



BNC

RESEARCH 10.2016

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 titles shortlisted for the 2015 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 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 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 2015 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 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 (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.

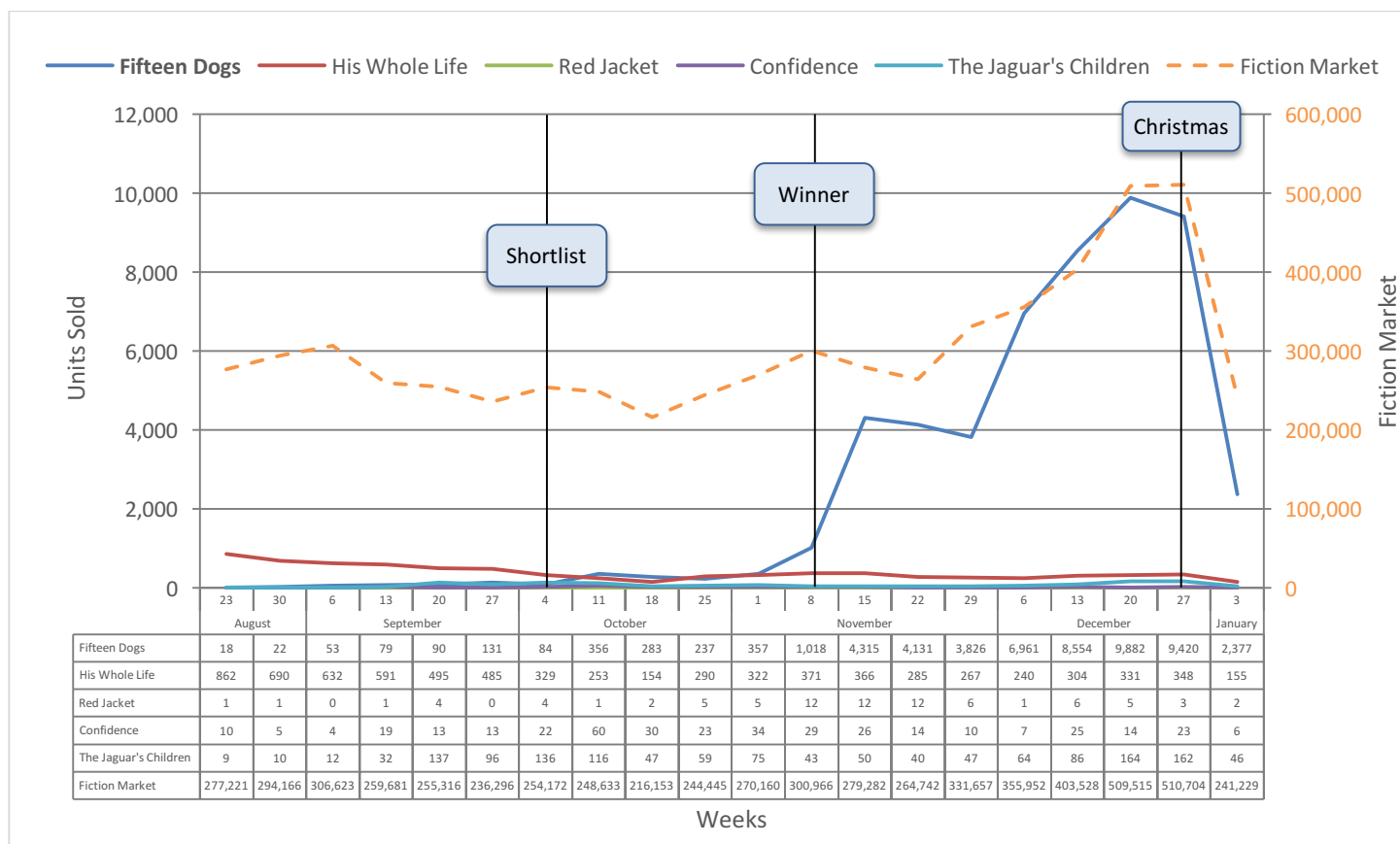
At this time, ebook sales are not represented in BNC's data. Therefore, all numbers in this report refer to print books only.

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.

Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize 2015

Volume Sold for All Shortlisted Titles and Winner

ORGANIZED BY THE WRITERS' TRUST OF CANADA
NOMINATIONS ANNOUNCED SEPTEMBER 29, 2015
WINNERS ANNOUNCED NOVEMBER 2, 2015



Shortlist announcement (September 29, 2015):

The winning title, *Fifteen Dogs*, experiences a 256% increase in sales the week after the shortlist announcement, while *Confidence* sees a 300% increase in sales. On October 5, 2015, *Fifteen Dogs* and *Confidence* were both shortlisted for the Scotiabank Giller Prize; the spike in sales after the shortlist announcement is likely because of the combined publicity of these two awards. *The Jaguar's Children* also experiences a 31% increase in sales.

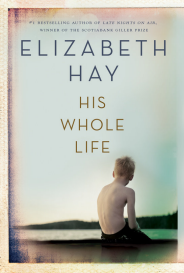
Winner announcement (November 2, 2015):

The titles that experience the highest sales increase from the weeks leading up to the winner announcement to the week following it are André Alexis's *Fifteen Dogs* (1,376%), followed by Pamela Mordecai's *Red Jacket* (200%). *Fifteen Dogs* went on to win the 2015 Scotiabank Giller Prize on November 10, 2015. The combined publicity from winning these two awards are likely to have positively influenced sales into the holiday season. *Fifteen Dogs* outsells the other four nominated titles substantially, selling a total of 52,194 units during this study period. *His Whole Life* has the next highest number of sales with 7,770 units.

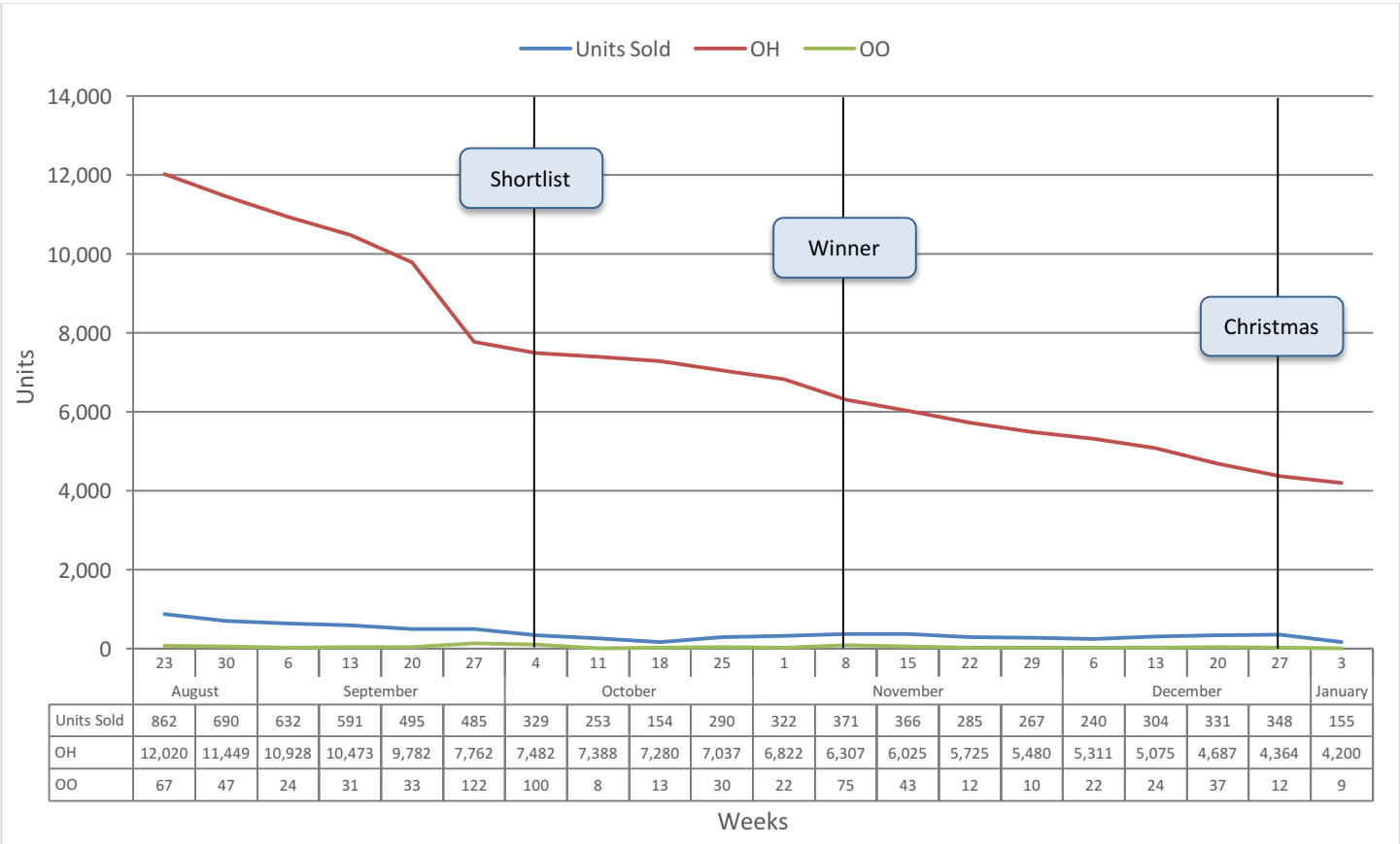
NOMINEE

ELIZABETH HAY'S *HIS WHOLE LIFE*

McCLELLAND & STEWART
HARDCOVER TRADE
9780771038594
\$32.00



Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order

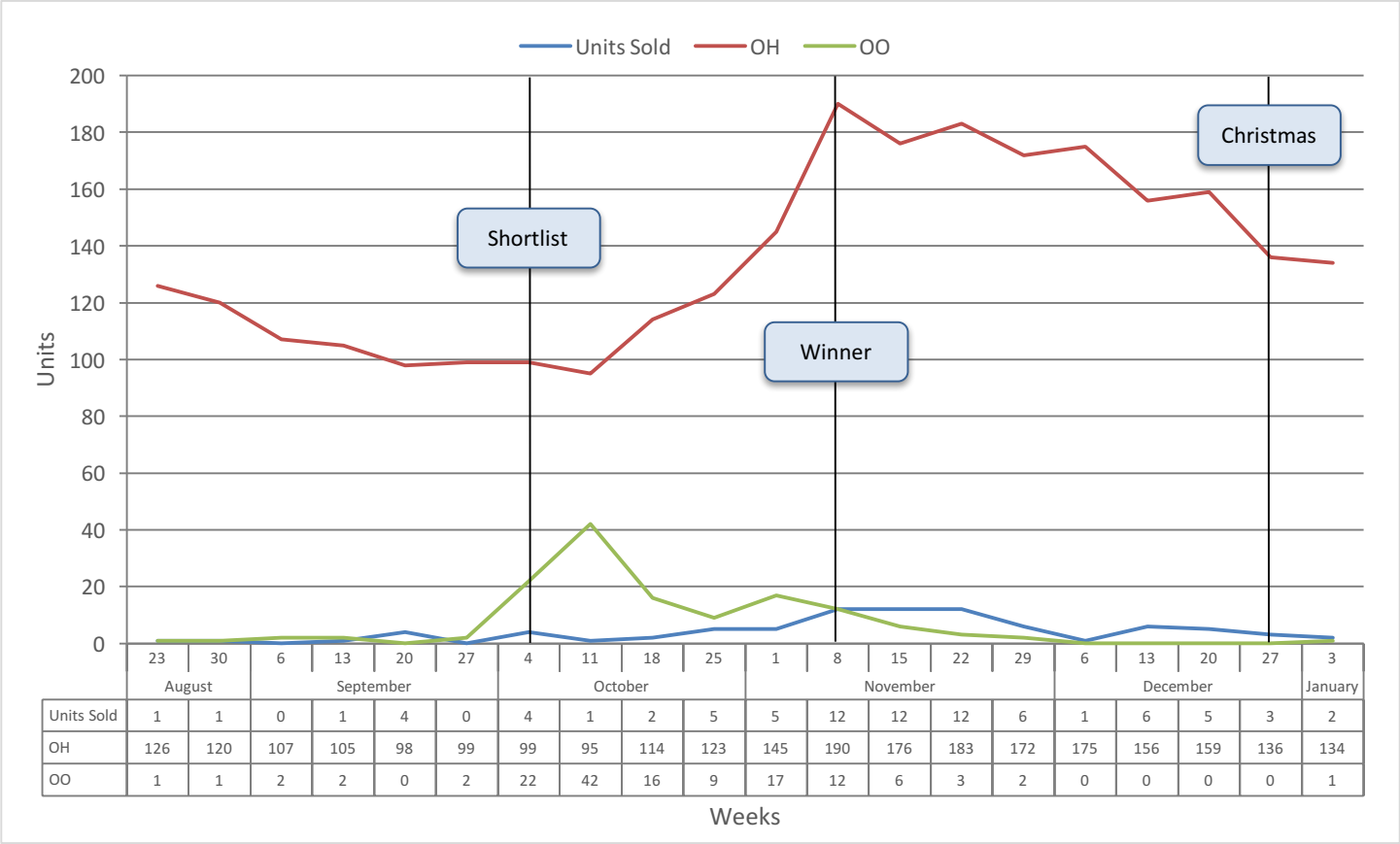
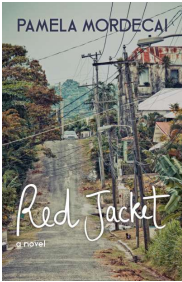


NOMINEE

PAMELA MORDECAI'S *RED JACKET*

Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order

DUNDURN PRESS
TRADE PAPERBACK
9781459729407
\$24.99

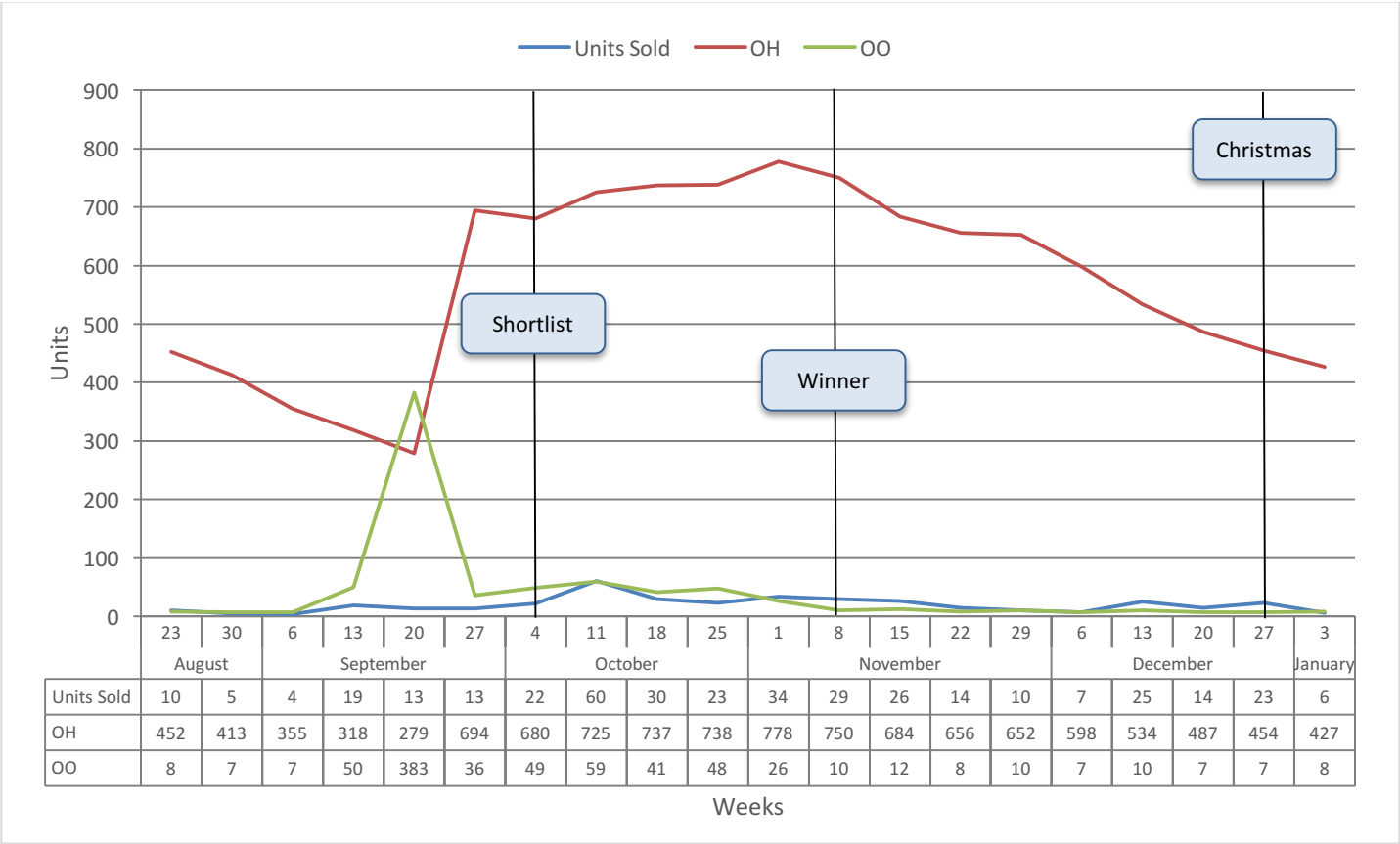
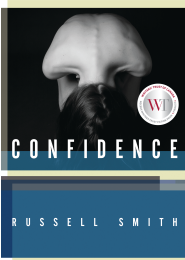


NOMINEE

RUSSELL SMITH’S *CONFIDENCE*

Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order

BIBLIOASIS
TRADE PAPERBACK
9781771960151
\$19.95



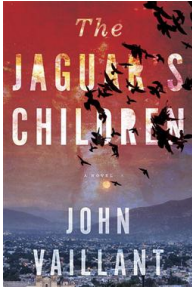
Confidence was also shortlisted for the 2015 Scotiabank Giller Prize on October 5,2015.

NOMINEE

JOHN VAILLANT’S THE JAGUAR’S CHILDREN

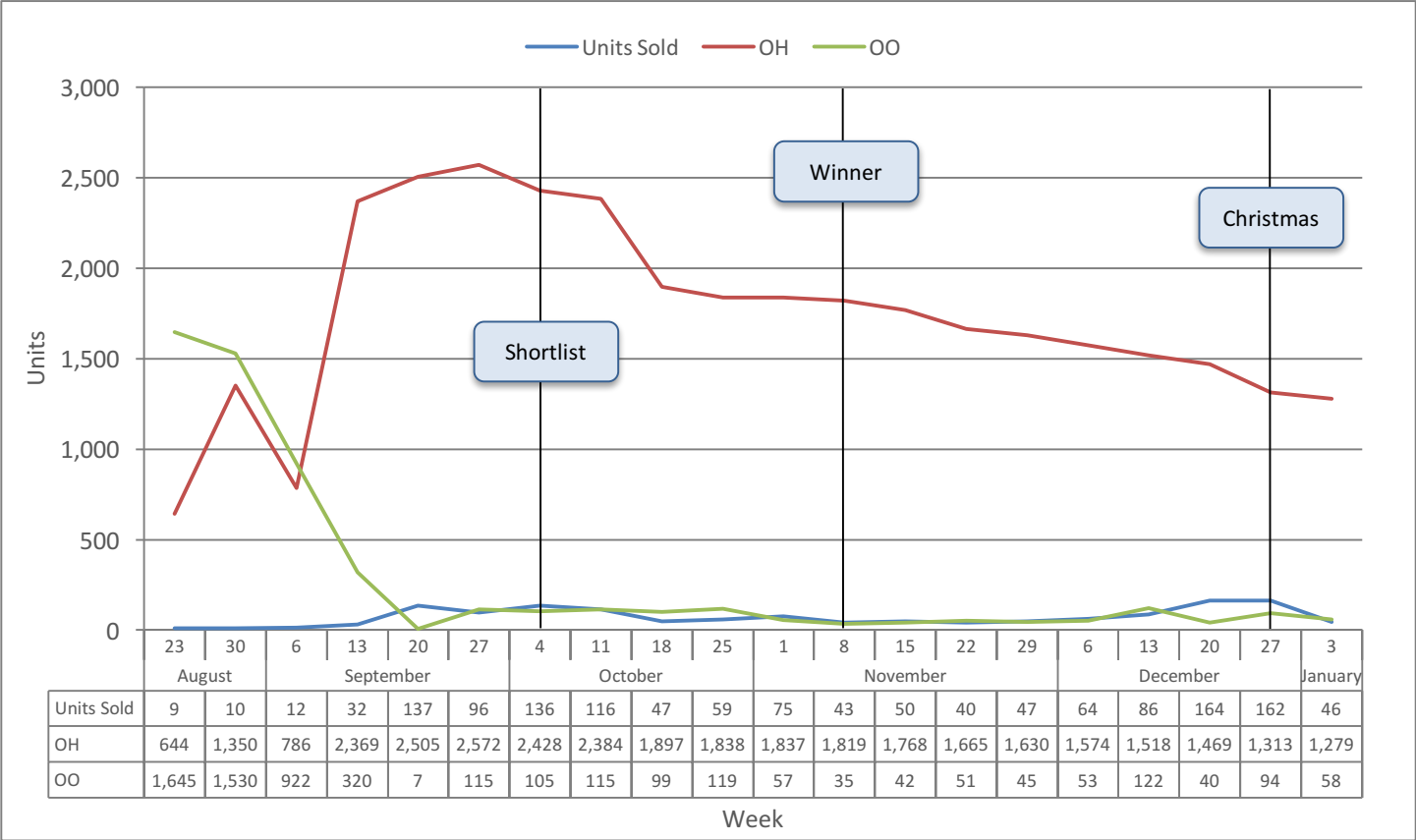
KNOPF CANADA
HARDCOVER TRADE
9780307397164
\$29.95

TRADE PAPERBACK
9780307397171
\$21.00



Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order

- Combined HT and TP ISBNs

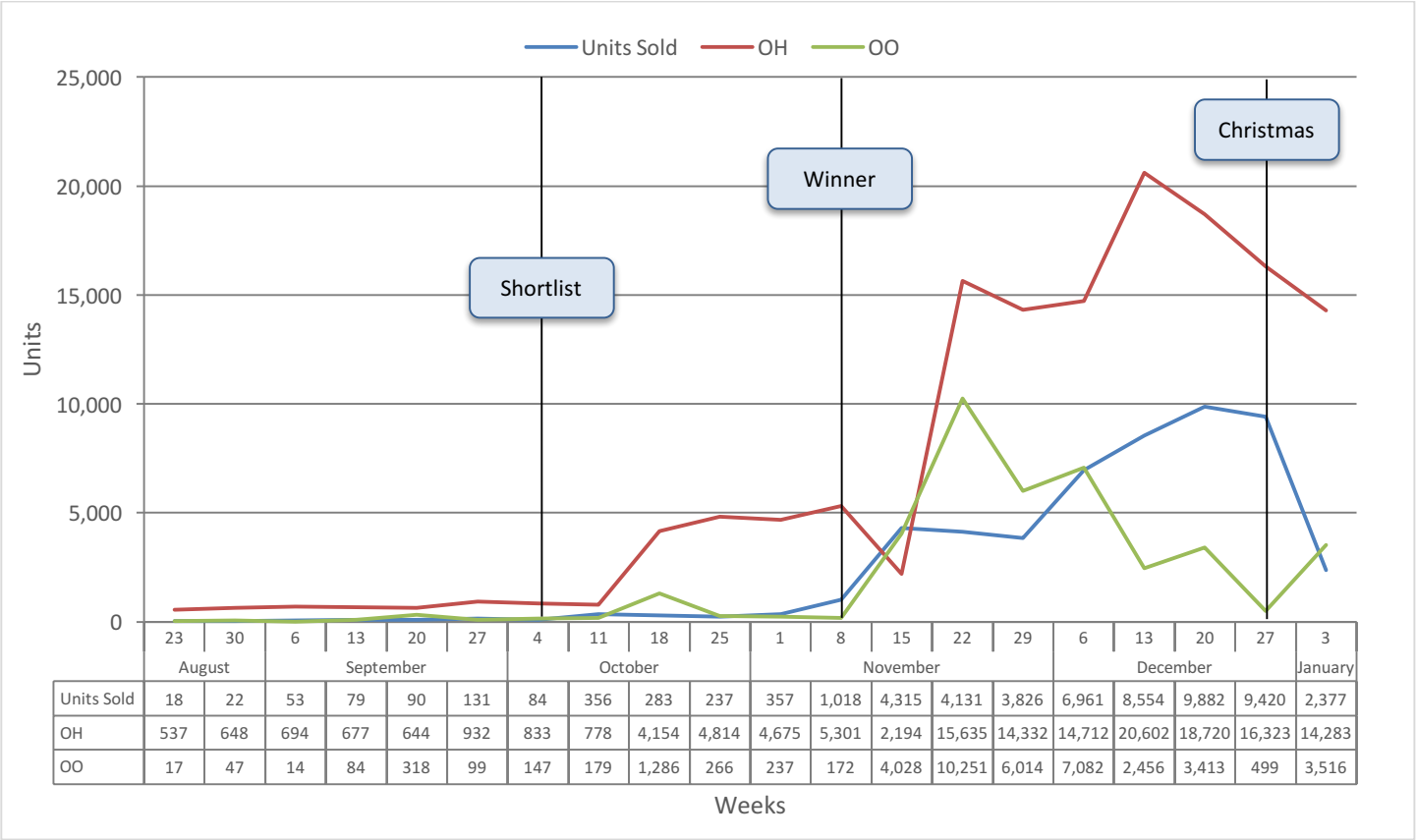
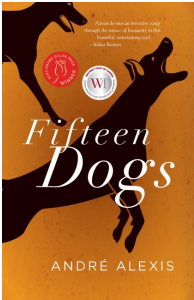


WINNER

ANDRÉ ALEXIS’S FIFTEEN DOGS

Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order

COACH HOUSE BOOKS
TRADE PAPERBACK
9781552453056
\$17.95



In addition to winning the 2015 Rogers Writers’ Trust Fiction Prize, André Alexis’s *Fifteen Dogs* also won the 2015 Scotiabank Giller Prize on November 10, 2015.

YEAR-OVER-YEAR COMPARISON – 2010-2015

2015

André Alexis's *Fifteen Dogs*

COACH HOUSE BOOKS

TRADE PAPERBACK | 9781552453056 | \$17.95

2014

Miriam Toews's *All My Puny Sorrows*

KNOPF CANADA

HARDCOVER TRADE | 9780345808004 | \$29.95

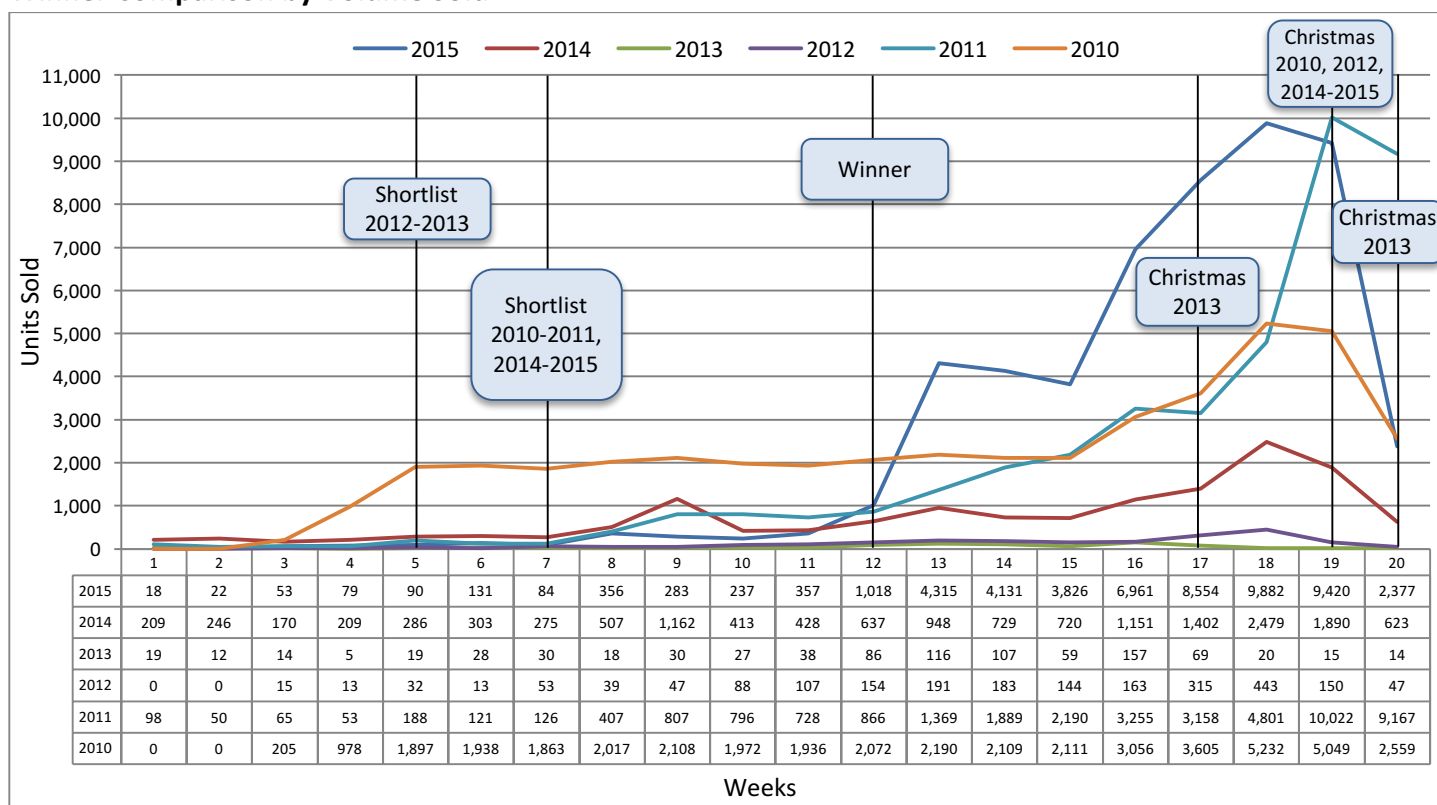
2013

Colin McAdam's *A Beautiful Truth*

PENGUIN PUBLISHING GROUP

HARDCOVER TRADE | 9780670066360 | \$30.00

Winner Comparison by Volume Sold



Many of the winners are nominees or recipients of multiple literary awards: *Fifteen Dogs* also won the Scotiabank Giller Prize, and 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 slightly 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 André Alexis's *Fifteen Dogs*, Emma Donoghue's *Room*, and Patrick deWitt's *The Sisters Brothers*. *Fifteen Dogs* won the Scotiabank Giller Prize in addition to the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize. Both *Room* and *The Sisters Brothers* were shortlisted for the Governor General's Literary Award and the Man Booker Prize the year they won the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize.
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