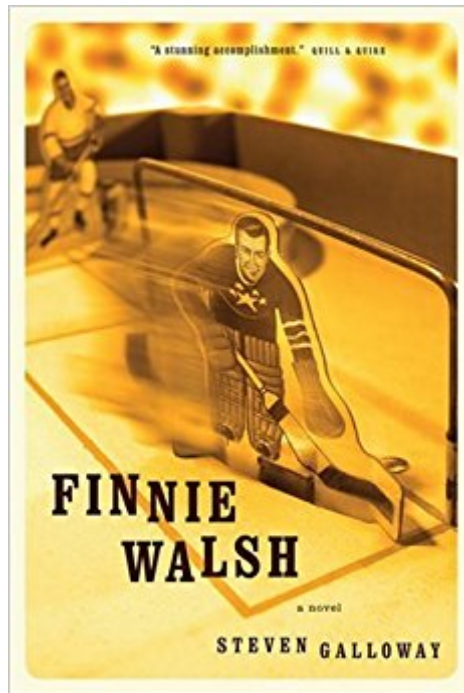




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Finnie Walsh: A Novel



Synopsis

"Finnie Walsh will forever remain in my daily thoughts, not only because of the shocking circumstances of his absurd demise, but because he managed to misunderstand what was truly important even though he was right about almost everything else." So begins Steven Galloway's critically acclaimed first novel. The story is told by Paul Woodward, Finnie's best friend and the only good child in a long line of delinquents. Hockey is one of the few things they have in common: Finnie's family is rich and snobbish, while Paul's father works the night shift at the local mill owned by Finnie's father. One fateful day, the boys noisily play hockey in the Woodward's driveway, keeping Paul's father awake. This seemingly innocent activity triggers a shattering chain of events. Finnie Walsh has been compared to the work of John Irving, but Galloway's voice, most particularly his unforgettable portrait of the title character, is uniquely his own.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

2001 .com/Books in Canada First Novel Award Shortlist: As a hockey player, young Paul Woodward is a few steps behind his best pal, Finnie Walsh. Both boys, however, have hockey coursing through their veins. Finnie, the son of the local mill owner, and Paul, the son of a mill worker, forge a fast friendship through endless hours of shooting, stickhandling, and passing. It is hockey that holds them together as they grow into young men. Along the way, they must deal with Paul's eccentric father, his withdrawn sister, and the uncomfortable disparity in their socioeconomic status. As a sports novel, Steven Galloway's first effort leaves a bit to be desired, since it doesn't capture the

frantic intensity of the game. As a tale of friendship, however, *Finnie Walsh* is sweetly endearing and filled with charming quirks and unexpected twists. --S. Duda --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Two fundamentals must be mastered in any successful sports novel: one is a penetrating knowledge of the sport in question; the other is skillful characterization. Galloway exhibits the former in spades, but the latter is less evident in his promising but uneven first effort. Paul Woodward, son of a mill worker in a small northern Canadian town, grows up playing and practicing his position as defenseman with his best friend and goalie, Finnie Walsh, son of the mill's owner. Their unusual friendship transcends class boundaries and develops through a series of accidents and near-supernatural coincidences that unfold over 14 years. Both eventually make it into the minor leagues, playing on the same team for a while, but when they meet up later on opposing sides of the ice, a foolish but loyal act leaves one of the two permanently sidelined. Some of the supporting characters--including Paul's younger sister, who is always wearing a lifejacket and receives premonitions from her bedside lamp, and a one-armed janitor who keeps losing his prosthesis--are quirkily engaging, but while this bittersweet first novel is workmanlike, it never quite captures the imagination or the heart. Intrusive editorial comments about the state of professional hockey and some rather clumsy attempts at armchair psychoanalysis hobble the narrative, which slips and slides aimlessly in the second half--although in the concluding pages it recovers some of the momentum promised in the opening section. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

This is now officially my favorite book. It is not only a great hockey story, but it has other stories that are as great as the hockey story.

Fans of John Irving will love this coming of age story in a mill town. The game of hockey and its centrality to Canadian life is a river that carries the plot. My American bookgroup, who were not at all familiar with hockey, had a spirited discussion and enjoyed the book.

Well written book. Good read

do with ice hockey. This was a great read, an easy read as well. It's been passed around the arena several times...from one hockey mom to another hockey mom or dad. Great story! I actually did not

want the story to end...it was THAT GOOD!

More than being an engaging tale, "Finnie Walsh" is a well written story full of delightful characters ... mostly delightful in their coping and approach to life. The author has written three books and I've read them all. Whereas many authors are known for theme, similar line up of characters or plot, Galloway's books are quite different...except in the single minded determination of main character. Rich reading, all three books.

I read this novel in two days, I couldn't put it down. A week later I went out and bought ten copies as Christmas gifts! The reports back after Christmas were all the same -- people were reading it in one or two sittings! Wives passed it on to their husbands and the husbands loved it, too! Book groups started ordering it. People fell in love with the characters. One friend said she had forgotten how much fun it could be to read a novel -- she'd been reading so much heavy, dark stuff. Don't be put off by the hockey content -- this really is a book for everyone. Galloway handles plot and characters with skill and precision, creates a vivid and engaging world and characters that are funny and quirky and live in your mind, even after you close the book. If I had to compare Galloway to another writer, I'd say he's the Canadian John Irving.

Finnie Walsh in my opinion was an eye opening experience it is by far the best book I have ever read and everything about it made me feel more interested. There is not a single bad thing I could say about it! The characters alone made the book, how you understood how they felt at different times, how they were perfectly described! This book made me laugh, cry and made me feel emotions that have never occurred before in my mind! I couldn't put it down and I will continue to read it over and over again because everytime I am sure that I will receive more and more happiness sadness and information from the text! I am getting it for everyone for Christmas and I hope that everyone will enjoy this story as much as I did!

Are you looking for a spanky good read? Look no further than this sly little Canadian book about a couple of kids living in the middle of the province of British Columbia who play hockey. This book is a swift, delicious thing that has a devilish way of not letting you free of it. You'll want to read it until you arrive at the last page--it is, in the classical sense of the hyphenated word, a "page-turner". I loved it. It was touching, heartfelt, and uncommon. A novel with an elegant plot, developed synchronously with its characters' motivations. Galloway is a secret talent ready to explode on the

scene.

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