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AWAD, Mona 2.

## LIFESTYLE

# Author's debut novel long-listed for Giller Prize

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MN Sept. 23, 2016

It's been quite a year and quite a debut for author Mona Awad.

Awad, who lived in Mississauga for about six years in her teens and attended Father Michael Goetz Secondary School, has already earned a great deal of critical praise for her first novel, *13 Ways of Looking at a Fat Girl*.

It's been positively reviewed from media outlets including *Time*, *Elle* and *The Washington Post* and, earlier this year, won the First Novel Award from Amazon.ca and the Walrus Foundation.

Recently, the good news continued for Awad as the novel has been selected as one of a dozen from a field of 161 to be long-listed for the Giller Prize, one of the country's most prestigious literary awards. A shortlist of finalists will be released on Monday.

The winner will be announced on Nov. 7

and will receive \$100,000 for the win.

Awad's book has parts of it set in a fictionalized version of Mississauga and the author spent about six years working on it and submitted as her Master's thesis at Brown University.



Mona Awad

In an earlier interview with *The News*, Awad said she had experienced her own body image issues in the past and it was a narrative she wanted to explore in her writing.

"Body image is something I've struggled with personally and I frankly don't know a man or woman who hasn't experienced (issues)

to some extent," Awad previously told *The News*. "Weight is something I've struggled with so I was able to draw from those emotions and experiences."

With the book, and its main character, Lizzie, Awad explored themes including if one transforms their body do they actually change as a person and is how we once looked and felt informing who we are today?