



Corner Gas

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email office@drlindahancock.com

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One of the stars of the popular television program, *Corner Gas*, is from my hometown. "Oscar" is the grumpy "know it all" who seems to think that change is his enemy. He is continually reminding his family and neighbours that he has all the answers to life's problems and most seem to be rooted in the past.

The show, which is set in a small prairie community, has been described as the "*New Friends*" - probably because each weekly segment focuses on relationships of a handful of characters and their unique perspectives to daily living circumstances. Surprisingly, the fan base extends far beyond rural Saskatchewan and, in fact, is popular in megacities such as Toronto. In fact, the show is now becoming a North American phenomenon.

What is it about *Corner Gas* that makes it so popular? Is it the simple, unrushed life that a small farming community offers? Would it be the loyalty that is shown for individuals who live and work together for a lifetime, despite their differences and problems? Perhaps it has something to do with the fact that the village's residents share common values - like *Rider Pride* or a desire to experience community safety through policing?

Does *Corner Gas* touch our inner desire to show our creativity and uniqueness by erecting a statue such as their "Hoe" to symbolize our town's history or cultural identity?

Or is *Corner Gas* just a reminder to us that every town and family has unique individuals with quirks, differing perspectives and interesting (or annoying) ways of communicating with others?

We all know someone with the overly-pleasing personality of "Lacey" who runs the *Ruby* or the sarcastic "Wanda". Those who have been married can likely relate to some of the methods that Oscar's wife uses to deal with his eccentricities. Each of us has faced that the *challenges* of bureaucratic process that is evidenced in Dog River's politics and, the headlines found on the "*Howler*" represent liberties (or sensationalism) we experience by the media on a daily basis.

There is more to life than getting a good education and then moving into the big city. *Corner Gas* reminds us that it is important to live in the moment, state your perspective, work together for the common good, and laugh! It's about relationship and community!

I think there's a little Dog River in all of us - and that's why we love the show so much!