fighting in the civil war that he detests to his adventures as a journalist in the new state of Zimbabwe, covering the bloody return to Black rule. With each transition Godwin's voice develops, from that of a boy to a young man to an adult returning to his homeland. This tale of the savage struggle between blacks and whites as the British Colonial period comes to an end is set against the vividly painted background of the myserious world of South Africa.

Book Information

Paperback: 432 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (93 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

'Mukiwa' opens with a six year old boy describing what he sees of a local murder. So begins this enthralling memoir. This saga of a youth growing up in troubled Zimbabwe (Rhodesia at that time), is divided into three parts. Book I, which comprises half of the book, is seen through the eyes of a child and told in that voice. As such it is reminiscent of 'Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight' by Alexandra Fuller. Both authors grew up in the eastern highlands of Rhodesia, near Umtali and the Mozambique border. One is a boy's story, the other a girl's and the differences are largely stylistic. They were separated by about ten years and 'Dogs' focuses only on one family, with the bush war only in the background, whereas 'Mukiwa' gives a broader picture of life in the remote, often

dangerous, areas of the country. A preschool boy accompanies his mother, a doctor, to various bush clinics where she is both GP and pathologist. Before long he can recognize not only dead bodies, but also malaria, TB, leprosy and other ailments. In this lonely place he forms close relationships with the various African staff and describes the harshness of their life there as well as the miseries of boarding school for a young child. In Book II, the author's hopes dashed that he cannot leave the country to attend university because of the compulsory conscription policy, finds himself in the midst of a brutal guerrilla war. His job is made harder by his ambivalent feelings as he frequently sympathizes with the 'terrorists'. He leaves finally only when defeat is conceded. In Book III he returns to the country, now with a law degree from Cambridge. Joining a distinguished firm in the capital, he is put to work defending prominent, former 'freedom fighters' of the Matabele tribe.

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