

Joseph Boyden



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English Faculty



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In 2005, [Joseph Boyden](#) published a novel called *Three Day Road* (Penguin). "You must read this," said Pat, my old friend and fellow English major from UBC. Her tone brooked no argument. That first novel created a lot of buzz. Since Pat put that volume into my hand, the work has been translated into 15 languages and published in over 50 countries. It's reviewed by [Bronwyn Drainie](#) in *Quill and Quire* here.

I read the book while we were on holiday in Mexico. Even in the relaxed atmosphere of sunshine, sea and palm trees, it haunted me.

Loosely based on the experience of a real native sniper who served in World War I, the story portrays the experience of the young Cree veteran Xavier, who returns to the bush at [Moose Factory](#) without the buddy who helped him get through the war, and with a severe drug addiction.

In 2008, this young novelist (born 1966) [won the Giller Prize](#) for *Through Black Spruce*, a novel that travels surefootedly between Moosonee, New York and Toronto. This book was also reviewed in [Quill and Quire](#), by Mark McCallanan. See the *Washington Post* review (2009) [here](#).

[Joseph Boyden](#) has been the recipient of various awards for his remarkable work. For *Three Day Road*, he won the Rogers/Writers' Trust Award and the CAA Book of the Year Award, the Amazon.ca/Books in Canada First Novel Award and the French *Prix Littéraire*. The book was also shortlisted for the Governor General's.

As well as the Giller Prize, *Through Black Spruce* earned its author the Libris Book of the Year and Author of the Year Awards. It was also nominated for the International Dublin IMPAC Literary Award and published in a dozen languages.

Boyden is a true Canadian, if there really is such a thing: his roots are Irish, Scottish and Metis (French and Cree). He has published short stories as well as novels as well as contributing to *Walrus*, *Zoomer*, *Macleans*, and *The Globe and Mail*.

He was educated at York University in Toronto and in New Orleans and now divides his time between Louisiana and Northern Ontario.