



BNC

RESEARCH 09.2015

Rogers Writers'
Trust Fiction 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 2014 Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize. 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 2009 to 2014 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 2014 Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize shortlisted titles by volume sold and includes a look at the overall 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 fiction market as a whole.

Next, we look at the 2014 shortlisted titles individually, showing volume sold, units on hand (OH) and units on order (OO) throughout the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction 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 2009 to 2014, 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:

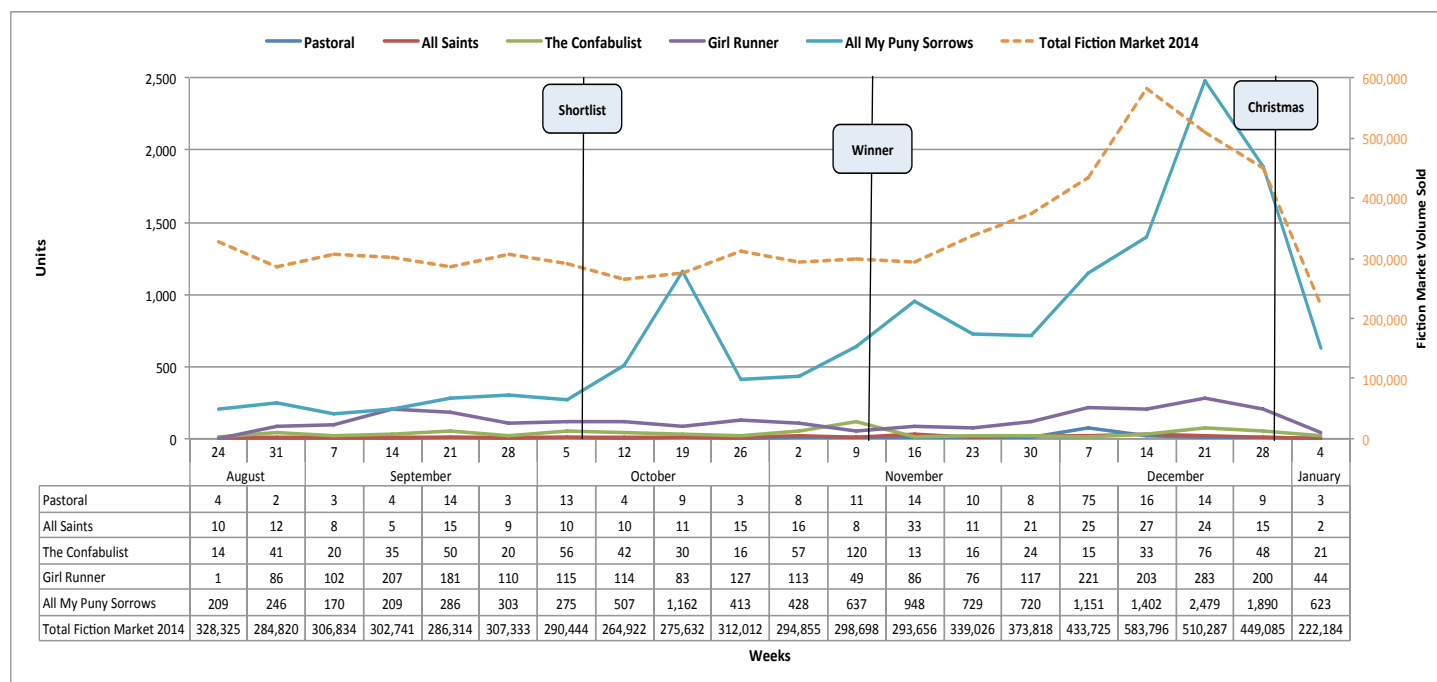
- Independent bookstores: BNC SalesData includes many major independent bookstores, but does not include many smaller ones, any of which could be actively promoting an award winner. It also does not capture many specialty independent bookstores (children's books, science fiction, etc.) where a genre-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

Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize 2014

Volume Sold for All Shortlist Titles and Winner

ORGANIZED BY THE WRITERS' TRUST OF CANADA
NOMINATIONS ANNOUNCED SEPTEMBER 30, 2014
WINNERS ANNOUNCED NOVEMBER 4, 2014



Shortlist announcement (September 30, 2014):

All My Puny Sorrows has a 91% sales increase the week after the shortlist announcement and *The Confabulist* also does well with a 20% leap in sales. On October 6, Miriam Toews's *All My Puny Sorrows* is shortlisted for the Giller Prize and the spike in sales during the study period is likely because of the combined publicity of these two awards.

Winner announcement (November 4, 2014):

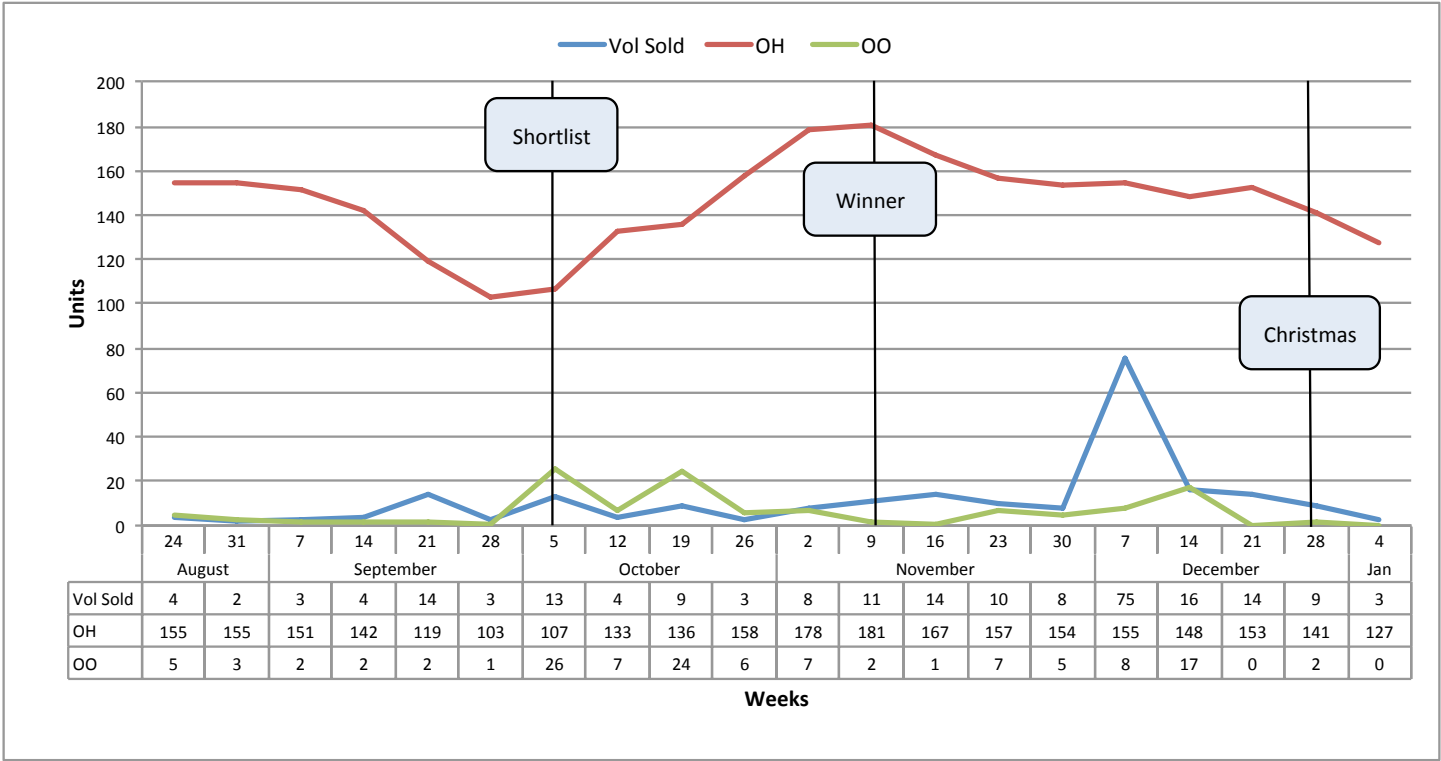
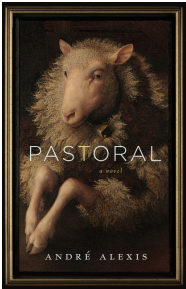
The titles that experience the highest sales increase from the weeks leading up to the winner announcement to the week following it are Andre Alexis's *Pastoral* (110%) and K.D. Miller's *All Saints* (136%). Although *All My Puny Sorrows* did not have the biggest sales increase the week after the winner announcement its sales are much higher than all the shortlisted titles combined and continue to climb into the holiday season.

NOMINEE

ANDRE ALEXIS’S PASTORAL

Sales vs. On-Hand vs. On-Order

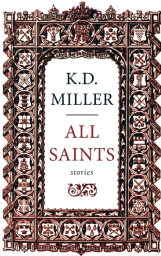
COACH HOUSE BOOKS
TRADE PAPERBACK
9781552452868
\$17.95



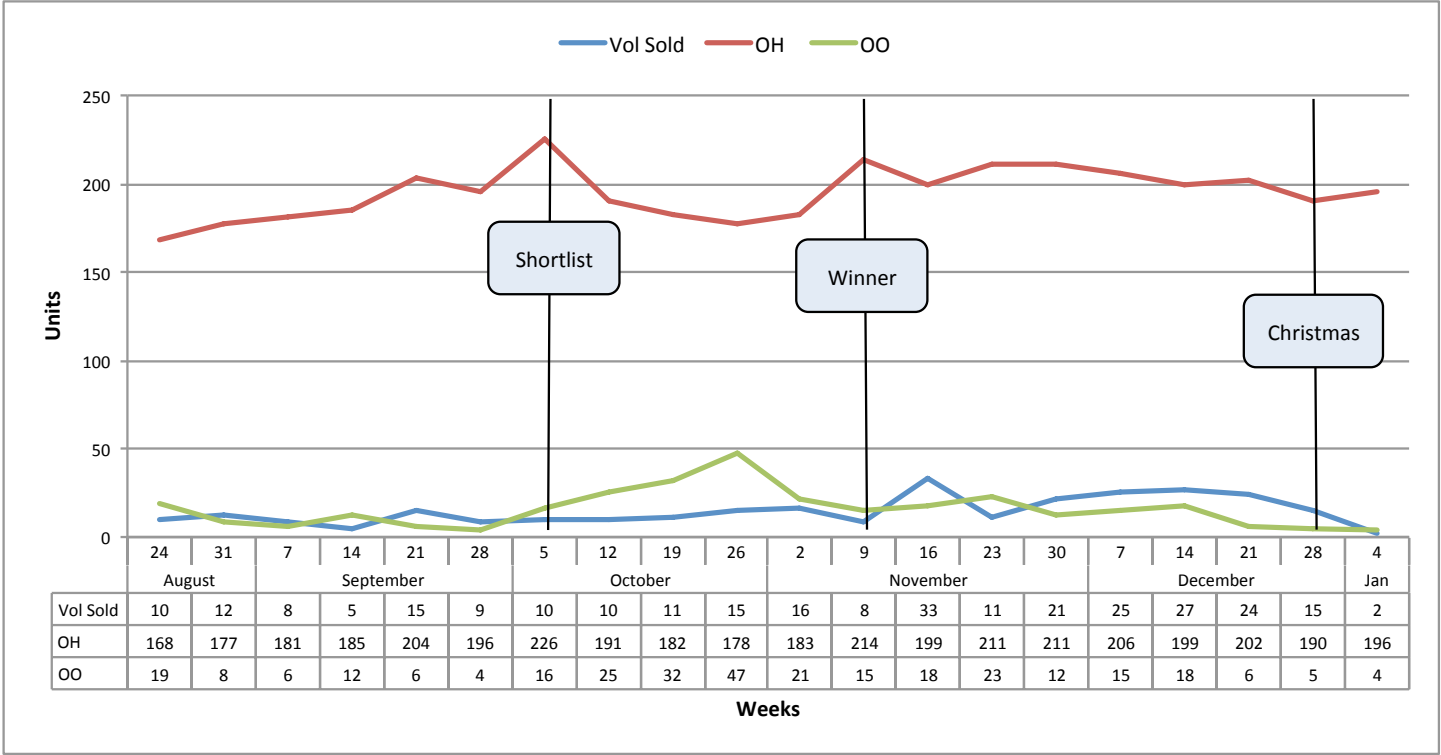
NOMINEE

K.D.MILLER’S ALL SAINTS

BIBLIOASIS
TRADE PAPERBACK
9781927428634
\$19.95



Sales vs. On-Hand vs. On-Order

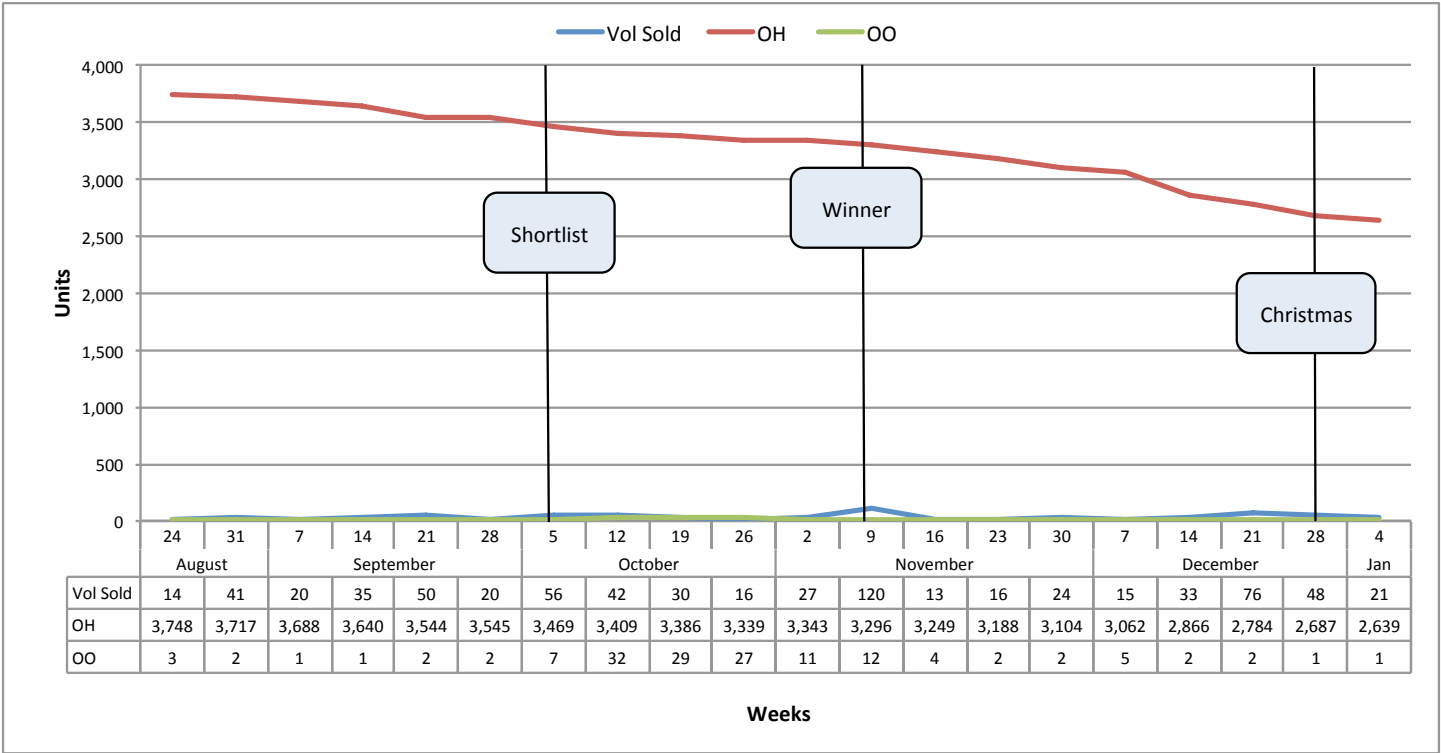
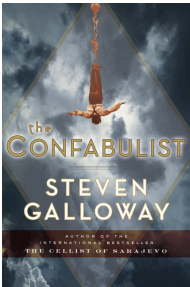


NOMINEE

STEVEN GALLOWAY'S *THE CONFABULIST*

Sales vs. On-Hand vs. On-Order

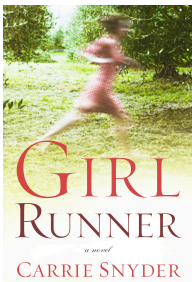
KNOPF CANADA
HARDCOVER TRADE
9780307400857
\$29.95



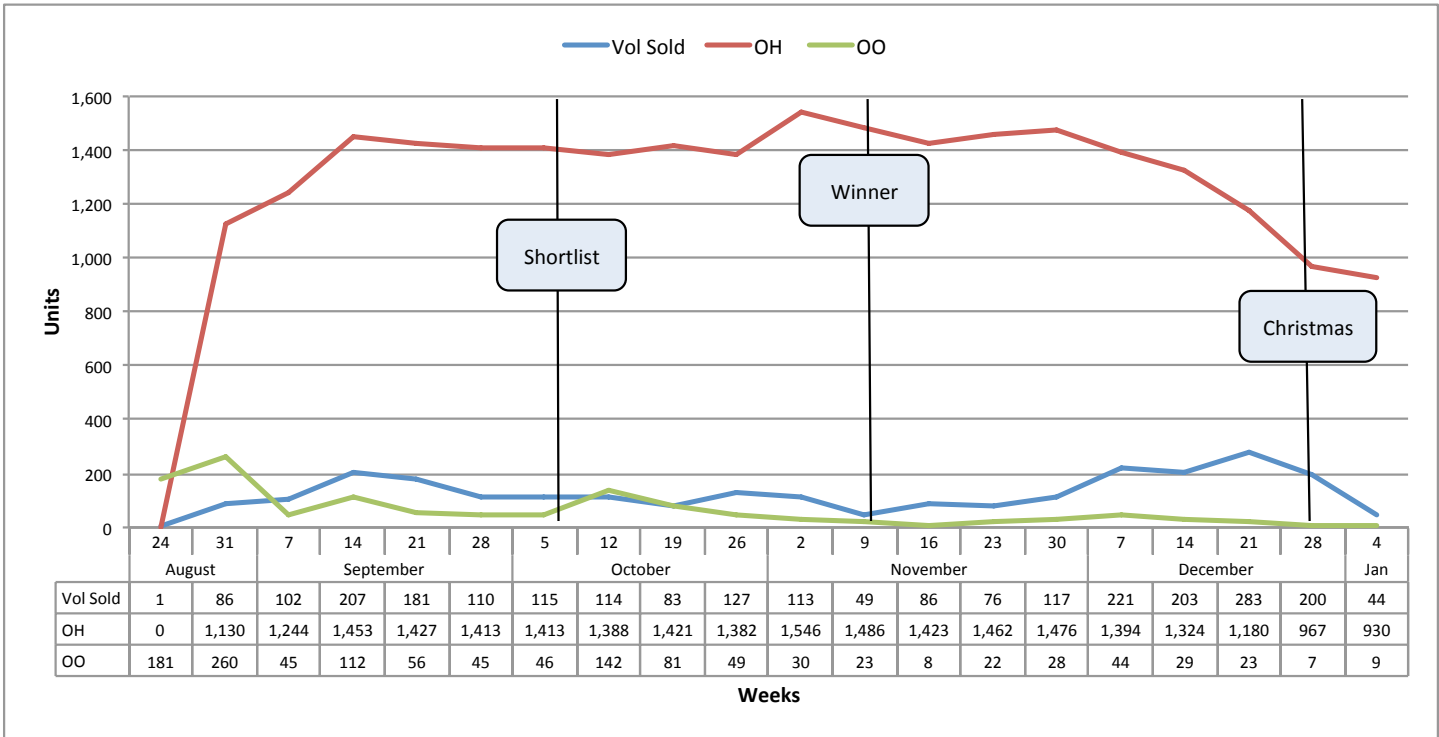
NOMINEE

CARRIE SNYDER'S *GIRL RUNNER*

HOUSE OF ANANSI PRESS
HARDCOVER TRADE
9781770894327
\$29.95



Sales vs. On-Hand vs. On-Order



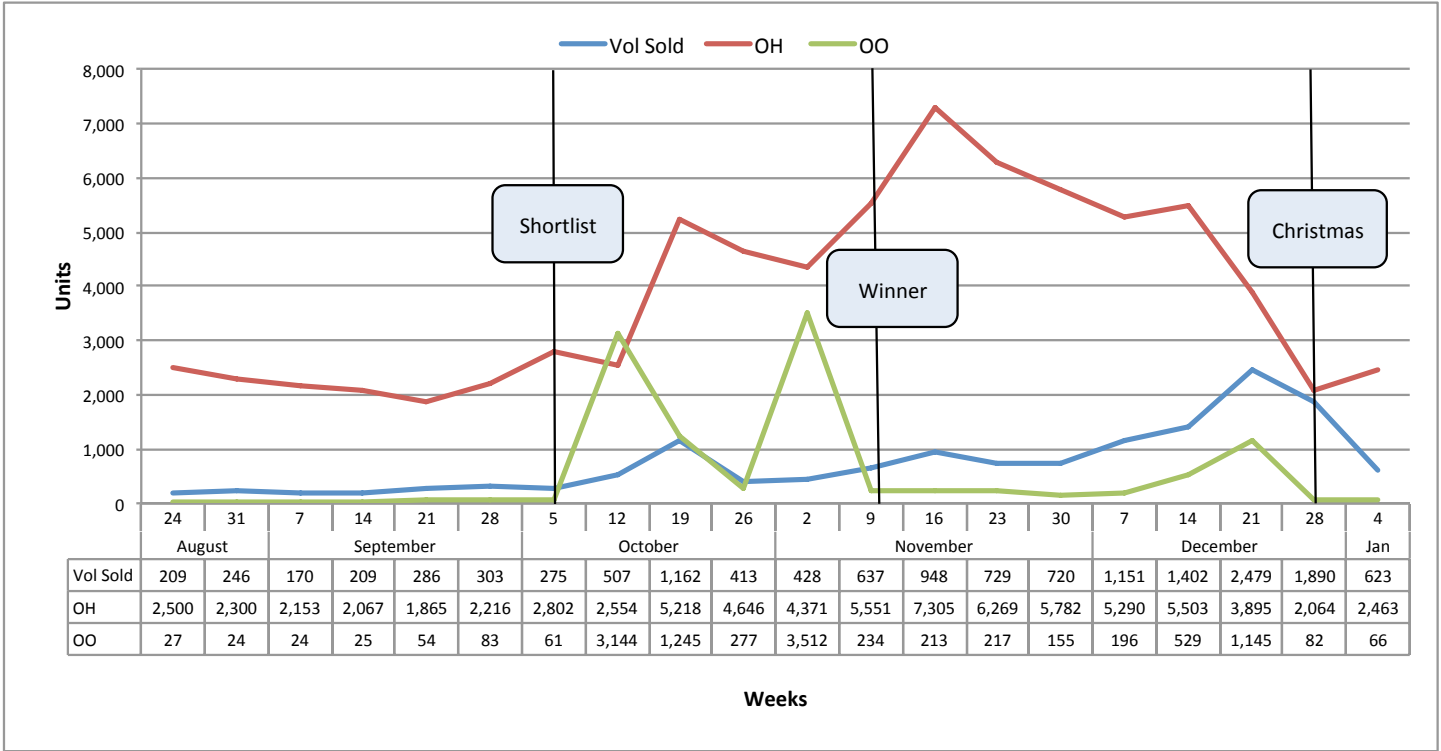
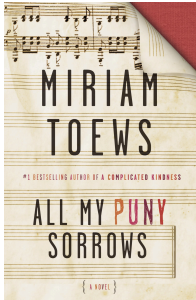
Although *Girl Runner* did not experience an immediate sales increase after the winner announcement, book sales begin to rise all the way to Christmas. This graph exemplifies the positive impact awards have combined with normal consumer behavior during the holiday season.

WINNER

MIRIAM TOEWS’S *ALL MY PUNY SORROWS*

Sales vs. On-Hand vs. On-Order

KNOPF CANADA
HARDCOVER TRADE
9780345808004
\$29.95



In addition to winning the 2014 Rogers Writers’ Trust Fiction Prize, Miriam Toews’s *All My Puny Sorrows* was shortlisted for the Scotiabank Giller Prize. Many expected the book to win the Giller Prize, for which winners were to be announced November 10, which likely influenced the on-order peak the week prior to the winner announcement.

YEAR-OVER-YEAR COMPARISON

2014

Miriam Toews's *All My Puny Sorrows*

KNOPF CANADA

HARDCOVER TRADE | 9780345808004 | \$29.95

2013

Colin McAdam's *A Beautiful Truth*

PENGUIN PUBLISHING GROUP

HARDCOVER TRADE | 9780670066360 | \$30.00

2012

Tamas Dobozsy's *Siege 13*

DUNDURN

TRADE PAPERBACK | 9781771022040 | \$22.95

2011

Patrick deWitt's *The Sisters Brothers*

HOUSE OF ANANSI PRESS

HARDCOVER TRADE | 9780887842894 | \$29.95

TRADE PAPERBACK | 9781770890329 | \$19.95

2010

Emma Donoghue's *Room*

HARPERCOLLINS PUBLISHERS LIMITED

HARDCOVER TRADE | 9781554688319 | \$29.99

2009

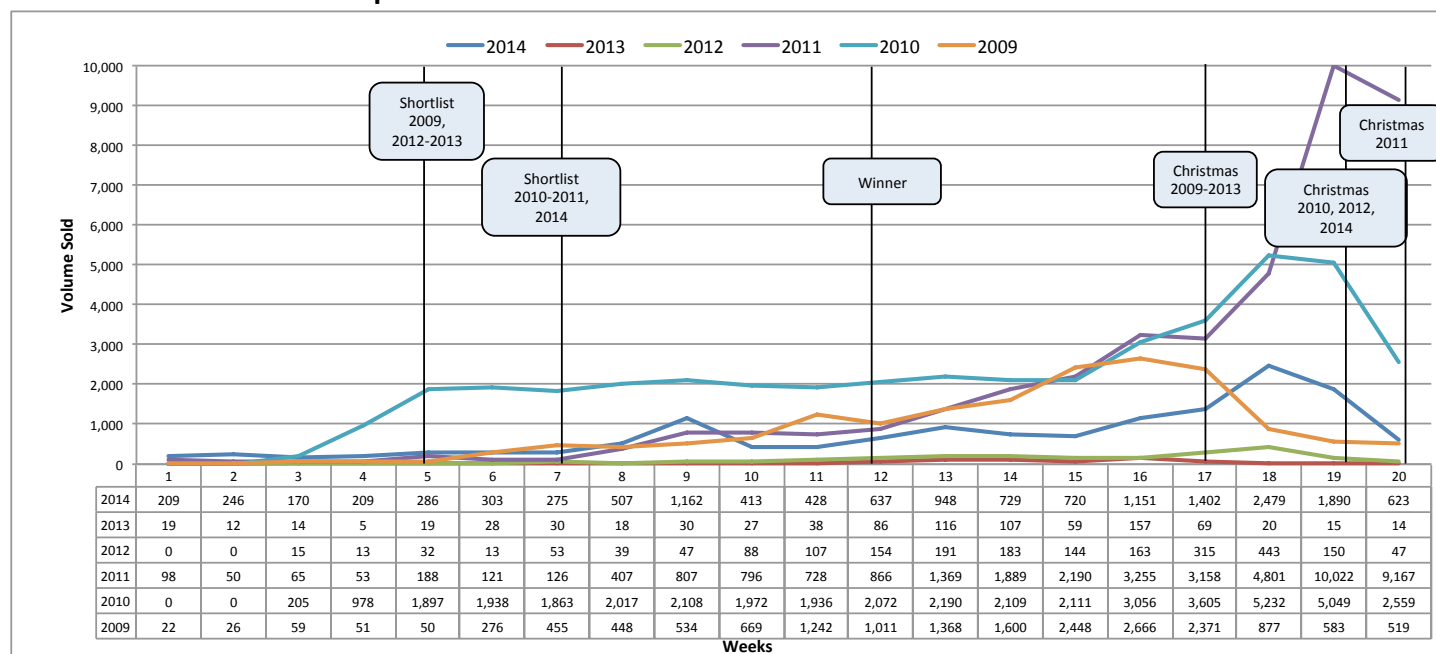
Annabel Lyon's *The Golden Mean*

RANDOM HOUSE OF CANADA

HARDCOVER TRADE | 9780307356208 | \$32.95

COMPARISON 2009–2014

Volume Sold – Winner Comparison



Many of the winners are nominees or recipients of multiple literary awards: both *A Beautiful Truth* (2013) and *Siege 13* (2012) were shortlisted for the Governor General's Literary Award. Patrick deWitt's *The Sisters Brothers* experiences one of the highest sales peaks, likely because the book was also nominated for several awards: the Man Booker Prize, the Scotiabank Giller Prize, and the Governor General's Award, which *The Sisters Brothers* won in 2011. Overall, book sales are not dramatically affected by the shortlist announcement and it is not until after the titles win that we see the sales shoot up, peaking during the holiday season.

CONCLUSION

Our analysis leads us to conclude that the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize continues to have a positive impact on Canadian book sales:

- It's clear that literary awards help boost sales, but for the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize, it appears that shortlists do not have a huge impact on sales.
 - The winning titles seem to have sales well above other titles on the Writers' Trust shortlist.
 - While winning the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction prize certainly increases sales, books with multiple nominations fare better than those with just one nomination. The winning titles with the highest sales are Emma Donoghue's *Room* and Patrick deWitt's *The Sisters Brothers*, which were shortlisted for the Governor General's Literary Award and the Man Booker Prize the year they won the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize.
 - When books are nominated for multiple awards there are usually more book orders in anticipation of the winner announcement, as seen with Miriam Toews's *All My Puny Sorrows*.
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