



BNC RESEARCH

A RESEARCH REPORT BY BOOKNET CANADA

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The RBC Taylor Prize Congratulations, nominees!

What happens now?
What if you win?



**BOOKNET
CANADA**

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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 2017 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 all the winners from 2012 to 2017.

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 2017 RBC Taylor Prize shortlisted titles by volume sold and includes a look at overall sales in the Non-Fiction market 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 2017 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 2012 to 2017, 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 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 physical 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 most major independent bookstores, and many smaller ones but not all, any of which could be actively promoting an award winner. It also does not capture some specialty independent bookstores 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.

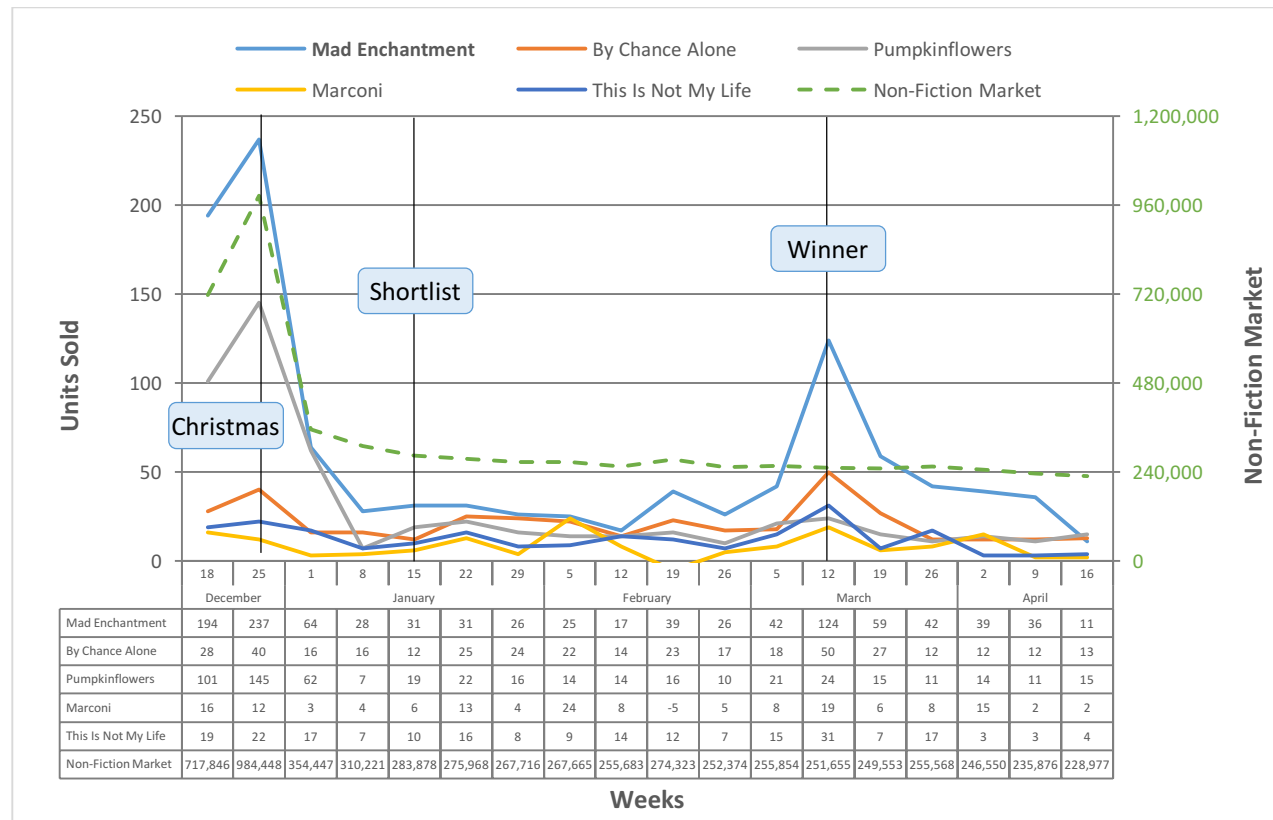
New booksellers have begun contributing to BNC SalesData since our first literary awards study, conducted in October 2006. Some changes seen in year-over-year sales figures may be due to the increased number of stores reporting sales, rather than a true increase in overall sales.

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

The RBC Taylor Prize 2017

Organized by The Writers' Trust of Canada
Nominations announced: Jan. 11, 2017
Winners announced: March 6, 2017

Volume Sold for All Shortlist Titles and Winner



Shortlist announcement (Jan. 11, 2017):

The impact of the shortlist announcement varied by title. While two titles experienced a sales decline after the shortlist announcement, three saw increases in sales. *Marconi* experienced the highest sales increase of 105%, but units sold for this title were minimal. Declines in sales are likely because the announcement takes place after Christmas, when consumer behaviour is on a decline.

Winner announcement (March 6, 2017):

The winner announcement increased sales for *Mad Enchantment*, *By Chance Alone*, and *Marconi*. Once again, *Marconi* experienced the greatest increase of 125%, but the title sold the fewest units out of the five nominated titles during the 18-week period. Meanwhile, the winner, *Mad Enchantment* experienced a sales increase of 65%, and sold the most units, almost double the next highest number of sales among the five titles during the 18 weeks observed.

Nominee

Max Eisen's *By Chance Alone*

A Remarkable True Story of Courage and Survival at Auschwitz

HarperCollins Publishers

Hardcover Trade

9781443449281

\$32.99

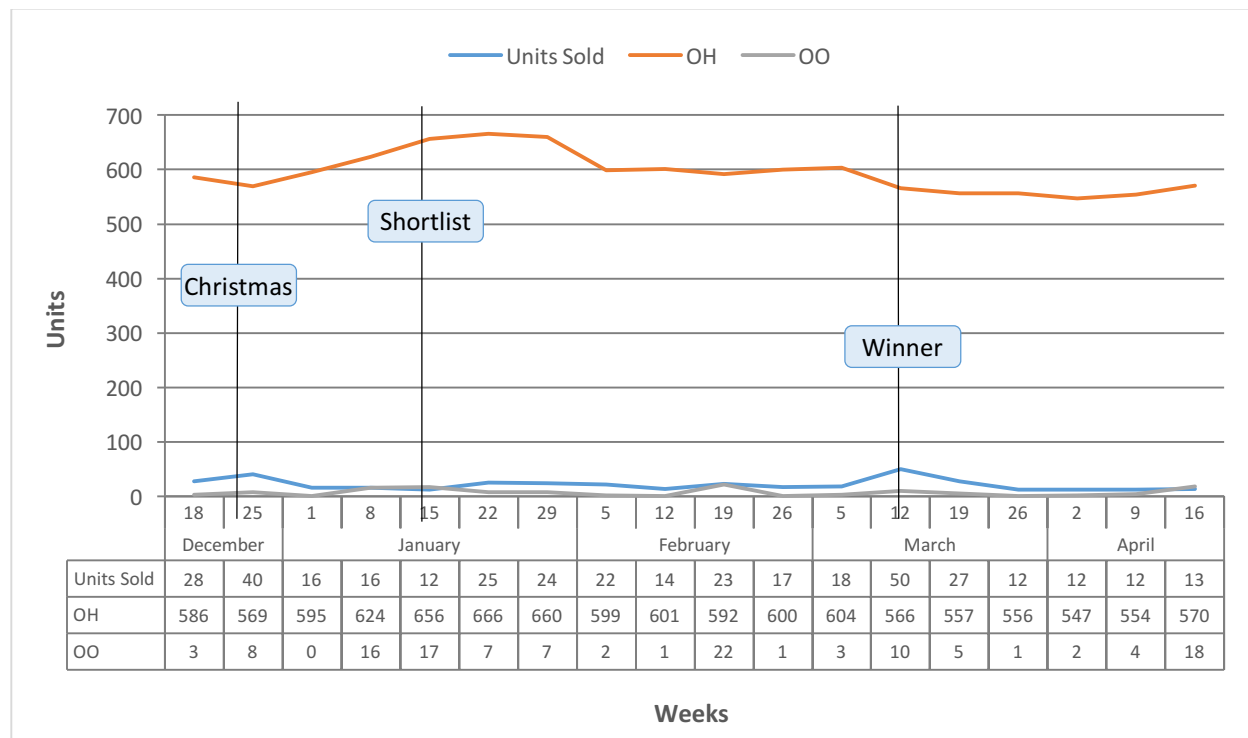
Trade Paperback

9781443448536

\$22.99



Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order



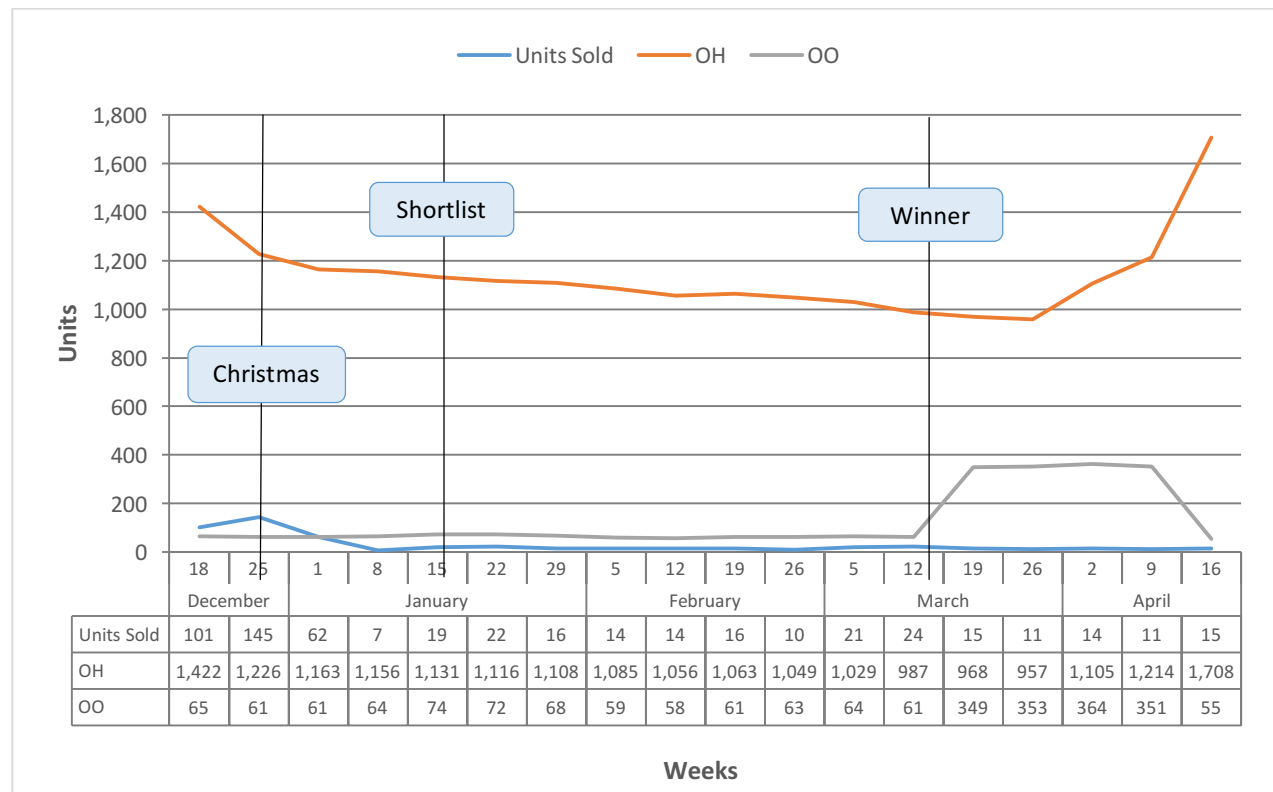
Nominee

Matti Friedman's *Pumpkinflowers* *An Israeli Soldier's Story*

McClelland & Stewart
Hardcover Trade
9780771036903
\$32.00
Trade Paperback
9780771036927
\$22.00



Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order



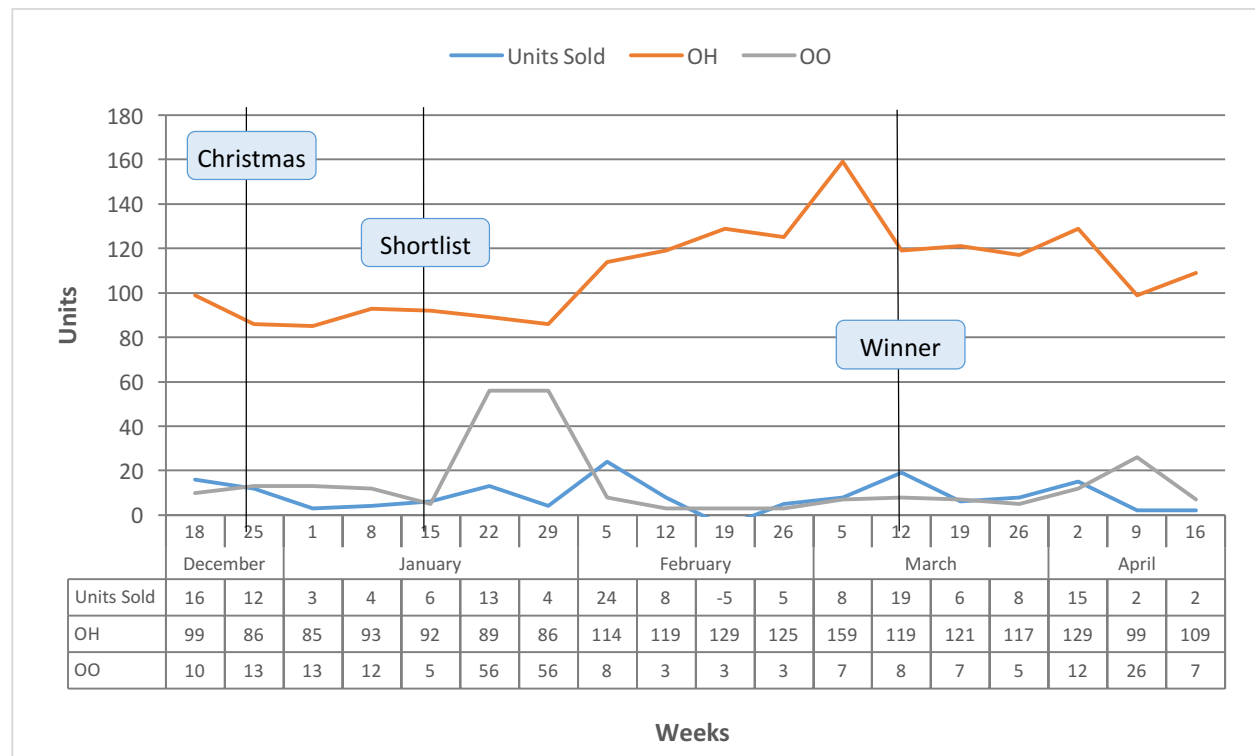
In addition to being nominated for the RBC Taylor Prize in 2017, *Pumpkinflowers* was also longlisted for the 2017 British Columbia National Award for Canadian Non-Fiction, and shortlisted for the 2016 Hilary Weston Writer's Trust Nonfiction Prize.

Nominee

Marc Raboy's *Marconi*

The Man Who Networked the World

Oxford University Press
Hardcover Trade
9780199313587
\$38.50



Marc Raboy's *Marconi* was also nominated for the 2016 Governor General's Literary Award for Non-Fiction, and would go on to be longlisted for the 2017 British Columbia National Award for Canadian Non-Fiction.

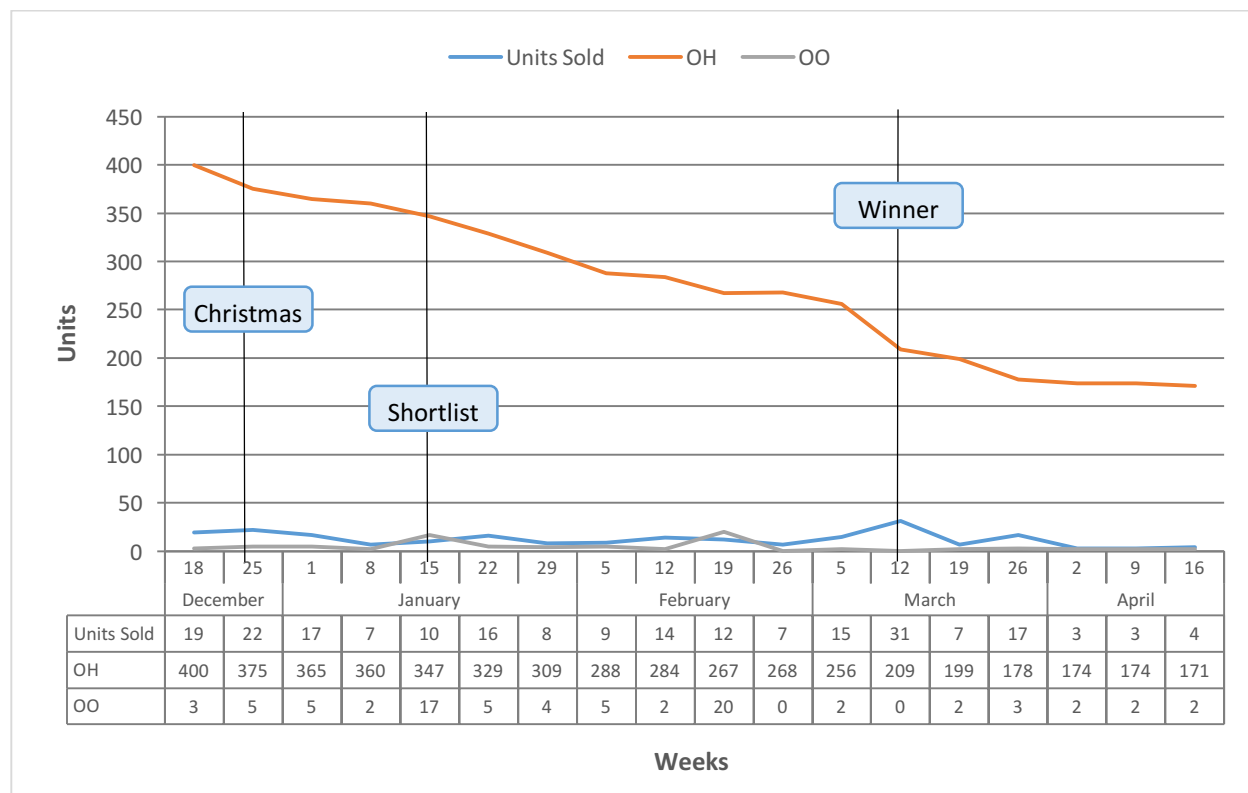
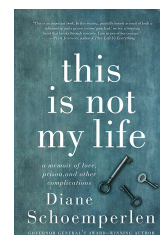
Nominee

Diane Schoemperlen's *This Is Not My Life*

A Memoir of Love, Prison, and Other Complications

Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order

HarperCollins
Trade Paperback
9781443434201
\$24.99

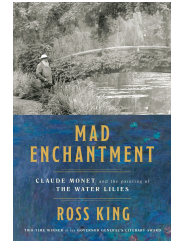


Winner

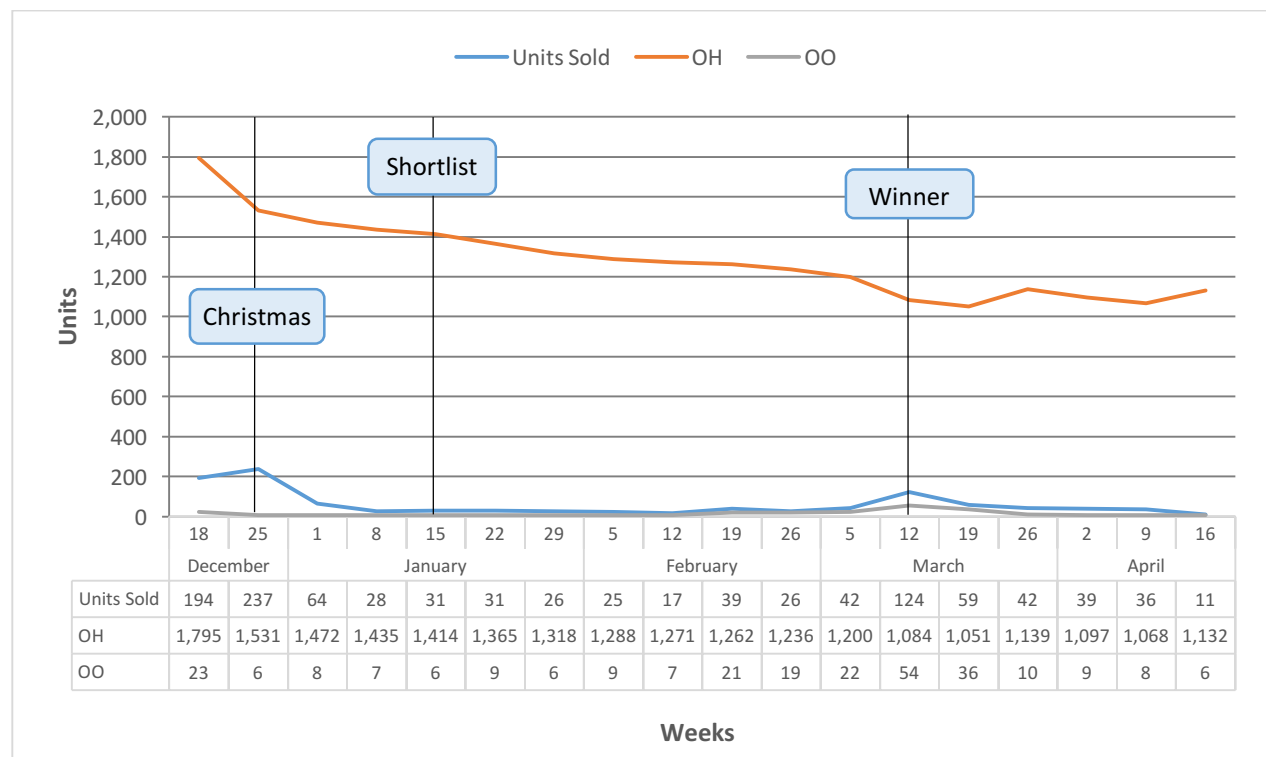
Ross King's *Mad Enchantment*

Claude Monet and the Painting of the Water Lilies

Doubleday Canada
Hardcover Trade
9780385684620
\$39.95



Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order



In addition to winning the 2017 RBC Taylor Prize, *Mad Enchantment* was also shortlisted for the 2016 Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for Nonfiction, and would go on to be longlisted for the 2017 British Columbia National Award for Canadian Non-Fiction.

Year-over-year Comparison 2012–2017

2017

Ross King's *Mad Enchantment*
Doubleday Canada
Hardcover Trade | 9780385684620 | \$39.95

2016

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

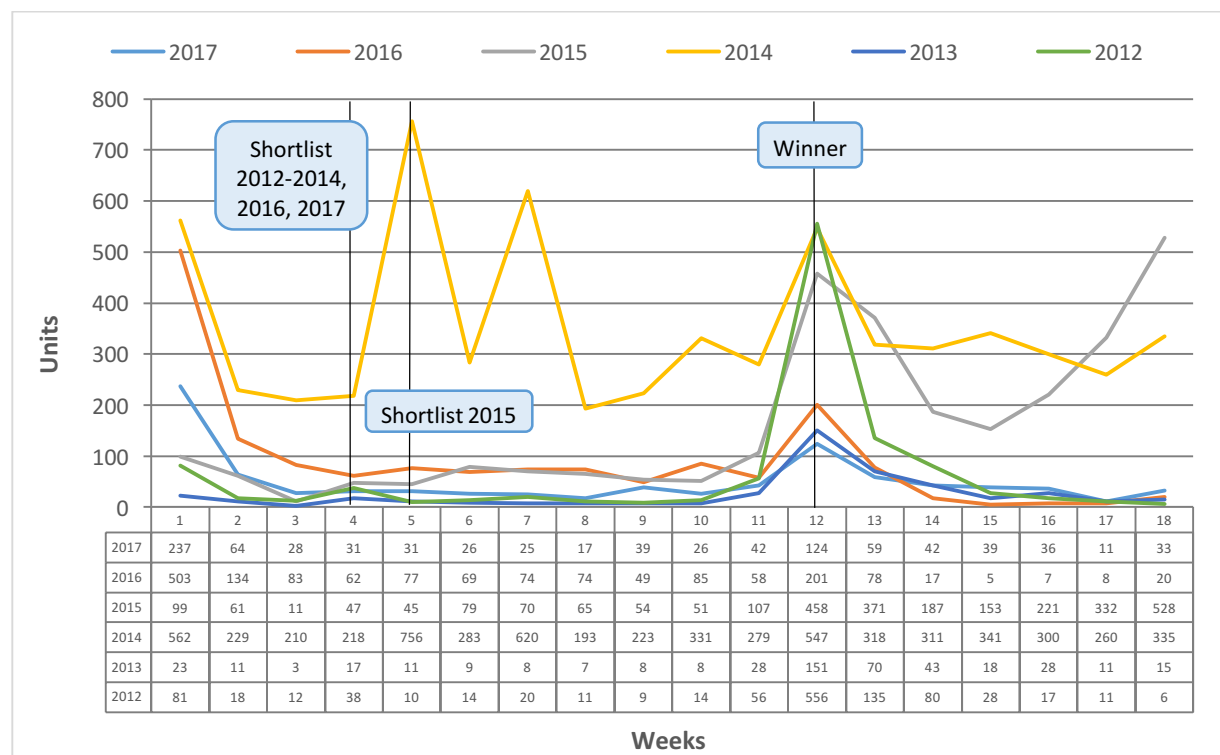
2013

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

Winner Comparison – Volume Sold



The RBC Taylor Prize clearly has a positive sales effect on winning titles; all of the winning titles in the past six years experienced a sales increase after the winner announcement. *The Inconvenient Indian* experienced the highest sales numbers during this 18-week period, more than double the units sold of the title with the second highest number of sales. *The Inconvenient Indian* was likely influenced by the other awards it received 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 2017 saw an increase in sales immediately following the winner announcement.
- The impact of the shortlist announcement was varied for the nominated titles; while some titles experienced an increase in sales following the announcement, others experienced decreases. As the shortlist is announced after the holiday season, overall consumer behaviour is on the decline during this time period.
- Overall, sales for the winning titles from 2012-2017 were positively affected by the award. This year's winner, *Mad Enchantment*, sold the most units of the five nominated titles in 2017 during the 18-week period observed.
- Thomas King's *The Inconvenient Indian* also won the 2014 British Columbia's National Award for Canadian Non-Fiction, and the 2013 Canadian Booksellers Association Libris Award for Non-Fiction Book of the Year, in addition to being nominated for Canada Reads 2015, the 2014 Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for Nonfiction, and the 2013 Trillium Award. The book experienced the highest overall sales of all the winning titles, likely a result of the additional publicity garnered from winning and being nominated for multiple awards.
- That being said, different awards have varying levels of impact on book buyers: *Stalin's Daughter*, which won the 2015 Hilary Weston Writers' Trust Prize for Nonfiction, and *Mad Enchantment*, which was nominated for the same prize in 2016, did not experience the same levels of sales as *The Inconvenient Indian*.