



BNC

RESEARCH 01.2017

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 2016 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 2011 to 2016 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 2016 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 2016 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 2011 to 2016, 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:

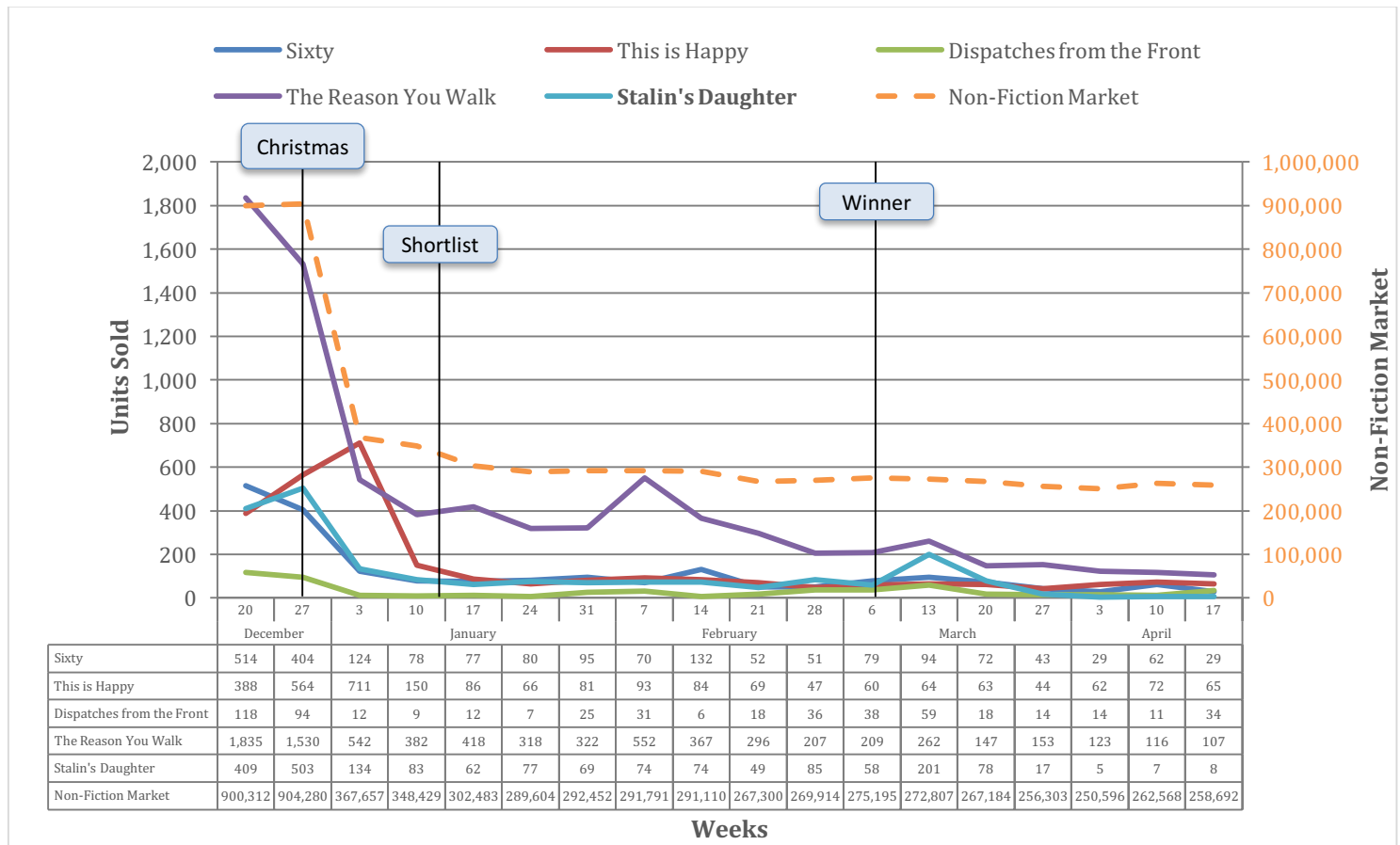
- Independent bookstores: BNC SalesData includes many major independent bookstores, but does not include many smaller ones, any of which could be actively promoting an award winner. It also does not capture many specialty independent bookstores (e.g., children's books, science fiction, etc.) where a 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 2016

Volume Sold for All Shortlist Titles and Winner

ORGANIZED BY THE WRITERS' TRUST OF CANADA
NOMINATIONS ANNOUNCED JANUARY 13, 2016
WINNERS ANNOUNCED MARCH 7, 2016



Shortlist announcement (January 13, 2016):

The shortlist announcement seems to have little impact on these titles, as all five shortlisted titles see a decline in sales the week after the announcement. This is likely because the announcement takes place after Christmas, when consumer behaviour is already on a decline.

Winner announcement (March 7, 2016):

The winner announcement reinvigorates and increases sales for *Sixty*, *This Is Happy*, and *Stalin's Daughter*, whereas sales for *Dispatches from the Front* and *The Reason You Walk* do not see the same impact. The winner, *Stalin's Daughter*, sees an increase of 29%. *The Reason You Walk* outsells the four other titles, likely due to the prominence of the author, Wab Kinew, who is a politician, musician, and broadcaster who has appeared on Canada Reads, as both a panelist and a moderator.

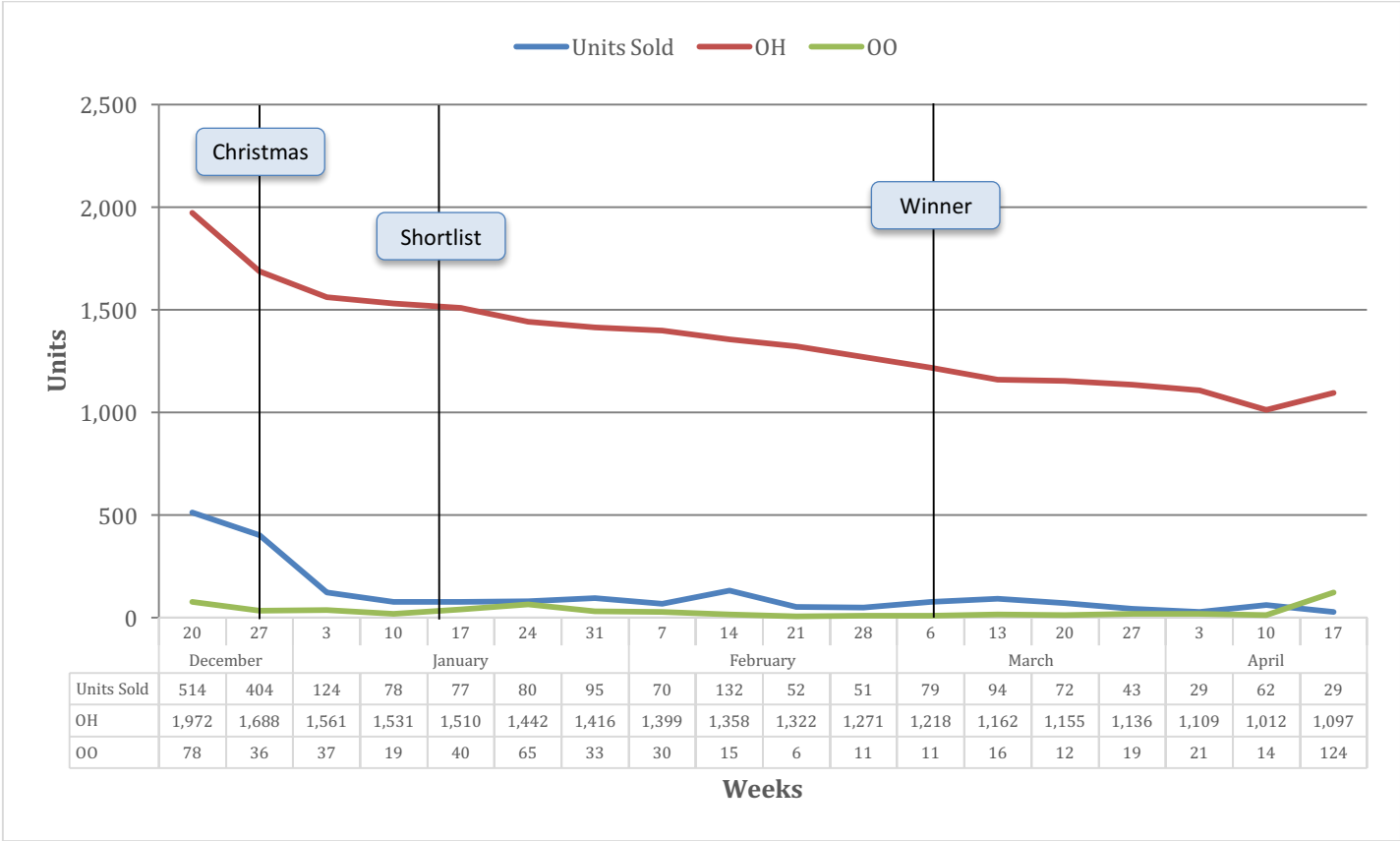
Nominee

IAN BROWN’S SIXTY: THE BEGINNING OF THE END,
OR THE END OF THE BEGINNING?

RANDOM HOUSE OF CANADA
HARDCOVER TRADE
9780307362841
\$29.95



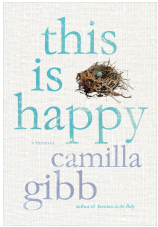
Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order



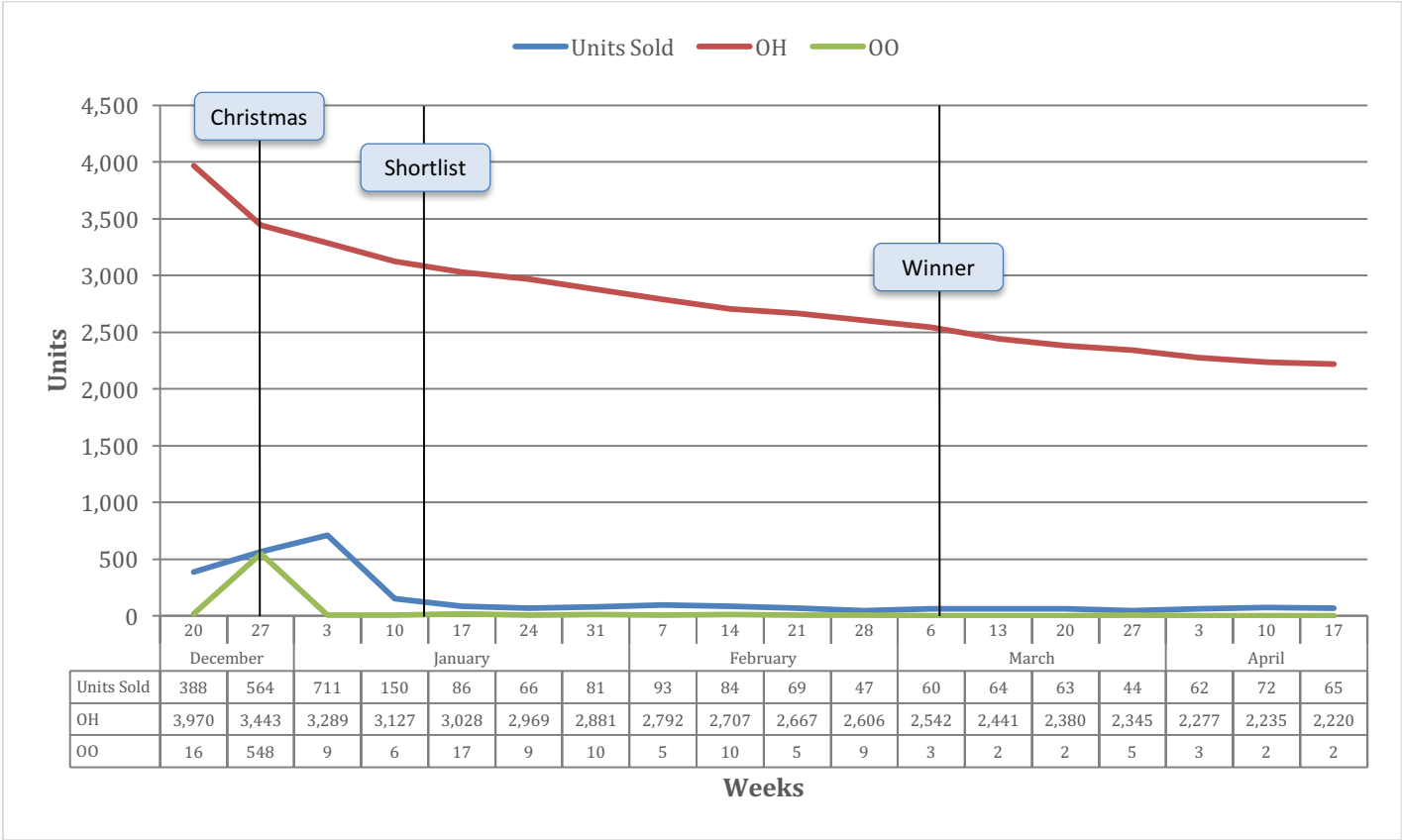
NOMINEE

CAMILLA GIBB'S *THIS IS HAPPY*

DOUBLEDAY CANADA PUBLISHING GROUP
HARDCOVER TRADE
9780385678124
\$29.95



Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order

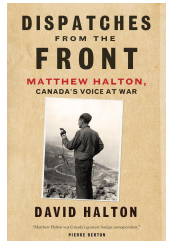


NOMINEE

DAVID HALTON'S *DISPATCHES FROM THE FRONT:*
MATTHEW HALTON, CANADA'S VOICE AT WAR

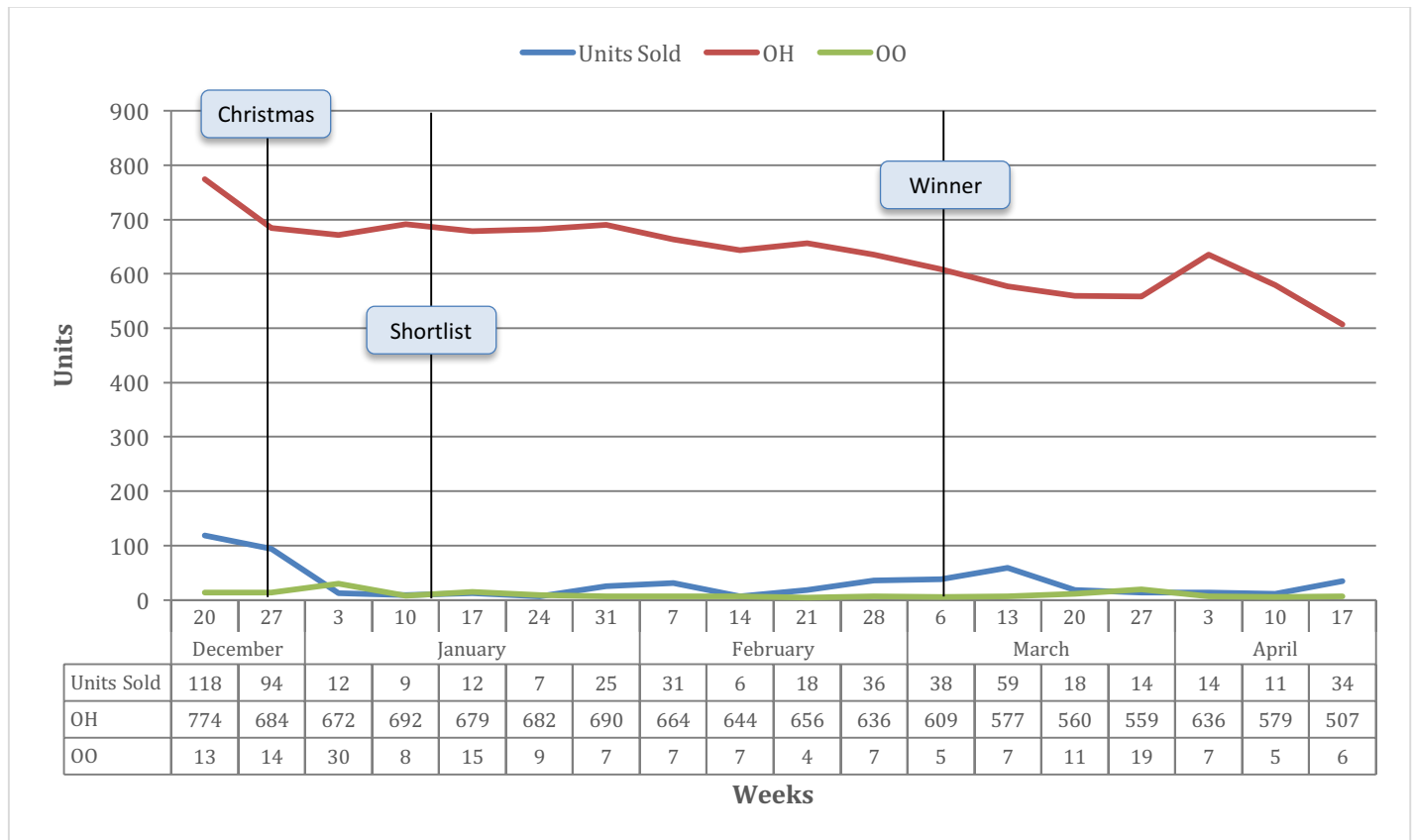
PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE CANADA LTD
 HARDCOVER TRADE
 9780771038136
 \$34.95

TRADE PAPERBACK
 9780771038204
 \$22.00



Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order

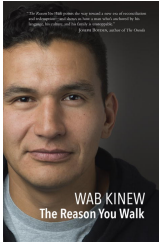
- Combined HT and TP ISBNs



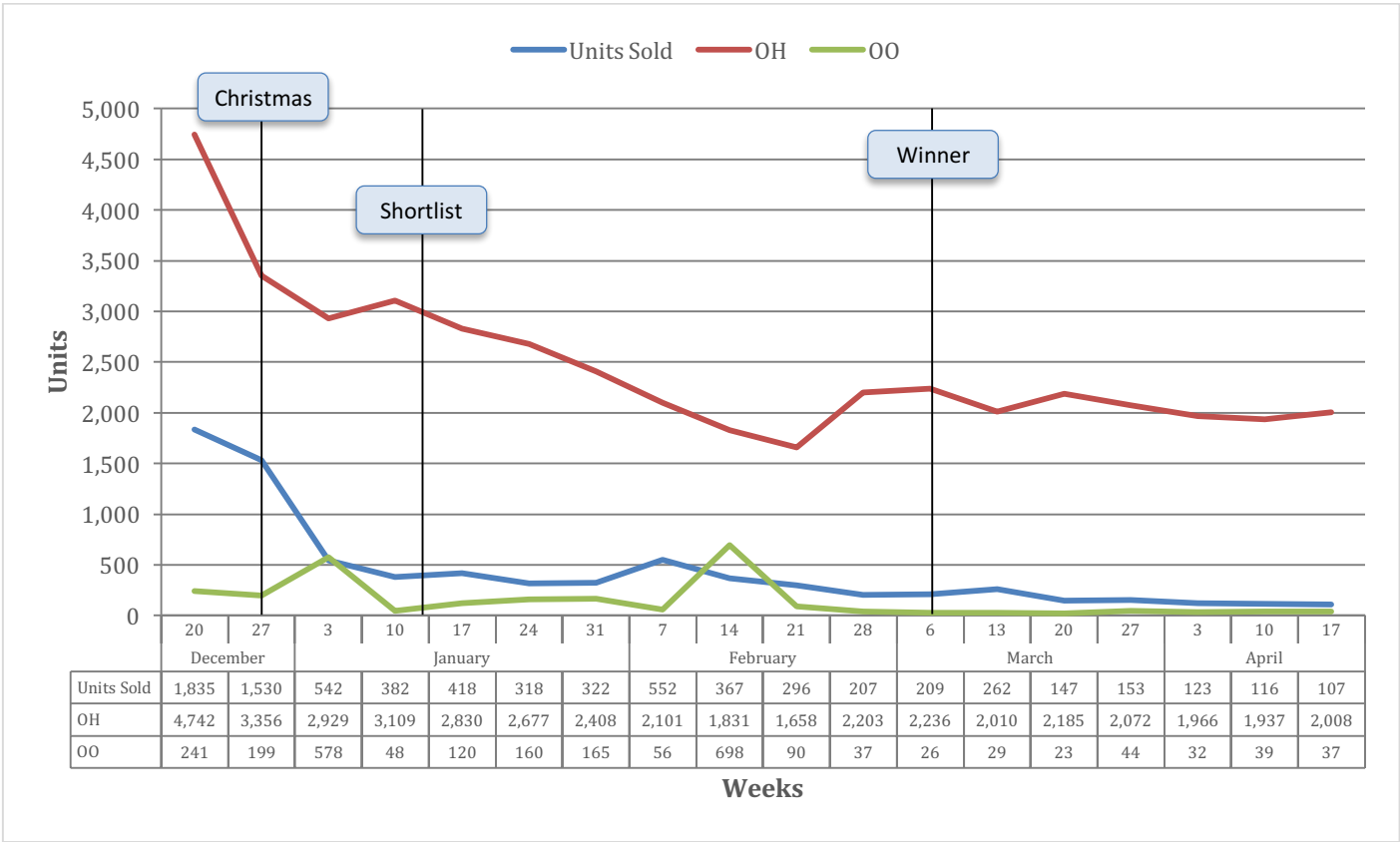
NOMINEE

WAB KINEW'S *THE REASON YOU WALK*

PENGUIN CANADA
HARDCOVER TRADE
9780670069347
\$32.00

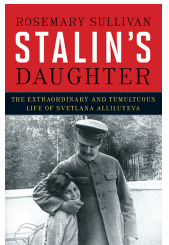


Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order



WINNER

HARPERCOLLINS CANADA
HARDCOVER TRADE
9781443414425
\$34.99



**ROSEMARY SULLIVAN'S *STALIN'S DAUGHTER:*
*THE EXTRAORDINARY AND TUMULTUOUS LIFE OF SVETLANA ALLILUYEVA***

Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order



YEAR-OVER-YEAR COMPARISON

2015

Rosemary Sullivan's *Stalin's Daughter*
HARPERCOLLINS CANADA
HARDCOVER TRADE | 9781443414425 | \$34.99

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

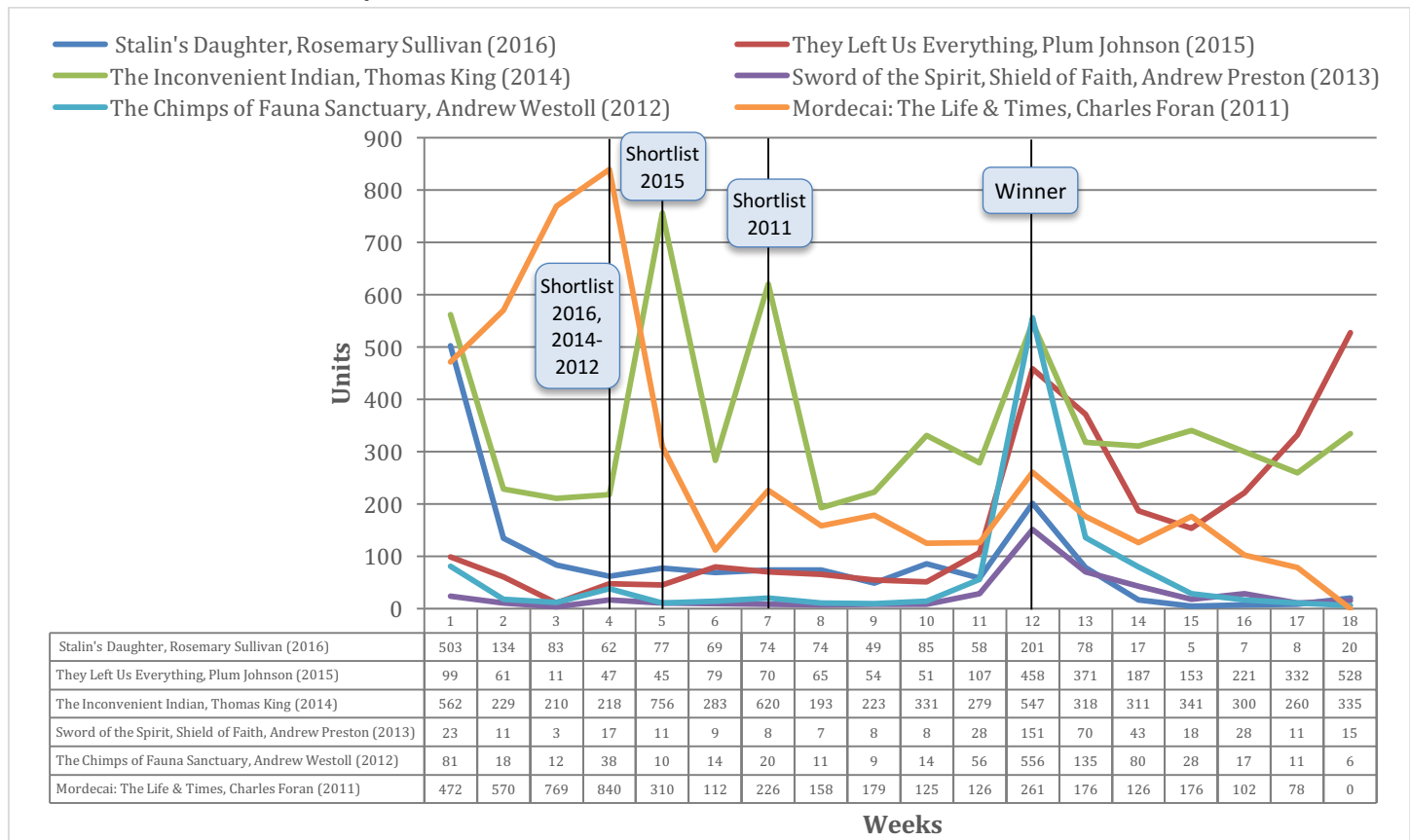
Andrew Westoll's *The Chimps of Fauna Sanctuary*
HARPERCOLLINS PUBLISHERS LIMITED
HARDCOVER TRADE | 9781554686490 | \$29.99

2011

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

COMPARISON 2011–2016

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 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:

- Three out of five nominated titles in 2015 saw an increase in sales immediately following the winner announcement.
- The shortlist announcement had little to no impact on the nominated titles, likely because it takes place after Christmas, when consumer behavior is already on the decline.
- The sales for winning titles during the years 2011–2016 were all positively affected by the award. This year's winner, *Stalin's Daughter*, had the greatest sales increase (29%) of the five titles 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 2011 Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for Nonfiction. *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. However, *Stalin's Daughter* also won the 2015 Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for Nonfiction, but sales did not reach the levels of *The Inconvenient Indian* or *Mordecai*, showing that different awards have varying levels of impact on book buyers.