

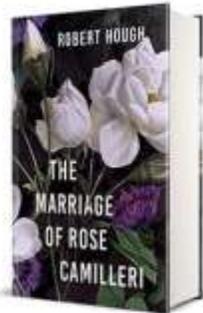
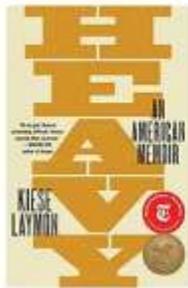
## WORDS

# MY THOUGHTS ON BOOKS 2021

December 2, 2021

by Lindsay Wincherauk

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## BEFORE THE COFFEE GETS COLD

*Before the Coffee Get's Cold is a collection of four stories delicately interwoven together. The characters grow on every page. Toshikazu Kawaguchi deftly weaves these stories together, sharing the absolute beauty living within vulnerability, allowing us to stop (especially men) feigning strength by hiding inside the comedy of anguish. Kawaguchi's beautiful prose brought tears to my eyes on several occasions. Not tears of suffering. Instead, tears filled with hope because if we make minor changes to the lenses we look at life through, we just might understand, the world is at times filled with love, empathy, kindness, and compassion.*

**All-Time Number 4! Number 4 in 2021!**

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## THE UNRAVELLING

*A suitcase is delivered. Every denial, blaming the times, not allowing you, the assaulted to express their tumult, specific dates on the calendar, fill the suitcase to the bursting point. When we lose the safety of home coupled with being ostracized by family, isolation, depression, suicidal thoughts, and fear of speaking up, often arise. Delivering the ostracized and assaulted to silence when they most need to speak. The cruelty of dismissiveness permits the assault to live on in perpetuity. It's cruel. There is no closure. There is only heartache.*

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## THE MARRIAGE OF ROSE CAMILLERI

*Another page turns. I'm on a train with Rose + Scotty, their children, and a collection of strangers. Tears are pouring from my eyes. I can't breathe. I can't consume another word; I look over at the other patron of the food court – I need her to leave. She pulls on her Covid-mask. Please leave. She pulls down her Covid-mask; I weep. Finally, she leaves. I'm too heartbroken to finish. I don't want to finish.*

*There is a beauty that comes from the boring mundaneness of living when somehow, despite all odds, love is allowed to grow when unburdened by condition.*

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**All-Time Number 3! Number 3 in 2021!**

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## PACHINKO

*"Pachinko" by Min Lin Lee is an epic tale of culture + the devastation patriarchal societies has levelled on an infinite number of families since the beginning of time.*

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## BREAD & WATER

*I turned sixty-one in July. Hobsbawn-Smith and I are in the same demographic as we drive down the grid roads of life, tires crackling, what's behind us simmering in the rear-view mirror is a warm broth as we reduce the regret and work toward reinventing whatever comes next, trying to make the world a little better along the way.*

**All-Time Number 7! Number 7 in 2021!**

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## IN SINGING - HE COMPOSED A SONG

*"In Singing - He Composed a Song" is a powerful look at the damage labels cause. For those of us who are labelled, how could we ever be, okay?*

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## UMBILICAL CORD

*Hasan Namir in Umbilical Cord deserves a rousing applause line for sharing his joy and giving the rest of us permission to love.*

*An All-Time Favourite*

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## #BLACKINSCHOOL

*I was sitting at a bar stool in a local watering hole. Next to me sat a Black Man; his Caucasian date arrived; I believe it was the first time they met. The Black Man's date asked, "Where are you from?" He replied, "I'm from here." His answer didn't satisfy his date, "I mean, where are you really from?" He fired back, "Aren't all white people from the same village?"*

3 *Fortunately, Sandra Bullock entered the watering hole and saved the day.*

*All-Time Number 8! Number 8 in 2021!*

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## ANY KIND OF LUCK AT ALL

*What hit home most for me is her unflinching honesty (and sense of humour) + ability to understand life, addiction, entitlement...everything, is ephemeral. If we don't come together and realize we matter more than what we desperately try to project, the world will continue to spin in judgement.*

*All-Time Number 2! Number 2 in 2021!*

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## HAPPY SANDS

*As much as this is a comedic ride, it is also a captivating story, opening a screen door into what it must be like for mothers when they feel they are on the cusp of losing everything. A husband to depression. Children who are outgrowing families. A life slipping from the shallows of youth into the deep end of whatever the heck is next?*

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## BECOMING VANCOUVER

*Vancouver is like the perfect Instagram shot if only you crop out the unavoidable suffering of those who are being left behind. Those falling into the throes of addiction, or with mental health issues, and the abject misery of not being born into wealth or coming from a family that staked the first claims to their slice of paradise. Being born into wealth or a construction family is not a qualification. Instead, it reeks of entitlement and privilege often laced in xenophobia and racism, coupled with a tremendous lack of self-awareness. The first inhabitants of Vancouver tried desperately, and succeeded, for the most part, to maintain their advantage by demeaning others and keeping voting rights to themselves. Or starting predatory businesses preying on those less fortunate.*

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## SUTURE

*I drip blood onto the page. Always thirsting for more. You love me unconditionally; you bring kindness. I return rage + my unworthiness. I need to be unlovable. I need to cry onto every page in a dark plasma. If I lose my agony, I will no longer be accepted for my art. I will become stale, repetitive, unreadable. I must bleed.*

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## LETTERS TO AMELIA

***Letters to Amelia** sent me spinning in a heavy fog as I tried to navigate emotions about the ephemeral nature of everything that is life...*

*...A baby arrives in forty-weeks, giving expectant mothers a short window to dismantle their lives and reinvent who they need to become – as their support networks one by one retreat into their own lives.*

***Letters to Amelia** is a powerful read about finding support in a place where judgement is replaced with the comfort of kindness.*

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## A CONFEDERACY OF DUNCES

*Ask yourself why the praise for this book comes from institutions, not individuals?*

*If you are a writer, would you hit the streets, find the most addicted or mentally addled person, and base your humour on them?*

*I would guess that not a single non-Caucasian would call this book funny or genius or anything other than savagely mean.*

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## THE WINTER WIVES

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Macintyre's innate ability to cut through pointless ramblings makes the "Winter Wives" a compelling page-turner. It leaves readers thirsty for page after page, not to unmask who did it (?), but more so because most of us understand life is often shrouded in secrecy bubbling below the surface of our lives, blocking us from becoming who we are meant to be.

## A HISTORY OF MY BRIEF BODY

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By inviting us into his life and soul, Belcourt, in an exquisite fashion, paints a never-ending reality of how centuries of oppression, both NDN + LBGTQ, destroyed the fabric and perceived pureness of our society. Many, if not most of us, have bought into the grift we somehow deserve more and discounting that the puppeteers working our strings are nothing more than puppets themselves as they attempt to keep life's playing field skewed to their advantage.

We all must be better. Thank you, Belcourt, for your piercing honesty and devastatingly gorgeous lyricism.

I must walk beside you to evolve + to grow.

We may not be able to erase our pasts, but our words and actions can help to heal our futures.

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### *An All-Time Favourite*

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## ZEN + THE ART OF MOTORCYCLE MAINTENANCE

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Zen... is a painful reality about a man whose mind has been marinating in genius who wants to provide his son (and all of us) the tools to soften our lives, pushing us toward caring. Still, the only trouble is that genius often finds itself spinning on a hamster wheel without a visible offramp.

## NIGHTBITCH

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About 100-pages to go, and the book takes a turn: A scene so grotesque for the first time ever, I didn't want to read another page. I did. It didn't get better, enjoyable, anything... it seemed like the author had exhausted her frustrations of motherhood and dropped on the readers' metaphors lost in blood. I hated the last 100 pages + and feel stupid for not understanding the advance praise.

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## SPOILED BRATS

*Simon comes across as a d-bag with a conscience and we are lucky he doesn't have hardship and struggle to cloud his mind as he delivers humour from a unique perspective. From the safety net looking up.*

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## EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM WILL SOMEDAY BE DEAD

*Emily Austin has an uncanny ability to bounce from sexuality to mental health, to addiction to...well, it's like a race car of thoughts is ripping around a track in her mind.*

**All-Time Number 5! Number 5 in 2021!**

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## BRAMAH AND THE BEGGAR BOY

*I step onto the disc. Spin. Spin. Spin. The verses and rhymes poetically layer on top of each other, elevating me, taking me places I've never been. I chase different dimensions. Just as I'm about to understand where I am, the mix master deftly sends me crashing through a portal to only have to rebuild once more. Another beat. Another layer. Another crash. The bad outweighs the good. Hope is being erased. But hope can never be eviscerated; it's hope; it has its own pulse and thundering beat.*

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## HEART BERRIES

*White people, we genuinely need to crawl inside the mirror and not come out until we've evolved. While inside, read: Heart Berries and open your heart and eyes – we are not everything.*

**All-Time Number 9! Number 9 in 2021!**

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## THIS CITY IS A MINEFIELD

*Chapter after chapter after chapter of insulting everything and everyone. This isn't so much a memoir as it is a lengthy rant of woe is me.*

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## THE UNION OF SYNCHRONIZED SWIMMERS

*When a person comes from purgatory and is thrust into the world, survival is questionable at best as their lack of grounding leaves them abundantly vulnerable to the darker sides of life. Transforming oneself into someone new, with predators lurking, waiting to feast on your insecurities and solitude – how?*

*Being female would only exacerbate life challenges (I would think), leaving loneliness and despair trapped inside. Coping, and trying to climb while fitting into a world full of rejection, a constant illusory reality.*

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## THE ROAD

*I couldn't help but think I was reading about society gone astray as the father and son moved from place to place, dragging their found belongings with them like homeless people hoping tomorrow will bring light. I felt none of us are immune from the plight of those less fortunate. And in a sense, humanity needs to peer deeply into a collective mirror and hopefully understand what matters most is love and kindness--and there is nothing more powerful than a parent's unconditional love for their children.*

**All-Time Number 5! Number 5 in 2021!**

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## TAKE UP THE SLACK

*Take up the Slack is the story of these ragged souls told with buttery prose, guaranteed to capture readers in the simplicity of what matters, and the beauty found in coming together.*

*Narrated from the tugboat's point of view!*

*If you can find this book, it's must-read. I hope the author revisits republishing this tasty sea morsel – I'm sure many publishers would be willing to give it a go!*

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## SURE, I'LL BE YOUR BLACK FRIEND

*First off, I want Ben to be my friend.*

*We'd be an odd pair. I'm a soon-to-be sixty-one-year-old lifelong conditioned Caucasian; I'm working on breaking my conditioning.*

*At times beyond hilarious (whatever that means), this book crosses generational and cultural biases with tickling aplomb.*

*Reading about the experiences of others helps us realize our individual lives are not the only ones that matter. While reading, I became hypersensitive to those walking amongst us.*

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## SEVERANCE

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*Progressing through the book there were chapters that could have easily been called "I" – I is a tedious character, at least for me.*

*The praise for the book sure is good. I am not sure all the praise-people read the book. I'm certain the editor didn't. If he/she would have, I wouldn't know what |bildungsroman| means. Seriously, in the praise section it was used twice. I can't pronounce it, and I most certainly am averse to using it: who is the word for?*

*Hey, did you hear about the book that delivers a bildungsroman?*

*A what?*

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## CRYING IN THE H MART

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*Here comes the waterworks. No. I must be dehydrated. I'm getting mad at myself. I turn a page. Why am I not crying? Cry dammit. It even says crying in the title.*

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## HAUNTED

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*Palahniuk is not likely everybody's cup of tea. However, he is so ridiculously gifted in storytelling he could author a story about a cup of tea that would not only disgust you, but it would make you wet yourself in laughter while making you consider if you could ever drink tea again because somehow, he's turned tea into a monster.*

*Palahniuk also comprehends better than most, humans are intrinsically flawed and when tragedy strikes, we are more interested in the sheer scope of suffering instead of the humanity lays within.*

***All-Time Number 10! Number 10 in 2021!***

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## MEMORIAL

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*Memorial by Bryan Washington is a deftly written, what's another word for compelling? – captivating read, shining a light on the reality a gay person's life is messed up, just like everyone else – only with different sex.*

***An All-time Favourite***

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## KLARA AND THE SUN

*We, humans, are deeply flawed, beautiful, complex, troubled beings. Imagine a sick girl needing friendship – an Artificial Friend is introduced | Klara | she's not the most advanced model. She's dated. But there is something about her that shines in this world where everyone, and everything, is replaceable. The new phones have arrived, this time purple...must get it...my life will be so much better.*

*An All-time Favourite*

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## WE, JANE

*Men must learn to listen, to evolve.*

*I was born in a secret place. I was to be sold or adopted out to a farm family. My mother was never to speak of me again – religion was going to fix her to become suitable for marriage after I was long gone. I was an afterthought; I survived, I'm okay.*

*Adopted out or aborted – I'm here. A choice was made. I'm happy to be here.*

*Regardless of my life, I don't think it is my responsibility to choose what's the right path for others.*

*I believe all we are collectively supposed to do, is listen + learn, + evolve.*

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*An All-time Favourite*

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## BETWEEN TWO KINGDOMS

*I cheered for Suleika. I'm ecstatic she survived the unrelenting wrath of Cancer to be able to share her incredible story. I visited hospitals at least 1500 times, watching my father and then my mother battle cancer, eventually succumbing. Unlike Suleika, who unfairly became inflicted at a youthful age, there wasn't the love + support of newfound love in my parents' cases. There wasn't the endless camaraderie between the others inflicted. And there wasn't the upset of the unfairness of Cancer tearing apart a young life.*

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## BEGIN BY TELLING

*"Begin by Telling" awakened me to the weight + beauty of listening because if we did, we'd understand listening is the root of kindness + shines a bright light on the path to a better world.*

*An All-time Favourite*

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## FLOAT LIKE A BUTTERFLY DRINK MINT TEA

*What makes this book glow the brightest isn't Alex's undeniable sense of humour; it's his unflinching honesty + unassuming way of giving something back.*

*We all need to be grateful Alex found the fortitude to pick himself off the canvas of addiction and shared his story instead of becoming another selfish, tragic, boring story.*

*An All-time Favourite*

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## HOW TO PRONOUNCE KNIFE

*Every white |person| should read this book. You will laugh, guaranteed. But what you might do even more, if you open your heart is, realize the struggles of many don't revolve around creams to erase the character lines around their eyes.*

*An All-time Favourite*

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## HAPPINESS™

*"HAPPINESS" tickles our funny bones by exorcizing the insanity of happiness fulfilled. The humour is brilliantly nuanced and, for this reader, relating to the nuance, helped relieve my bout of depression/sadness, if only for a moment as I guffawed whole-heartedly while realizing what makes life sweet is the struggle. Without struggle, the happiness we derive from life would be nothing more than cultlike sameness if happiness were a given.*

*An All-time Favourite*

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## ON SUCH A FULL SEA

*Eyes always darting. Never connecting. Money comes before humanity. Business is heartless. We're the product: Humans. Damaged. Flawed. Barely holding on. We shamelessly hide behind a shaded false mask of direction, when used up – you tell the broken: This is no longer for you. Each time, your soul dies a little more. You don't care; you drive a big truck.*

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## HEAVY

*“Heavy” shines a powerful light on the disparities of centuries of oppression and the unearned advantages of white marginality. It delicately touches on the difference between black + white, wealth.*

*I’m white. I don’t think I’d have survived my life events if they were dropped on me after being held down for 400-years.*

**All-Time Number 1! Number 1 in 2021!**

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## ELECT MR. ROBINSON FOR A BETTER WORLD

*“HAPPINESS” tickles our funny bones by exorcizing the insanity of happiness fulfilled. The humour is brilliantly nuanced and, for this reader, relating to the nuance, helped relieve my bout of depression/sadness, if only for a moment as I guffawed whole-heartedly while realizing what makes life sweet is the struggle. Without struggle, the happiness we derive from life would be nothing more than cultlike sameness if happiness were a given.*

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**An All-time Favourite**

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## THE PLAGUE

*The Plague, written in 1947, is a profound reminder that man is a preciously small idea that needs to recapture the capacity for love for all. Regardless of societal, economic, or demographic differences, and return us, or maybe deliver us, for the first time, to a kinder world where discrimination is levelled off or totally eradicated.*

*We’re all in this together. Be kind. Wear a mask. Don’t let selfishness eliminate an understanding that your thoughts are not always right.*

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## WHITE TRASH

*America may be a classless society, because all-in-all, are we not all White Trash?*

*Admitting our shortcomings and the despicable advantages bestowed upon some of us, maybe, just maybe, might spark centuries of curing an illness still plaguing many of us today.*

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## HOW TO SLOWLY KILL YOURSELF AND OTHERS IN AMERICA

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*I'll never truly comprehend the unwavering advantage I've been given + the unforgivable truths we've inflicted on those who don't look like us, just because we've been conditioned to believe the festering lies of entitlement.*

*I don't want to be racist.*

*So, I'll read more.*

### *An All-time Favourite*

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## HOME FIRE

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*As the story tumults perpetually to the confounding conclusion – mouth agape, I gasped as a single tear rolled over my left cheek.*

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## TALKING ANIMALS

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*Still, much like the inhabitants of the sea and greed's persistent lack of care for anything but hoarding wealth, well, if it is not glaring in your face, all of us are complicit in the consumption of everything, which is leading toward an inevitable ending.*

*We are floundering in capitalism. We are distracted by life and shiny things.*

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## THE BOOKSHOP

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*Simple is kept simple by those who yield the power – for no reason other than they can. The definition of evil?*

*These exterminators of hope have no shame.*

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## WHO IS LINDSAY WINCHERAUK?

Lindsay Wincherauk is a fearless writer. He has published two books and has had more than eighteen OPEDs appear in major commuter newspapers. Lindsay wasn't born with a silver spoon in his mouth. His father (who wasn't his father) worked as a mechanic. His mother (who wasn't his mother) worked as an excellent chef in a diner. In fact, his birth was in a secret place where | society deemed | unfit mothers were sent to give birth in isolation – shading families from shame. If the babies survived being born, usually, they were sold to wealthy Americans or adopted out to farm families.

*Lindsay's life began with a lie.*

Despite Lindsay's perilous beginnings, starting with deception, Lindsay knew no better and went through life excelling at things, usually in two-year stints. Be that athletics (hall of fame, record holding, one-eyed quarterback), scholastically, career-wise (generating more than \$70 million in revenue for one company), socially, + without question: creatively!

Lindsay's challenging beginning instilled in Lindsay heaping doses of compassion and empathy. Lindsay's life starting out as a lie gave him a keen sense to spot BS from miles away. It also provided him with a dry sense of humour and an understanding those born with silver spoons in their mouths will never be self-aware enough to understand (or admit) their good fortune.

13 During Lindsay's work career, he was well-liked by all coworkers. Lindsay was also well respected by his diverse collection of clients, developing several fantastic friendships, primarily because Lindsay is known for his unflinching integrity and ability to hold conversations on most topics.

Lindsay's life mantra is:

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*The most valuable part of life is the fabulous people we meet during our journeys. If you treat people with respect (leaving judgment at the door), and more importantly, by opening doors for those less fortunate or who can't speak up for themselves, you are living a good, compassionate life. Making money at all costs is not the only thing mattering. Life can be difficult + devastatingly unfair.*

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*Lindsay believes sharing vulnerability is what makes us human. Lindsay will never shy away from being honest about his pain.*

*Lindsay also believes we must stand up for ourselves, + more importantly, for those who are too burdened by the injustices of life, they can't find the strength to stand up for themselves.*

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Some things Lindsay is most proud of are when:

1. A sixty-year-old employee of his, who had entered a point of life where life had become more struggle than joy (it happens to all of us as we age), said to Lindsay, *"I must thank you. I've listened to how you treat people, + by listening, I've learned so much about compassion and patience. Thank you. I consider you a great friend."*
2. Another employee who was struggling with addiction thanked Lindsay for his kindness, presenting Lindsay with a Christmas card from him and his girlfriend. Tucked inside the card: lottery tickets.

**LINDSAY WINCHERAUK**, *compassionate, empathetic, well-read, kind, blessed with unflinching integrity, humour in balance, loved by coworkers + friends alike.*

Lindsay will always stick up for the underdog. Lindsay understands there are countless older people suffering job loss because COVID gave some companies an opportunity to – Lindsay thinks it is essential to draw attention to this life-threatening issue by being the voice for those too broken to speak up for themselves.

Lindsay is currently pitching four manuscripts to publishers and literary agencies. One of the manuscripts (he can't talk about) will blow the roof off the predatory practices of –

Lindsay is writing relentlessly and is also pitching OPEDs and short stories, fiction, + non; to literary magazines around the globe.

Lindsay has appeared on Breakfast Television, radio programs in Montreal, + several others in the Vancouver area. Lindsay has also been a featured guest on CKNW + CBC, both on several occasions. And Lindsay was a vital witness of a Hate Crime. This led to the first Hate Crime conviction in Canadian legal history, resulting in him being a speaker at an Enough is Enough Rally (anti-violence rally) with dignitaries, politicians, law enforcement, and community leaders in front of a crowd of approximately five thousand.

Lindsay was the **#1 MIXED-TAPE DJ** at the **UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN** for most of the nineteen-eighties, a fact bringing him joy.

Lindsay resides in Vancouver.

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Fire me a message on the TALK PAGE of my website: [www.lindsaywincherauk.com](http://www.lindsaywincherauk.com) if you have more suggestions on making our world a better place!

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