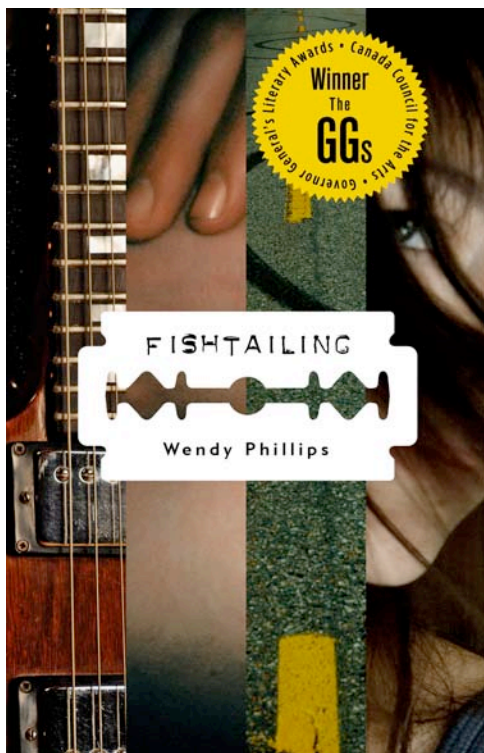


## Fishtailing wins Governor General's Award



November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010

Coteau Books is thrilled to announce that *Fishtailing*, a teen novel by Wendy Phillips, has won the 2010 Governor-General's Award for Children's Literature – Text.

In announcing the award, the Governor General's Award jury commented, "In this highly-inventive, poetic narrative, four compelling characters take the reader on a wild ride through the dangerous terrain of friendships threatened by manipulative acts. Deftly switching voices, Wendy Phillips creates a powerful momentum in *Fishtailing* that leaves the reader breathless."

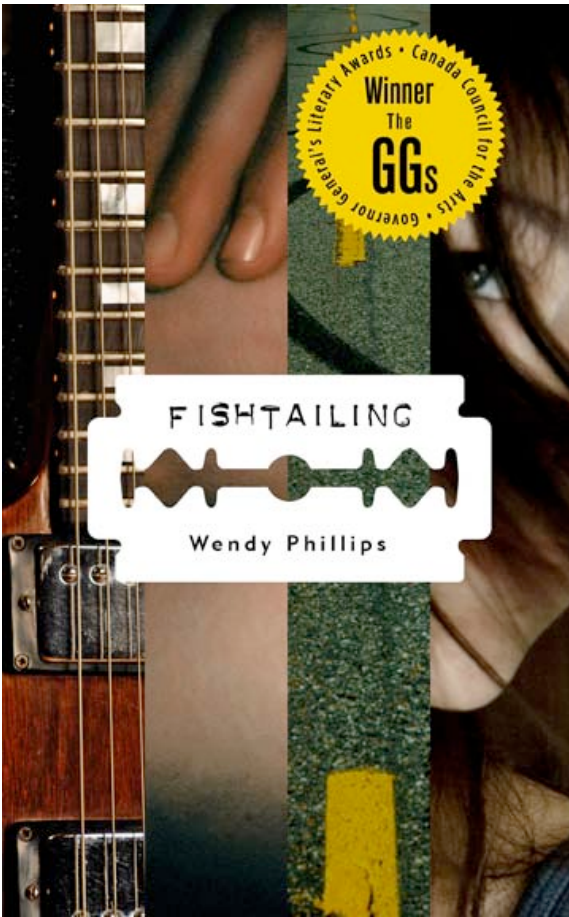
James Grainger, writing in *Quill and Quire*, said, "Phillips nails the shifting voices and perspectives", while Tracy Sherlock, in the *Vancouver Sun*, wrote, "I finished the book in one go, and its message haunted me for days".

Wendy Phillips joins Coteau's previous Governor-General's Award winners Gloria Sawai (*A Song for Nettie Johnson*, fiction, 2002) and Anne Szumigalski (*Voice*, poetry, 1995). Coteau President Geoffrey Ursell said, "We're proud to be the publisher of such important writing."

Dedicated to bringing Canadian and prairie writers and themes to a national and international audience, Saskatchewan-based Coteau Books was established as a publishing co-operative in 1975. Coteau titles have received seven previous Governor-General's Award nominations, in fiction, poetry, drama and children's literature.

Wendy Phillips has worked as a journalist, a bookbinder, an English teacher and a high-school teacher-librarian. She holds degrees in Journalism, English, Education and Children's Literature. She and her husband currently live in Richmond, B.C. with their two children, where she teaches high school.

*Fishtailing* is Wendy Phillips's first published novel. It has also been named a finalist for the Ontario Library Association's White Pine Young Readers' Choice Award, and been shortlisted for the Saskatchewan Book Award for Publishing.



## Fishtailing

*Wendy Phillips*

High School. Four lives caught up in a game. The problem with games is that there may be winners, but there are always losers.

Physical and psychological violence, bullying and the burning quest to fit in are presented in the poems of four unforgettable high school students: Natalie, Kyle, Tricia, Miguel. Their stories unfold in this explosive new book, told in free verse. A story of teen angst like no other, it is based on fictional characters but is rooted in the realities of the teen experience.

When Natalie moves to a new high school she befriends three unwitting victims into her spider-web of manipulations, lies and deceit. Through the poetry and assignments of an English class we glimpse the world of the four teens. Natalie, whose alcoholic parents, years of neglect and ultimate rape by her father's friend has shaped her into a cruel and manipulative teen; Tricia, dealing with her blended family is drawn into Natalie's forbidden world of partying and rebellion; Kyle, a would-be musician is in love with Tricia and Miguel who lusts for Natalie while hiding the secrets of his family.

The story weaves us through their lives via their poetry, and culminates at a party where the four lives fishtail out of control.

English class will never be the same.

**Wendy Phillips** began her first novel at the age of 11, climbing the hills behind her hometown of Kamloops, B.C. to scribble in notebooks. Her love for words has led her into jobs as a journalist, a bookbinder, an English teacher and a high-school teacher-librarian. She holds degrees in Journalism, English, Education and Children's Literature. She has lived in Ottawa, in Lesotho, Southern Africa and in Australia. She and her husband currently live in Richmond, B.C. with their two children where she teaches high school. This is her first publication.

ISBN: 978-1-55050-411-8

\$14.95

5" x 8" • 176 Pages

Teen Novel • Paper

Grades 9 and up; Ages 14+