

A RESEARCH REPORT BY BOOKNET CANADA



BNC

RESEARCH 01.2015

Charles Taylor Award: Sales trends of shortlisted and winning titles



**BOOKNET
CANADA**

PREPARED BY BNC STAFF

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INTRODUCTION

Being nominated for a literary award is an exciting time for a publisher, because with national recognition comes increased orders and sales. So what's the best way to stay on top of the game? Can you predict when your books are going to start flying off the shelves? Will you need to reprint? What happens if you win?

BNC Research's literary award studies help Canadian publishers avoid surprises during awards season. By looking at sales data from previous years, we can better predict potential sales and order spikes, giving you the data you need to ensure you have enough copies in the warehouse and on booksellers' shelves.

APPROACH

This study examines sales and order trends for the shortlisted titles for the 2013 and 2014 Charles Taylor Prize for Literary Non-Fiction. Unit sales are tracked from three weeks before the shortlist announcement until six weeks after the winning title is announced to gauge the titles' performance during this period and determine the impact of this literary prize on sales figures.

CAVEATS

Based on publisher feedback, we estimate that BNC SalesData represents 85% of book industry sales. Certain retail categories are not completely covered by our retail panel, and this should be noted in any interpretation of these results, as the effect of certain awards may not be fully captured in our data. These retail categories include:

- Independent bookstores: BNC SalesData includes many major independent bookstores, but does not include many smaller ones, any of which could be actively promoting an award winner. It also does not capture many specialty independent bookstores (children's books, science fiction, etc.) where a genre- or subject-specific award may have more impact. However, we are able to detect even the slightest variation in sales in our independent panel, so we are confident that sales changes in the independent market are well represented.
- K-12 and higher-education sales: our panel does not include direct institutional sales to schools or college/university textbook sales.
- New booksellers have begun contributing to BNC SalesData since our first literary awards study, conducted in October 2006. Some changes seen in year-over-year sales figures may be due to the increased number of stores reporting sales, rather than a true increase in overall sales.
- At this time, ebook sales are not represented in BNC's data. Therefore, all numbers in this report refer to print books only.

THE CHARLES TAYLOR PRIZE FOR LITERARY NON-FICTION

2014 SHORTLIST ANNOUNCED JANUARY 15

2014 WINNER ANNOUNCED MARCH 10

SUMMARY

The 2014 Charles Taylor Prize for Literary Non-Fiction was awarded to *The Inconvenient Indian* by Thomas King. *The Inconvenient Indian* also won British Columbia's National Award for Canadian Non-Fiction and the Canadian Booksellers Association Libris Award. It was nominated for several other awards including the Trillium Book Award and the Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for Non-Fiction.

The Charles Taylor Prize shortlist and winner announcements positively affected sales of King's title. As seen in the graph on the following page, units sold for *The Inconvenient Indian* began to taper off after the holiday season but experienced another spike in sales after being shortlisted for this award. The second spike between the two announcements may be due to the publicity surrounding The Charles Taylor Prize or other marketing initiatives and buzz surrounding the book.

In 2013, Andrew Preston's *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy* was awarded the Charles Taylor Prize for Literary Non-Fiction. The winning title saw a small increase upon announcement of the shortlist, followed by a significant spike when it was declared the winner, with sales 439% higher than the previous week.

As we can see from the data of the 2013 and 2014 seasons, the announcement of the champion title helps boost book sales significantly for the winner and but also for the other titles nominated. The shortlist announcement tends to have less of an impact on sales for all titles with the exception of *The Inconvenient Indian*—although this may have been due to the title already having significant acclaim in the 2013 awards season.

2013 SHORTLIST ANNOUNCED JANUARY 9

2013 WINNER ANNOUNCED MARCH 4

2014



Winner:

- *The Inconvenient Indian* by Thomas King, Doubleday Canada, 9780385664219 & 9780385664226

Nominees:

- *The Massey Murder* by Charlotte Gray, HarperCollins Publishers Ltd., 9781443409230
- *The Dogs Are Eating Them Now* by Graeme Smith, McGill-Queen's University Press, 9780773540613
- *The Once and Future World* by J.B. Mackinnon, Knopf Random Vintage Canada, 9780307362186
- *Arthur Erickson* by David Stouck, Douglas & McIntyre, 9781771000116

2013



Winner:

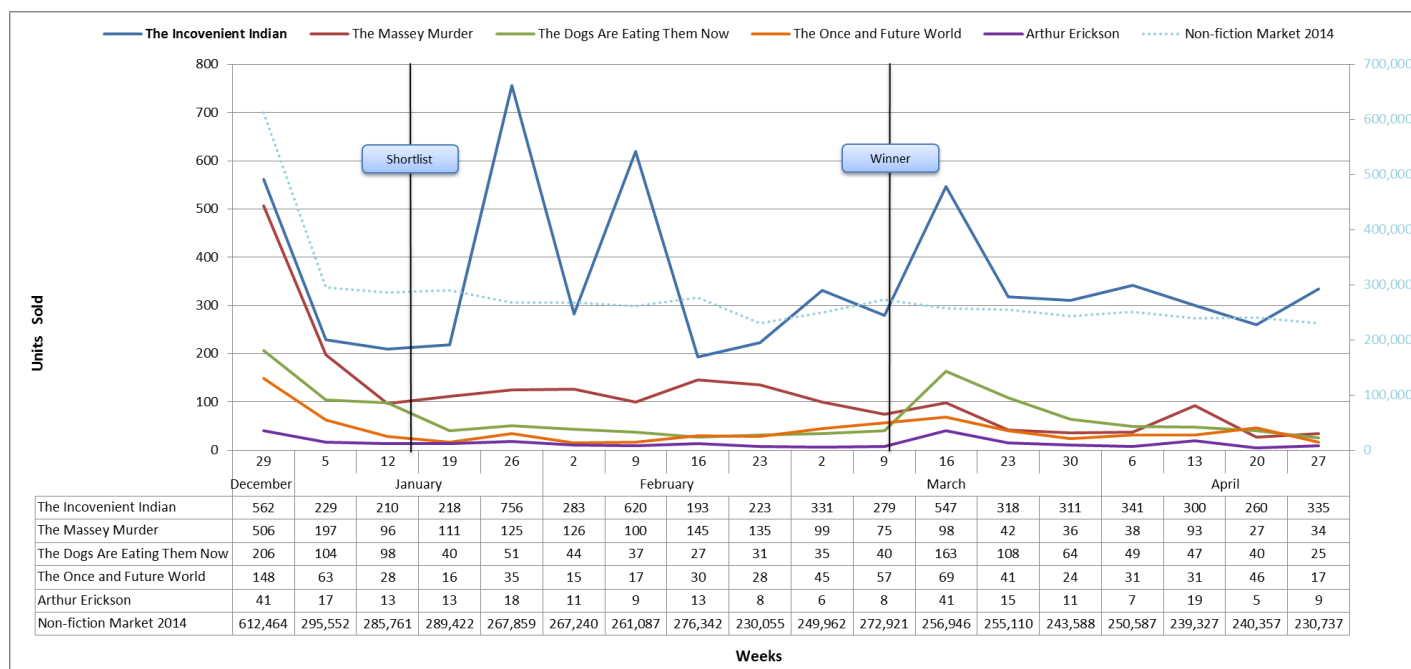
- *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith* by Andrew Preston, Knopf Canada, 9780676977424 & 9780676977431

Nominees:

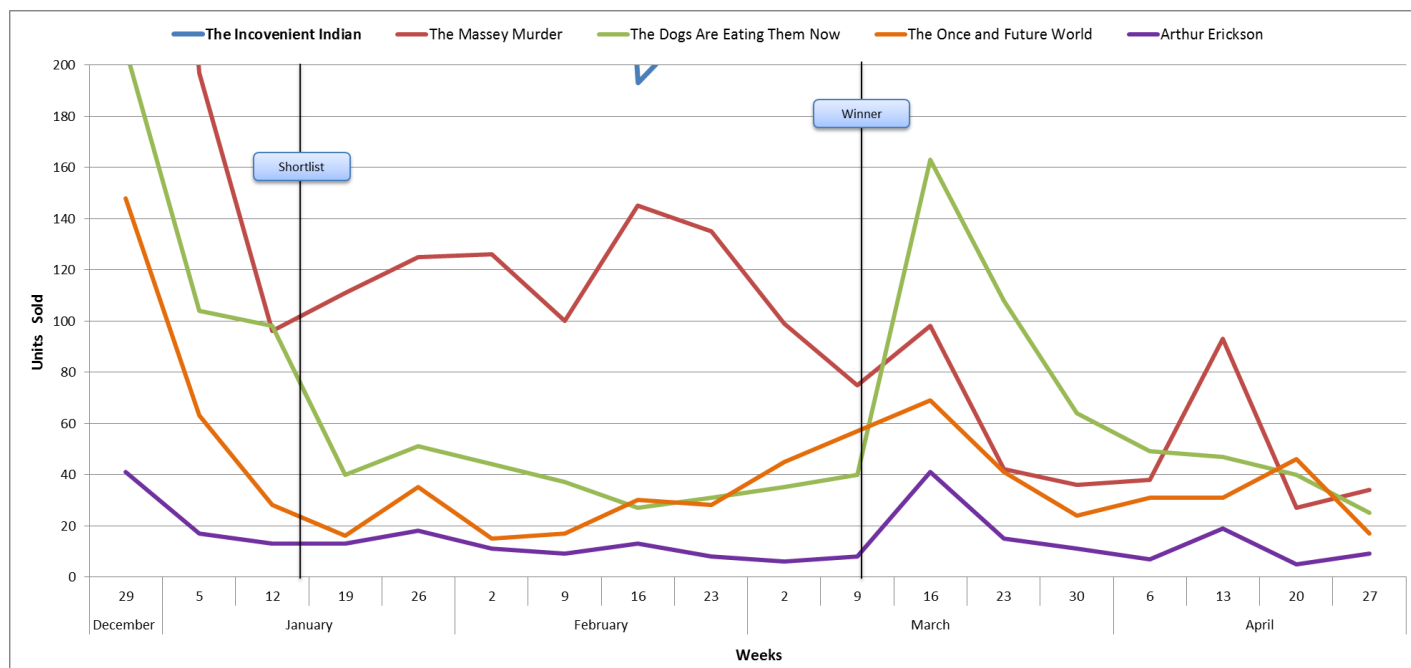
- *The Pursuit of Perfection* by Carol Bishop-Gwyn, Cormorant Books, 9781770860438 & 9781770862258
- *Warlords* by Tim Cook, Allen Lane, 9780670065219
- *Journey with No Maps* by Sandra Djwa, McGill-Queen's University Press, 9780773540613
- *Leonardo and the Last Supper* by Ross King, Bond Street Books, 9780385666084

SHORTLIST COMPARISON – 2014

Volume Sold for All Shortlist Titles and Winner

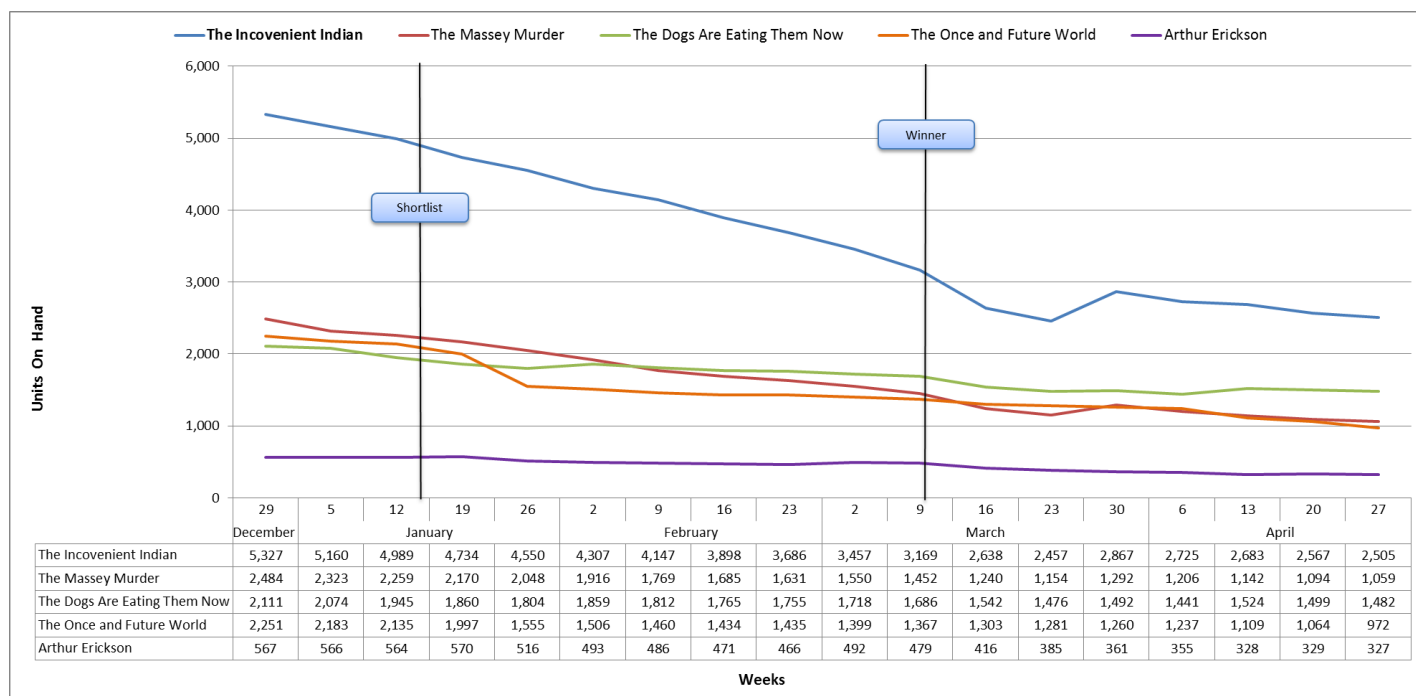


Expanded View of Sales Under 200 Units



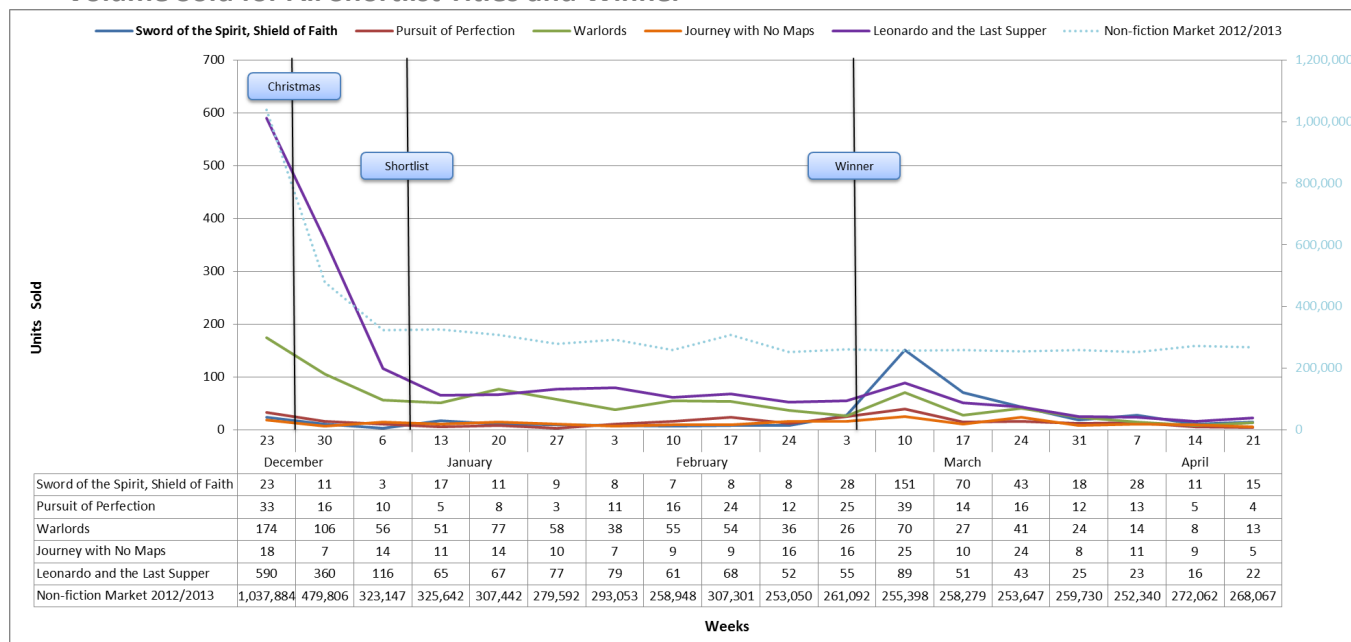
SHORTLIST COMPARISON – 2014 (CONTINUED)

Volume On Hand for All Shortlist Titles and Winner

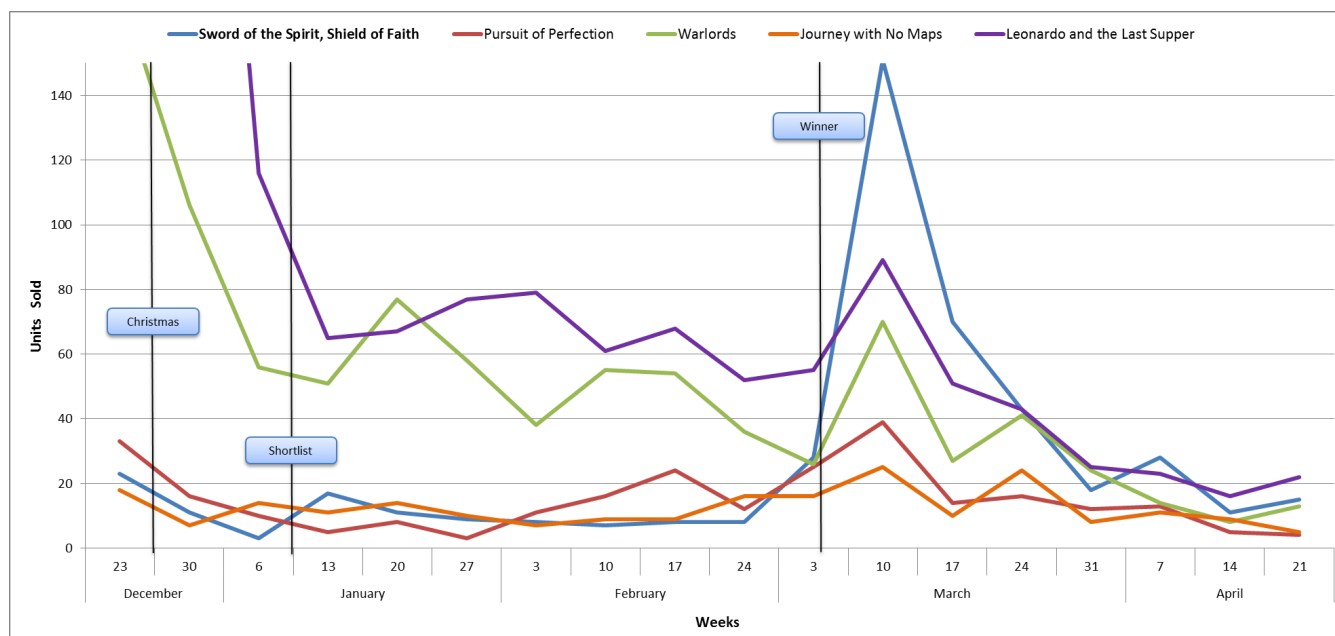


SHORTLIST COMPARISON – 2013

Volume Sold for All Shortlist Titles and Winner

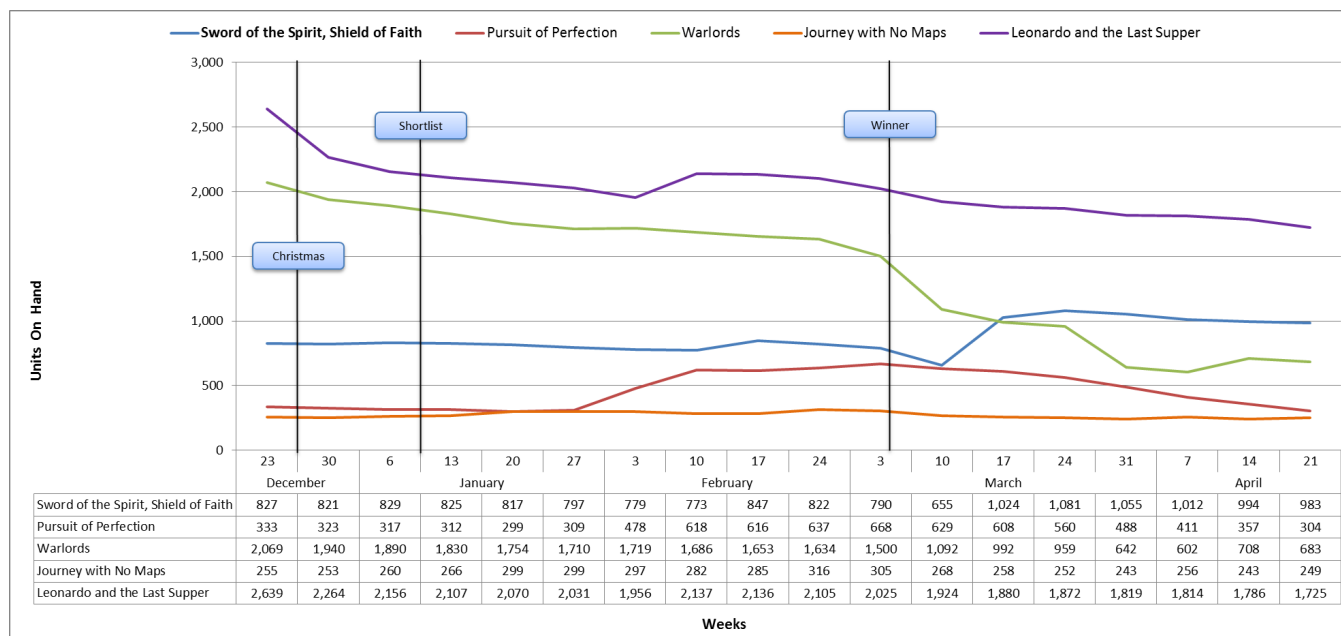


Expanded View for Sales Under 150 Units



SHORTLIST COMPARISON – 2013 (CONTINUED)

Volume On Hand for All Shortlist Titles and Winner



YEAR-OVER-YEAR WINNER COMPARISON 2008–2014

2014

Thomas King's *The Inconvenient Indian*

DOUBLEDAY CANADA

Hardcover Trade | 9780385664219 | \$34.95

Trade Paperback | 9780385664226 | \$19.95

2013

Andrew Preston's *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith*

KNOPF CANADA

Hardcover Trade | 9780676977424 | \$37.50

Trade Paperback | 9780676977431 | \$24.95

2012

Andrew Westoll's *The Chimps of Fauna Sanctuary*

HARPERCOLLINS CANADA

Hardcover Trade | 9781554686490 | \$29.99

2011

Charles Foran's *Mordecai*

KNOPF CANADA

Hardcover Trade | 9780676979633 | \$39.95

2010

Ian Brown's *The Boy in the Moon*

RANDOM HOUSE CANADA

Hardcover Trade | 9780307357106 | \$29.95

2009

Tim Cook's *Shock Troops*

VIKING CANADA

Hardcover Trade | 9780670067350 | \$40.00

2008

Richard Gwyn's *John A.*

RANDOM HOUSE CANADA

Hardcover Trade | 9780679314752 | \$37.00

Volume Sold for Winning Titles

