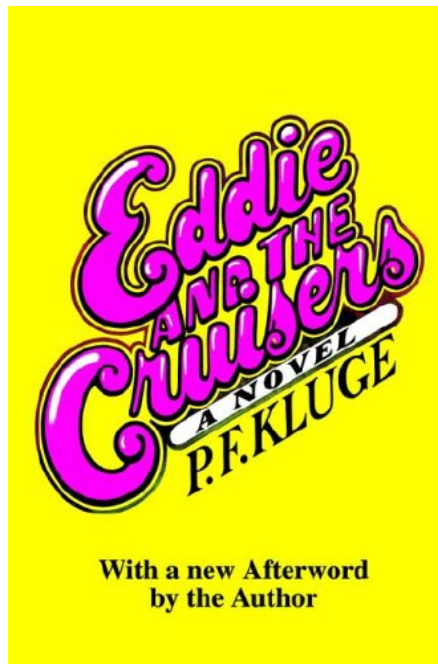




Eddie and the Cruisers

P.F. Kluge

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More information to be announced soon on this forthcoming title from Penguin USA

Eddie and the Cruisers Details

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Author : P.F. Kluge

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From Reader Review Eddie and the Cruisers for online ebook

George says

This is the second book by P.F.Kluge that I have read, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I like his writing, and the evocation of the Jersey shore is great.

Jim Dooley says

Not unlike certain movies that you know are flawed (including the one made from this book), but you love them all the same, EDDIE AND THE CRUISERS is what film fans would call a “guilty pleasure.” There are a number of over-the-top melodramatic moments and incidents that strain common sense. If I was asked if it was a well-written book, I’d need to answer in the negative. Yet, like a Doc Savage pulp adventure, it was a great deal of fun to read.

I had recently rewatched the movie made from EDDIE AND THE CRUISERS, and I was struck by the number of reviews that referenced, “You should read the book. It’s so much better.” Even so, there were comments citing the extreme melodrama. So, what’s going on here?

For fans of the movie, the book is very different. The core story is there, but there are murders. The “lost album tapes” are extremely different from the movie’s studio recording. Joann Carlino is Eddie’s girlfriend, but is NOT a Cruiser. And Wendell doesn’t die of a drug overdose forcing the need for a replacement Cruiser. Probably the biggest departure of all is Eddie’s reason for the final recording sessions and the ending.

Where the book has a great deal of value is in fleshing out the characters more, providing a much stronger backstory. It also beautifully creates a “you are there” behind-the-scenes feeling for the performances. The “college concert” that was simply nasty in the movie has much more depth here. In short, there is an excellent exploration of creative human emotions and why artistic endeavors can seem so much more larger than life. That is the real gift of the book, EDDIE AND THE CRUISERS.

If you have an interest in 50’s music or the drama of being in an indie band on the rise, this is worthwhile. If you appreciate the scars that can be left by unrealized dreams, EDDIE AND THE CRUISERS has you covered.

You’ll want to see the movie, though. The songs are better.

Matt Price says

Watched the film as a kid a million times on HBO, waited too long to read the novel, more of Kluge's trademark exploration of middle aged ambivalence about vocation, love and what we remember throughout life. This makes my 3rd Kluge book read this year.

Kirk says

Some thoughts on this great book:

<http://blog.oup.com/2014/07/eddie-and...>

Leanne says

It IS the movie and it ISNT the movie. As usual there are some obvious differences but for the most part it's easy to pull scenes from movie into your mind while reading. For all it's differences I loved this book. It was darker than the movie but I think that's only because Hollywood couldn't pull it off and stopped at coming close.

It's a great book.

Trav Rockwell says

3.5 stars

"I was alive back then," I said. "It's odd how you keep waiting for your life to happen, to lift off the ground. You wait for that one period of time when you can say to yourself, This Is It! Well.... That was it."

One thing that effects us all is the feeling of nostalgia, a longing for the past in the present. How fast time really flies by, we have no control over it. One of the hidden meanings from the book is we must learn to truly respect the here and now, because before you know it, your gone.

'Eddie and the cruisers' is the story of an up and coming band in the 50s, the next big thing about to blow, on the cusp of worldwide fame. It all ends for the cruisers the night their charismatic lead singer Eddie Wilson dies in a horrible car crash, the band part ways soon after Eddies death calling it quits and going their own separate ways.

20 years on 'Eddie and the cruisers' are thrown back into the lime light after a famous English rock group dedicate there success to 'Eddie and the cruisers' giving them a whole new generation of fans which put the cruisers back into the top of the charts. Now 20 years on Questions surface about the mysterious death of Eddie and the lost tapes he recorded secretly with the some of the biggest names in 50s Blues and rock and roll in the weeks before his death. Someone is out to find those priceless tapes, breaking into all the original members homes looking for them. But who? Strange things start happening to all who were involved in Eddies life. Someone is out there who wants the tapes, who would even kill for them. Everyone is a suspect, including Eddie himself, who's been recently haunting their memories.

I enjoyed this book, I have seen the movie and did enjoy it, however the movie and book differ and both go there own way.

A great story full of mystery. It doesn't fail in keeping the reader guessing.

Kim Smiley says

A great movie! I never even knew a book existed. It's been out of print for eons, only to be brought back in late 2008. The book is good, but isn't exactly like the movie, (most aren't). The book, like the movie deals with the one member of the Cruisers and his life after the death of Eddie. Unlike the movie, Eddie is not alive at the end of the book. It's a good read if you're a fan of this cult classic.

Jess says

I saw Eddie and the Cruisers several, several times whilst growing up, it was one of my favourite films, so I thought I'd give the book a go. It was well written, Kluge clearly had a passion for music and that came across quite clearly in the novel. My only issue was sometimes the detail got a bit carried away and it dragged a little, otherwise, I thought it was pretty fantastic.

I preferred the ending of the movie over the book ending, but it's still a great read if you loved the film as much as I did.

Christopher says

While I preferred the Hollywood ending more, and found the use of violence unnecessary, this is an terrific read. Kluge creates an stellar Rock Legend with soul, passion and an amazing reverence for pop-culture influences. It's fascinating to read through the mind of Frank the Wordman and see his naivete for racial music blossom into an understanding of the cross cultural musical pollination his friend found so important and unattainable. The ending is a bit of a let down after such an amazing journey, but I think the movie is a great companion to the hole the original denouement left.

Karie says

I am a huge fan of the movie yet I always felt the plot was kind of silly and over dramatic in the typical 80's way. The book has a similar plot but it is changed just enough to make the story seem plausible. The book is available on Kindle but that edition isn't listed.

Rachael says

If you like good ole music and are interested in the 50s decade, this may be a good read for you. Also, if you are into music and anything about it, you may find this of interest. The plot was good; it was like a mystery/music drama. The movie was okay but if you're like me and you like the book first you can't help but compare. The book had a more defined climax whereas I felt the movie was toned down a bit and did not reflect the true plot of the book.

Mollie says

Not even bothering to write a review, I'll just quote Sherman Alexie from the introduction: "This is a novel about sex, drugs, rock and roll, murder, and the caesura. How could one not love it?" Indeed Mr. Alexie, indeed.

Marc Strozyk says

I loved this movie and the book fleshed it out a bit more. Not sure it would have read the same though had I not seen the movie and heard the soundtrack. I did like this ending A touch better than the movie

Aaron Lozano says

This was a fun read, and hard to put down. Naturally very different than the movie, but enough crossover with the dialogue and Kluge's writing to be able to appreciate the similarities more than mourn the differences. A thriller for sure, Kluge seems to capture the changing world that was the 50's and preceded the 60's. Fun read, fun movie too! Now I finally have the words to go with the music.

J.K. Grice says

I remember enjoying the film version of EDDIE AND THE CRUISERS, and I always wanted to read the novel. It's definitely worth the time.

Dave says

A rare case where I love BOTH the film and the book. I saw the film on cable TV, in the summer of '84. I found the book at the library, and really enjoyed it.
The book IS different from the film in many ways, but some scenes in the film are almost word for word from the book.
If you enjoyed the film, I suggest the book. You won't be disappointed.

Robert says

If you only know the movie, you don't know Eddie or the Cruisers. While the basic framework is similar - flashing back and forth from the 50's to the (then) present to tell the story of a band that never was but might have been - the prescience and universality of the characters crafted by Kluge, his insightful observations on the sharp pains of youth and the dull aches of middle age, and the third act that was radically altered by the movie producers combine to make the novel superior.

Read it today and then share it with anyone you know who had a misspent youth, a lost love, or a friend who left to soon.

Ronnie says

Normally I like to read the book first, but, sad to say, until I found this at a secondhand shop recently, I didn't realize that the movie I saw probably three times while it was still at the theater back in the earlyish 80s--because I liked it that much!--was even based on a novel. Well, even though it's been that many decades ago now, so many of those scenes came so vividly back to life in my mind while reading this, so I'd say the movie was a very faithful adaptation in all ways that matter (and, yeah, the book's even better). It was a lot of fun going down that lane again, and I'll now definitely be seeking out other Kluge titles.

If you happen to find the same copy I did, though, I'd advise skipping the intro by Sherman Alexie. I gather that prior to his recent "Me Too" travails Alexie had amassed fans of his own as a writer, but I'm also willing to bet that didn't happen based on what he's written here. It's difficult to understand why the publishers of this edition even okayed Alexie's words being included here. They are far inferior to the novel itself and, from what I can tell, the intro has more in the way of "foundational issues" that he says Kluge's book does. It was weird to even read Alexie saying that, and it's unfortunate that his assessment is now tied to even one edition of this book.

First lines:

"Writers and would-be writers--I put myself in the second group--are always carrying on about how they need an ideal place to work: a lighthouse, a forester's cottage, a garret or a gatehouse. I'm laboring in much less picturesque surroundings: a rented trailer in a mobile-home park in Melbourne, Florida."

Derek says

It was OK, but the whole mystery side of it was a little weak.

Jim Cherry says

Eddie and The Cruisers, the movie has been on TV recently and it's a movie I usually watch, and I decided I wanted to read the book to see how it compares to the movie. Did the screenwriters just adapt what was in the book? Or was the book a starting point for them? And, of course, it adds to the eternal debate which is better, the book or the movie? This is a review of P.F. Kluge's Eddie and The Cruisers (until the last paragraph).

Frank Ridgeway is a high school English teacher who is getting a divorce and pretty much doesn't like the students he teaches or his life. In his past he was a guitar player and lyricist for the 1958 era band Eddie and the Parkway Cruisers, who's lead singer, Eddie Wilson, died mysteriously. After one of Frank's classes he's contacted by a reporter, Elliott Mannheim, who is doing a retrospective story on The Cruisers because their song "Far Away Woman" has been getting some airplay, and there's a rumor of undiscovered recordings Eddie made right before he died. After the interview with Mannheim, Frank is contacted by Doc Robinson, the former manager of The Cruisers who was somewhat of schemer/scammer but now is making a living as a DJ at a college radio station. Doc tells Frank there may be tapes, he doesn't know but he started the rumor

there were to flush them out if there were any tapes. And this is where the plot starts to get a little implausible to me. Doc tells Frank he needs to seek out all the old Cruisers and see if they know or have the tapes. Why doesn't Doc do this himself? Frank agrees to do this at the very least to make peace with his past.

As Frank visits all the old Cruisers, Salvatore "Sally" Amato, Kenny Hopkins, now a Reverend, Wendell Newton, and finally Joann Carlito, he starts hearing how Eddie, the month before he died rented a Quonset hut in Lakehurst New Jersey ostensibly to record music that would bring together black and white music. Wendell, who is in a mental institution swears that Eddie brought together 'the kings' of black and white music and they had jam sessions. But the characters and their motives seem forced like actors trying to make an unwieldy script work. Frank and all the other Cruisers suspect the reporter of trying to steal the tapes (if they exist) with no real evidence or actions by the reporter to suspect him of that.

This is where I find more implausibility's. The Parkway Cruisers are described as a small local N.J. band that released one album and they're playing small bars and Eddie is able to summons rock legends "the kings" of music? Eddie for no stated reason abandons The Cruisers, he doesn't take any of them to the jam session except Wendell. As in the movie Eddie considers Frank important to the band because he's "The Wordman," and Eddie also tells everyone it's 'words and music' that make the band. If words and music were so important to Eddie and Frank was the "Wordman," why didn't Eddie take Frank to Lakehurst?

Another shortcoming of the novel is that Kluge introduces characters that go nowhere, and don't really add anything to the understanding of Eddie or the music, such as Eddie's wife and parents. The characters of the reporter Elliott Mannheim and his girlfriend appear in the beginning, disappear, only to reappear at the end. Joann Carlito appears as an after thought, her position is never really delineated, she's "Eddie's girl" other than that we don't know if she's in the band and a back up singer, like in the movie, or someone just hanging out with Eddie and the how and why of that aren't explained too much. As the relationship with Eddie's wife isn't explained.

The world that Kluge is familiar with is what stands out. He knows schools and the academic life. The scenes at Frank's prep school ring the truest, the descriptions and the motivations of the kids at school, even the Toby Tyler scene works much better in the book and isn't as awkward as it is in the movie. What Kluge doesn't know or isn't able to render is a feeling for Eddie and The Cruisers or their music.

There's a lot of ambivalence in the characters starting with Eddie, there's not much of a mystery if Eddie is dead or how he died. The Lakehurst tapes, did Eddie make any tapes or not? In the beginning Doc admits he put out the rumor of there being tapes but no one in the story has any idea if there are any tapes or if they should be looking for them? I think Kluge wasn't clear whether this was supposed to be a detective story, or a murder mystery, there's a double murder towards the end but it's cleared up within a half a page, or if Kluge was trying for something else all together.

Movie vs. Book - By the above review you can tell the screenwriters of "Eddie and the Cruisers" stripped the story down to its skeleton and added a more plausible story based on the elements of the novel. I think, in this case, the movie is a little better than the book.