



BNC

RESEARCH 10.2015

RBC Taylor Prize:
Congratulations,
nominees!

What happens now?
What if you win?

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.

This study examines sales and order trends for the shortlisted titles for the 2015 RBC Taylor Prize for Literary Non-Fiction. To get a sense of what to expect during the award season, and to help nominees with stock and demand planning, we've created a trend analysis of last year's shortlist and winner, as well as a comparison in sales and stock position of the 2010 to 2015 winners.

This study includes:

- Week-over-week comparison of volume sold for all nominees.
- Stock position by week: How many units were on hand during the award season?
- On-order position by week: When do orders rise and fall, and by how much?

The first section of this study compares the 2015 RBC Taylor Prize shortlisted titles by volume sold and includes a look at the overall non-fiction market sales during this time. The comparison by volume sold helps us understand how the award affects consumer behavior, and how it relates to the rise and fall of the non-fiction market as a whole.

Next, we look at the 2015 shortlisted titles individually, showing volume sold, units on hand (OH) and units on order (OO) throughout the RBC Taylor Prize timeline. This shows us the retail demand and how retailers are predicting sales, especially during the holiday season.

Finally, the year-over-year comparison looks at the award winners from 2010 to 2015, showing the impact of the award over time and noting similarities and special cases. The volume sold comparison shows how the award is reaching readers, on-hand numbers show how retailers are predicting sales, and on-order information shows publishers the retail demand.

Note:

- All dates used in the graphs represent week-ending dates.
- BNC calculates percent change based on average units sold three weeks prior to shortlist and winner announcements compared to units sold in the week following each announcement. These calculations are dependent on a given title's availability in the market.

CAVEATS

Based on publisher feedback, we estimate that BNC SalesData represents 85% of book industry sales in Canada. 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:

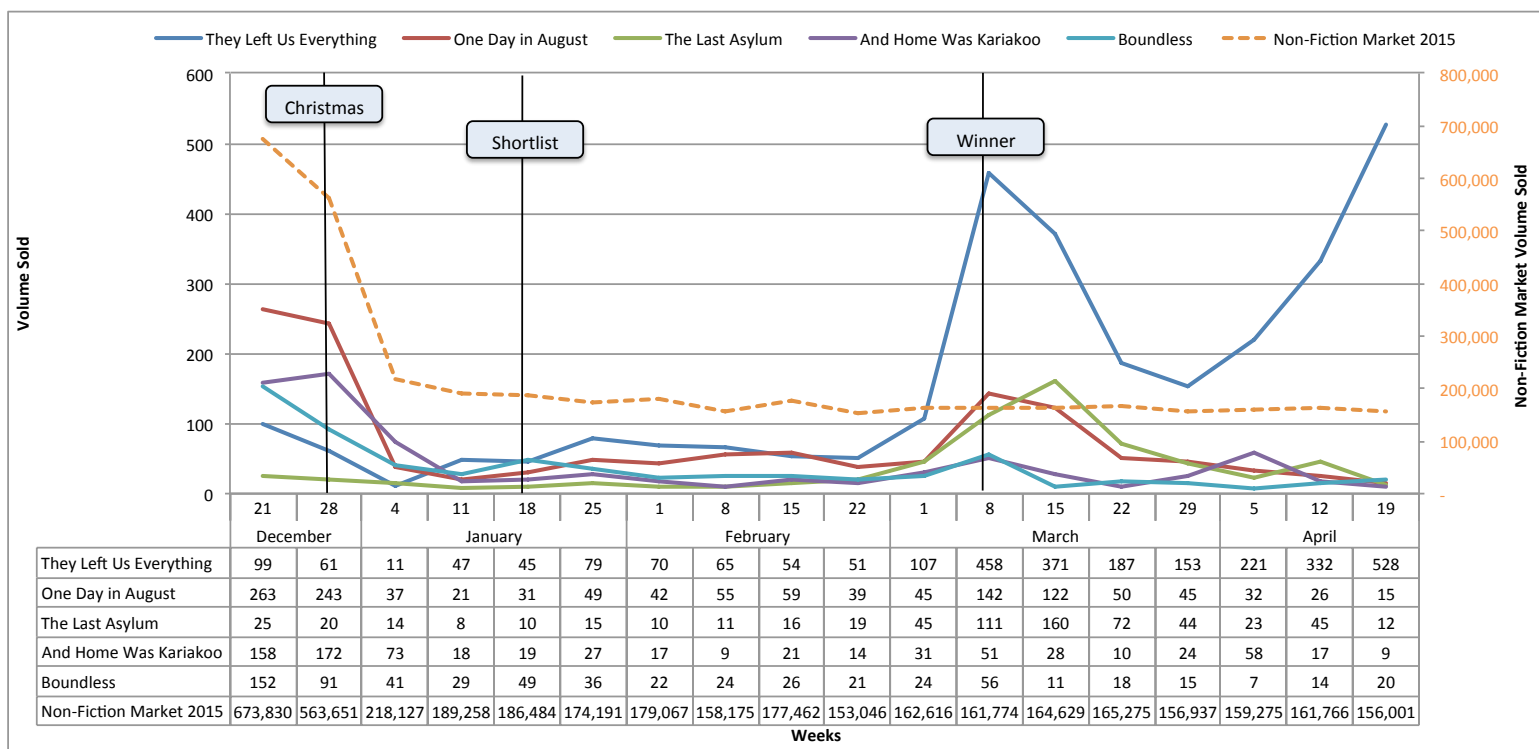
- Independent bookstores: BNC SalesData includes many major independent bookstores, but does not include many smaller ones, any of which could be actively promoting an award winner. It also does not capture many specialty independent bookstores (children's books, science fiction, etc.) where a genre- 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.

At this time, ebook sales are not represented in BNC's data. Therefore, all numbers in this report refer to print books only. Please also note that 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.

The RBC Taylor Prize 2015

Volume Sold for All Shortlist Titles and Winner

ORGANIZED BY THE WRITERS' TRUST OF CANADA
NOMINATIONS ANNOUNCED JANUARY 14, 2015
WINNERS ANNOUNCED MARCH 2, 2015



Shortlist announcement (January 14, 2015):

The shortlist announcement seems to have little impact on these titles, likely because it takes place after Christmas, when consumer behavior is already on the decline. However, *They Left Us Everything* does see a 99% sales jump after the announcement.

Winner announcement (March 2, 2015):

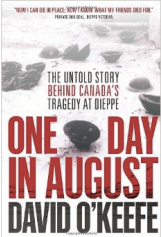
The winner announcement reinvigorates and increases sales for all the nominated titles. The winner, *They Left Us Everything*, sees an increase of 425% and sells the most units out of all the nominated titles.

Nominee

DAVIDE O’KEEFE’S *ONE DAY IN AUGUST*

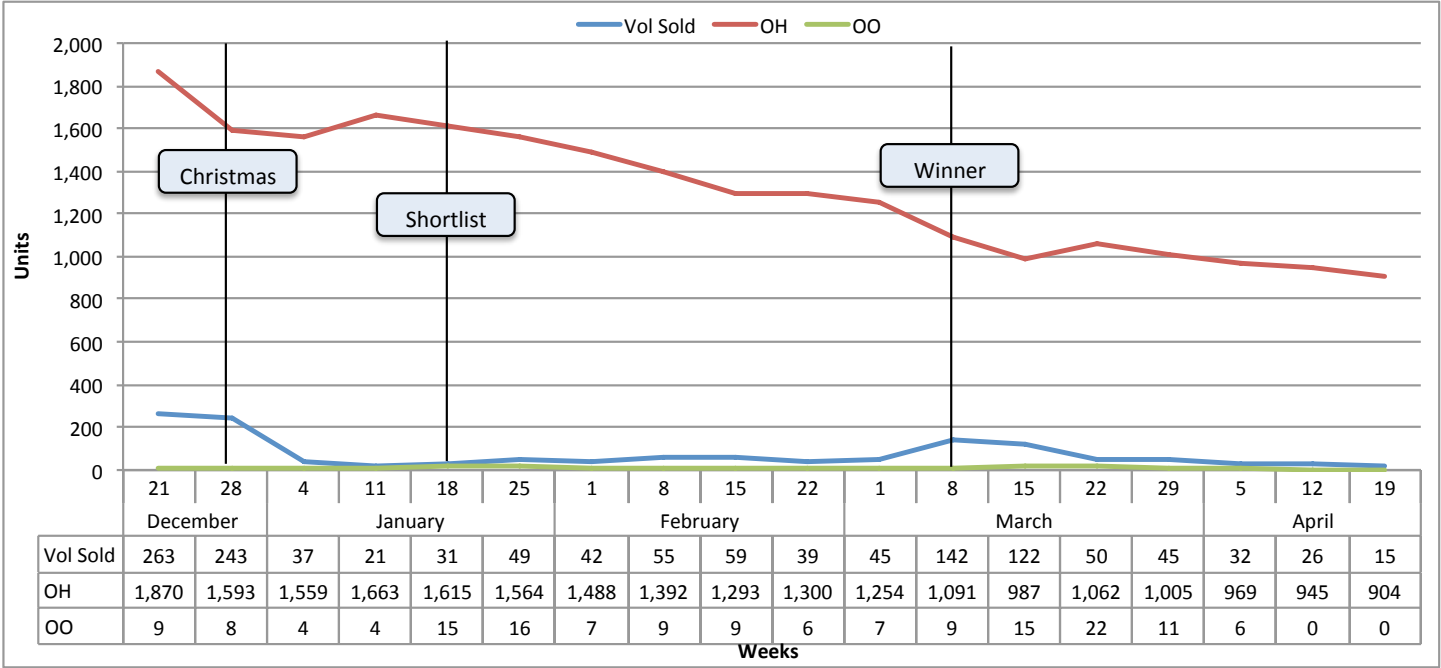
KNOPF CANADA
HARDCOVER TRADE
9780345807694
\$35.00

TRADE PAPERBACK
9780345807700
\$22.00



Sales vs. On-Hand vs. On-Order

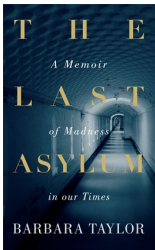
- Combined HT and TP ISBNs for Volume Sold, OH, & OO



NOMINEE

BARBARA TAYLOR'S *THE LAST ASYLUM*

PENGUIN PUBLISHING GROUP
TRADE PAPERBACK
9780143191599
\$24.00



Sales vs. On-Hand vs. On-Order

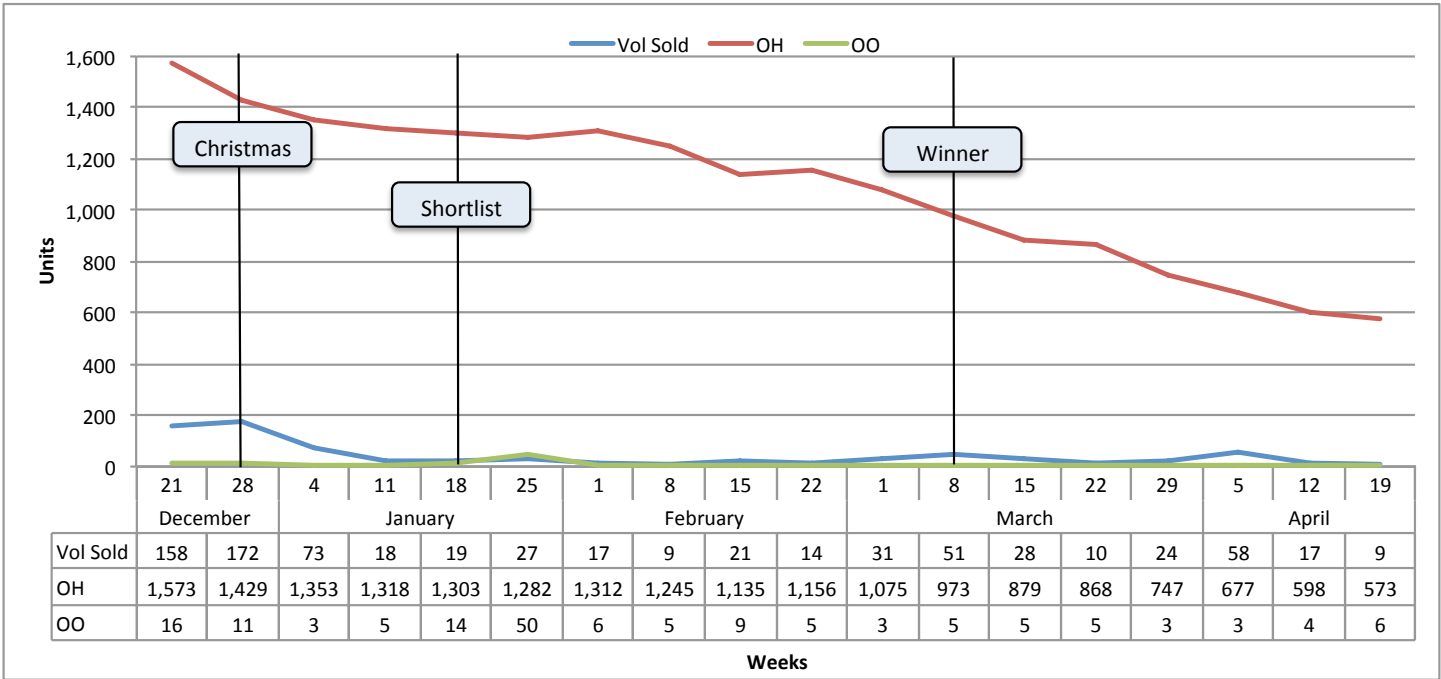
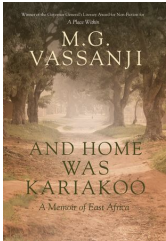


NOMINEE

M.G. VASSANJI’S AND HOME WAS KARIAKOO

Sales vs. On-Hand vs. On-Order

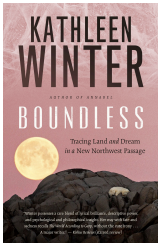
DOUBLEDAY CANADA
HARDCOVER TRADE
9780385671439
\$32.95



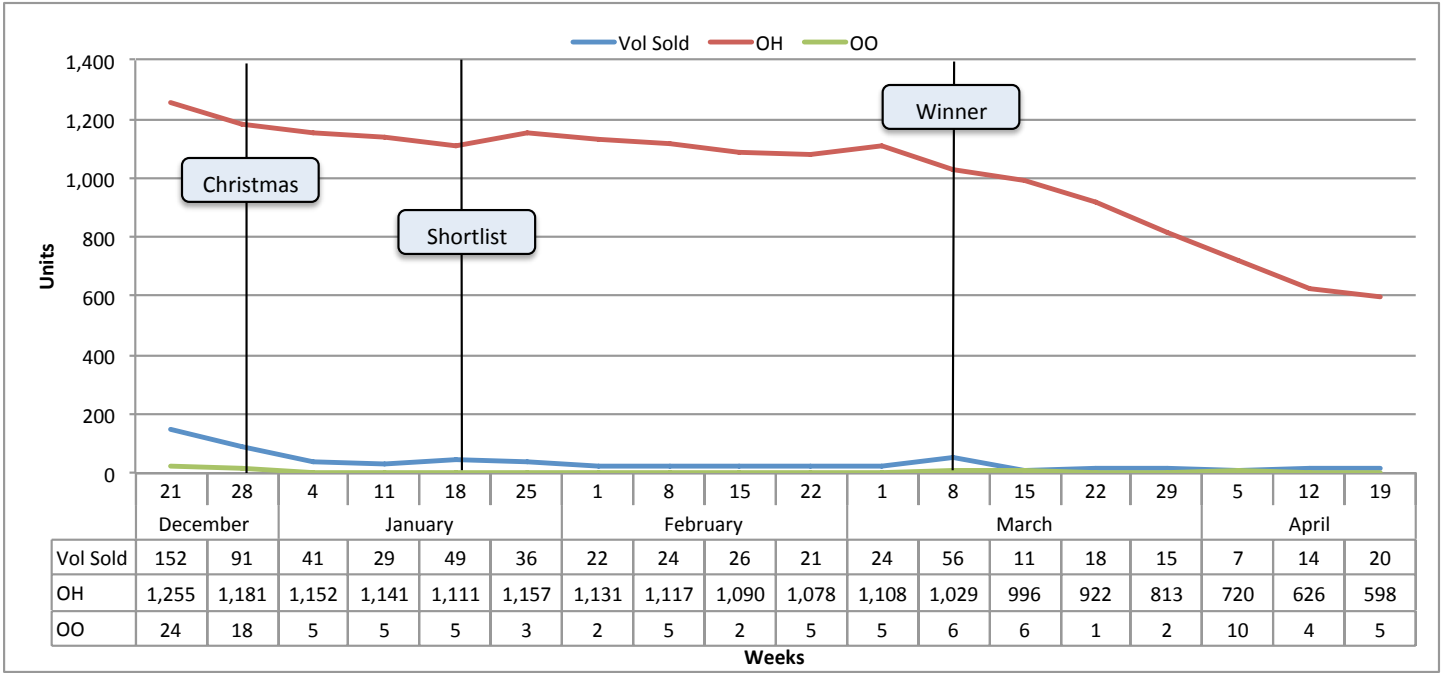
NOMINEE

KATHLEEN WINTER’S *BOUNDLESS*

HOUSE OF ANANSI PRESS
HARDCOVER TRADE
9781770893993
\$29.95



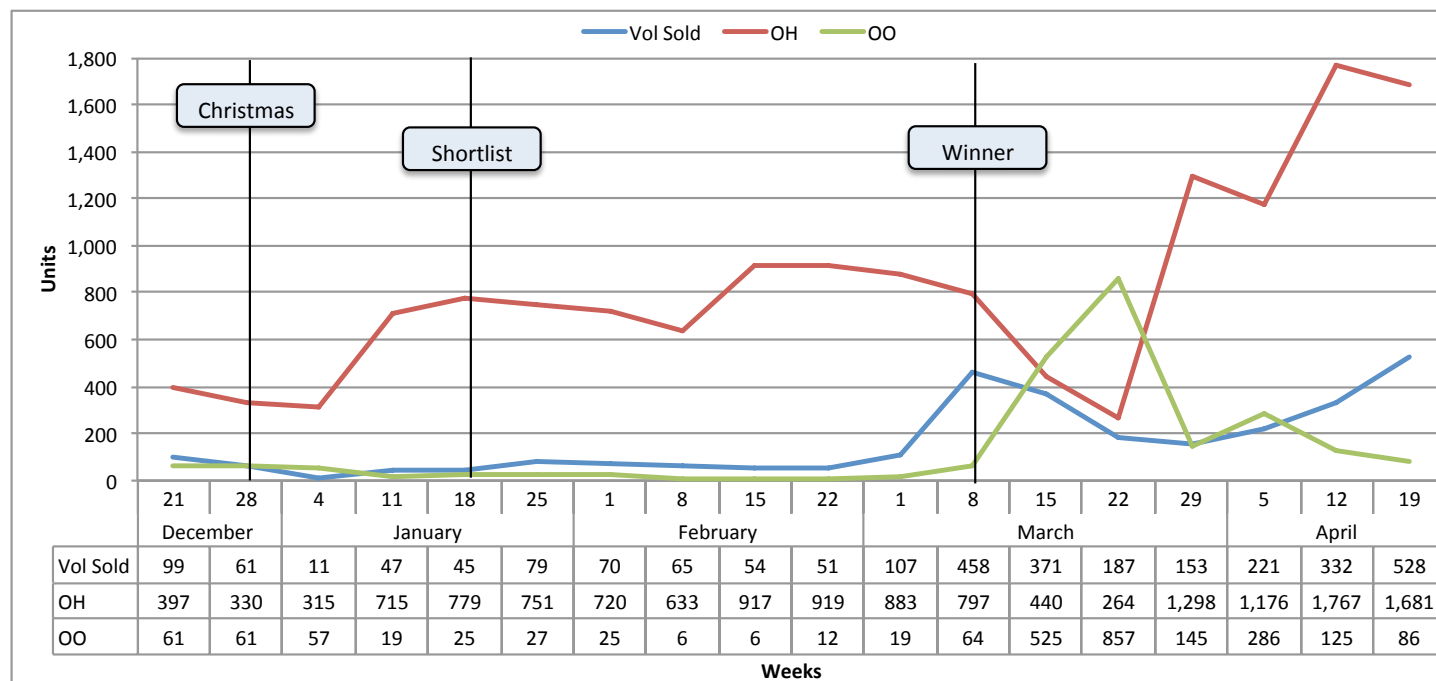
Sales vs. On-Hand vs. On-Order



WINNER

PLUM JOHNSON'S *THEY LEFT US EVERYTHING*

PENGUIN GROUP (CANADA)
 TRADE PAPERBACK
 9780143189053
 \$22.00

**Sales vs. On-Hand vs. On-Order**

The lower sales during the week ending March 22 may be a reflection of the lower availability of books on hand. This graph shows a peak in orders and a huge dip in on-hand copies, indicating that bookstores were likely running low on stock for two weeks in March.

YEAR-OVER-YEAR COMPARISON

2015

Plum Johnson's *They Left Us Everything*
 PENGUIN GROUP (CANADA)
 TRADE PAPERBACK | 9780143189053 | \$22.00

2014

Thomas King's *The Inconvenient Indian*
 DOUBLEDAY CANADA
 HARDCOVER TRADE | 9780385664219 | \$34.95
 TRADE PAPERBACK | 9780385664226 | \$21.00

2013

Andrew Preston's *Sword of 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 PUBLISHERS LIMITED
 HARDCOVER TRADE | 9781554686490 | \$29.99

2011

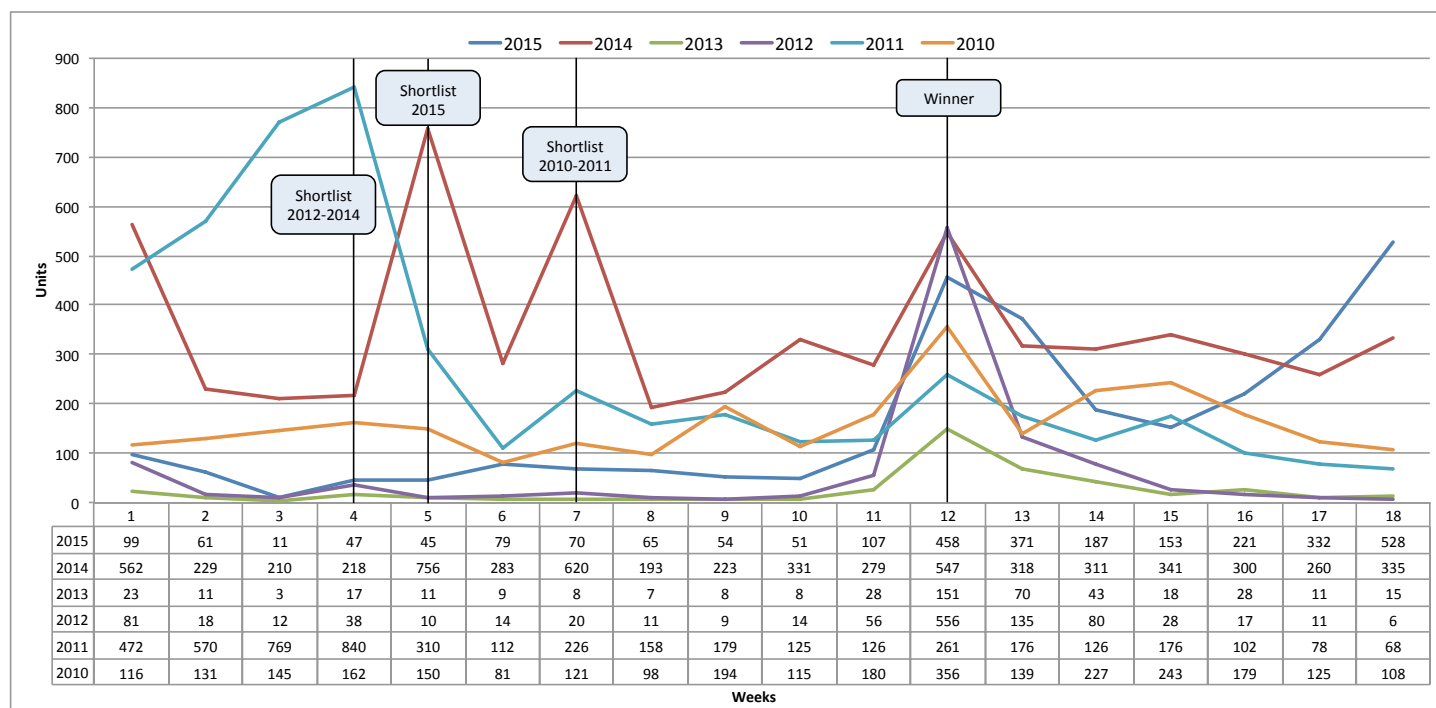
Charles Foran's *Mordecai*
 KNOPF CANADA
 HARDCOVER TRADE | 9780676979633 | \$39.95

2010

Ian Brown's *The Boy In The Moon*
 RANDOM HOUSE OF CANADA
 HARDCOVER TRADE | 9780307357106 | \$35.00

COMPARISON 2010–2015

Volume Sold – Winner Comparison



It is clear that the RBC Taylor Prize has a positive effect on the sales of winning titles. All winning titles, with the exception of Ian Brown's *The Boy In The Moon* (2010), whose sales quickly dropped the week after the announcement, experienced a sales increase after winning. *The Inconvenient Indian* and *Mordecai* experienced the highest sales during this 18-week period, likely due to winning other awards that same year.

CONCLUSION

Our analysis leads us to conclude that the RBC Taylor Prize for Literary Non-Fiction continues to have a positive impact on Canadian book sales:

- Almost all nominated titles in 2015 saw an increase in sales immediately following the winner announcement.
- The shortlist announcement had little impact on the nominated titles, with the exception of *The Last Asylum* which had a 7% sales increase, and *They Left Us Everything*, which experienced a 99% jump in sales after making the shortlist. The shortlist announcement seems to have little impact on the nominated titles because it takes place after Christmas, when consumer behavior is already on the decline.
- The sales for winning titles during the years 2011–2015 were all positively affected by the award. This year's winner, *They Left Us Everything*, had the greatest sales increase (425%) the week after the announcement.
- Thomas King's *The Inconvenient Indian* won British Columbia's National Award for Canadian Non-Fiction that same year and in 2013. It also won the Libris Award for Non-Fiction Book of the Year and the Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Nonfiction Prize. *Mordecai*, written by Charles Foran, won the Governor General's Literary Award for Non-Fiction and the Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for Nonfiction in 2011. *The Inconvenient Indian* (2014) and *Mordecai* (2011) both experienced the highest overall sales compared to the other winners of the RBC Taylor Prize, which is likely a result of the publicity garnered from winning multiple awards.