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Corner Gas star bringing debut thriller

Bob Armstrong

As a stand-up comic, *Corner Gas* star **Brent Butthas** "killed" many times.

So perhaps it's no surprise that his debut novel will be a psychological thriller about a comedy tour that turns deadly.

Publishing rights to his novel, *Huge*, were sold recently to Doubleday Canada. The book is scheduled for publication in fall 2023.

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The author of a book on the effects of hydroelectric developments along the Winnipeg River in northwestern Ontario on Indigenous communities has received The Governor General's Award for Scholarly Research.

Brittany Luby, a history professor at Guelph University, examined the subject in *Dammed: The Politics of Loss and Survival in Anishinaabe Territory*, published by University of Manitoba Press. The award was recently announced by the Canadian Historical Association, which administers the prize.

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A biography that uses **George Orwell's** passion for gardening as a lens to examine his life and ideas is one of the finalists in the annual Orwell Prizes for political writing in fiction, non-fiction and journalism.

Rebecca Solnit's *Orwell's Roses* joined on the non-fiction shortlist by much-discussed books *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity*, by **David Graeber** and **David Wengrow**, *The Right to Sex*, by **Amia Srinivasan**, and a pair of titles on the covid pandemic - *Shutdown: How Covid Shook the World's Economy*, by **Adam Tooze**, and *Spike*, by **Jeremy Farrar** and **Anjana Ahuja**, among other books.

The fiction list includes *A Passage North*, a novel of the Sri Lankan civil war, by **Anuk Arudpragasam**, and *Small Things Like These*, a novel of the church's domination of Irish society, by **Claire Keegan**.

Winners will be announced July 14. The full list of nominated titles can be found at wfp.to/orwellprizes.

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Jillian Horton and **Colleen Nelson** are multiple nominees in this year's High

Plains Book Awards - a series of prizes for authors from the prairie provinces and seven western states.

Horton is nominated in the creative non-fiction, medicine/science and non-fiction categories for her memoir of medical life, *We Are All Perfectly Fine*, for which she earlier shared the prize for best first book in the Manitoba Book Awards.

Nelson is nominated for two books: *The Life and Deaths of Frankie D*, in the young adult category, and *The Undercover Book List*, in the children's category.

Winnipeg publisher At Bay Press picked up a nomination in the first book category for the poetry collection *Miraculous Sickness*, by Alberta author **Ky Perron**.

The winners will be announced in October in Billings, Mont.

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University of Ottawa law professor **Aimée Craft**, a former chair of the Manitoba Arts Council and lawyer for Manitoba's Public Interest Law Centre, won this year's Indigenous Voices award in the graphic novel/comics/illustrated books category for *Treaty Words For as*

Long as Rivers Flow.

The fifth annual awards were announced on National Indigenous Peoples Day, June 21.

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Based on a recent survey by the Writers' Union of Canada, the typical published Canadian author is a white Ontario woman in her 60s.

That's one of the takeaways from a survey the organization conducted of more than 500 writers who published books in 2020 or 2021.

The survey found that writers who identified as Black, Indigenous or people of colour were underrepresented among those who published in the last two years (19 per cent of respondents, whereas 27 per cent of Canadians so identify, according to recent census data). On the other hand, BIPOC writers were substantially overrepresented when it came to both award nominations and invitations to literary festivals.

The survey data also suggest generational changes in Canada's writing community, as white writers were substantially more likely to report that they had been active in writing for more than 30 years.

The report can be found at wfp.to/diversityreport.

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