



BNC RESEARCH

A RESEARCH REPORT BY BOOKNET CANADA

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09.2018

The Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize Congratulations, nominees!

**What happens now?
What if you win?**



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CANADA**

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 2017 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 all the winners from 2013 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 Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize shortlisted titles by volume sold and includes a look at overall sales in the Fiction market during this time. The comparison by volume sold helps us understand how the award affects consumer behaviour, and how it relates to the rise and fall of the 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 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 2013 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.

Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize 2017

Organized by The Writers' Trust of Canada

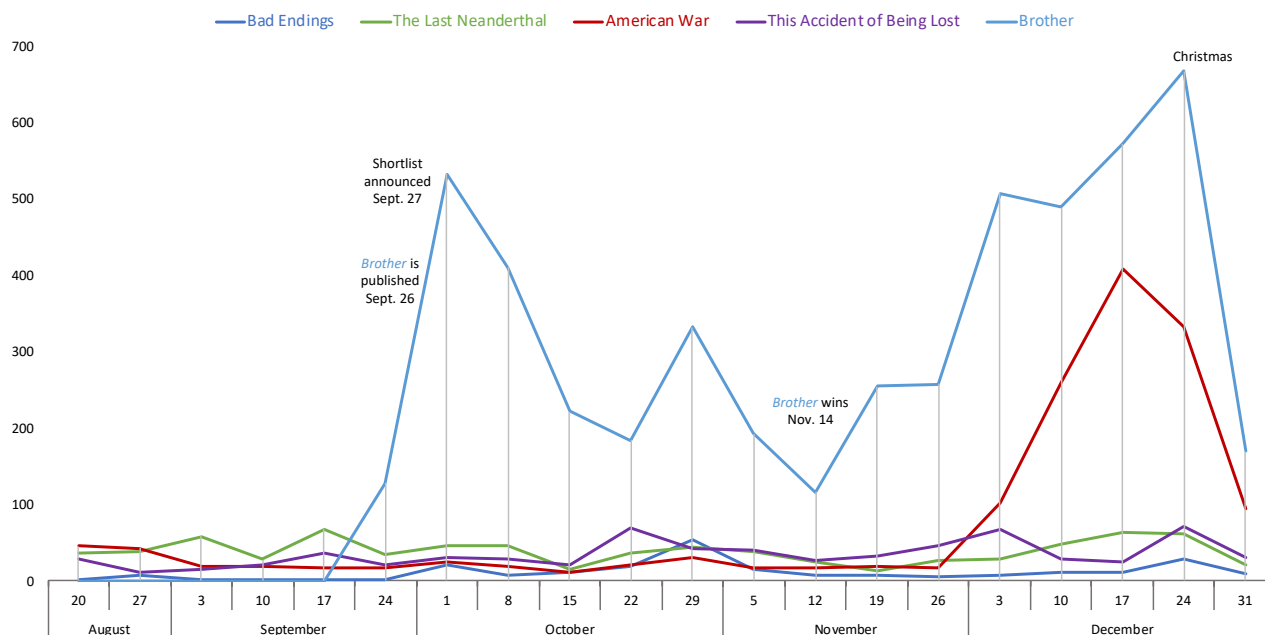
Nominations announced: Sept. 27, 2017

Winners announced: Nov. 14, 2017

Winner: *Brother*

Volume Sold

		Shortlist announced Winner announced Christmas					2017 Market		
		<i>Bad Endings</i>	<i>The Last Neanderthal</i>	<i>American War</i>	<i>This Accident of Being Lost</i>	<i>Brother</i>	Overall Unit Sales	Fiction	Week number
August	20	1	37	46	29	0	113	270,627	1
	27	8	39	43	12	0	102	266,655	2
September	3	1	58	19	15	0	93	288,340	3
	10	1	28	20	21	0	70	258,440	4
	17	1	68	17	37	0	123	273,462	5
	24	2	35	18	22	128	205	266,943	6
October	1	22	46	24	30	533	655	291,736	7
	8	7	46	19	28	411	511	286,055	8
	15	12	15	11	21	222	281	244,897	9
	22	20	36	22	70	184	332	249,668	10
	29	54	45	30	43	332	504	253,616	11
November	5	16	39	17	41	193	306	272,165	12
	12	7	25	17	27	116	192	264,804	13
	19	8	14	19	33	255	329	269,935	14
December	26	6	27	18	46	258	355	308,600	15
	3	7	28	102	67	507	711	344,422	16
	10	11	49	260	29	489	838	386,581	17
	17	12	63	409	24	572	1,080	444,153	18
	24	28	61	333	72	667	1,161	570,090	19
	31	9	22	94	31	170	326	279,557	20



Shortlist announcement (Sept. 27, 2017):

The winning title, *Brother*, experienced a sales increase of 863% following the shortlist announcement, when units sold quadrupled from the prior week; the title was published on Sept. 26, the day before the shortlist announcement. All five of the nominated titles experienced a sales increase the week of the shortlist announcement, however sales went down or were flat the following week. *Bad Endings* experienced a sales increase of 425% following the shortlist announcement while the other increases hovered around 3-5%.

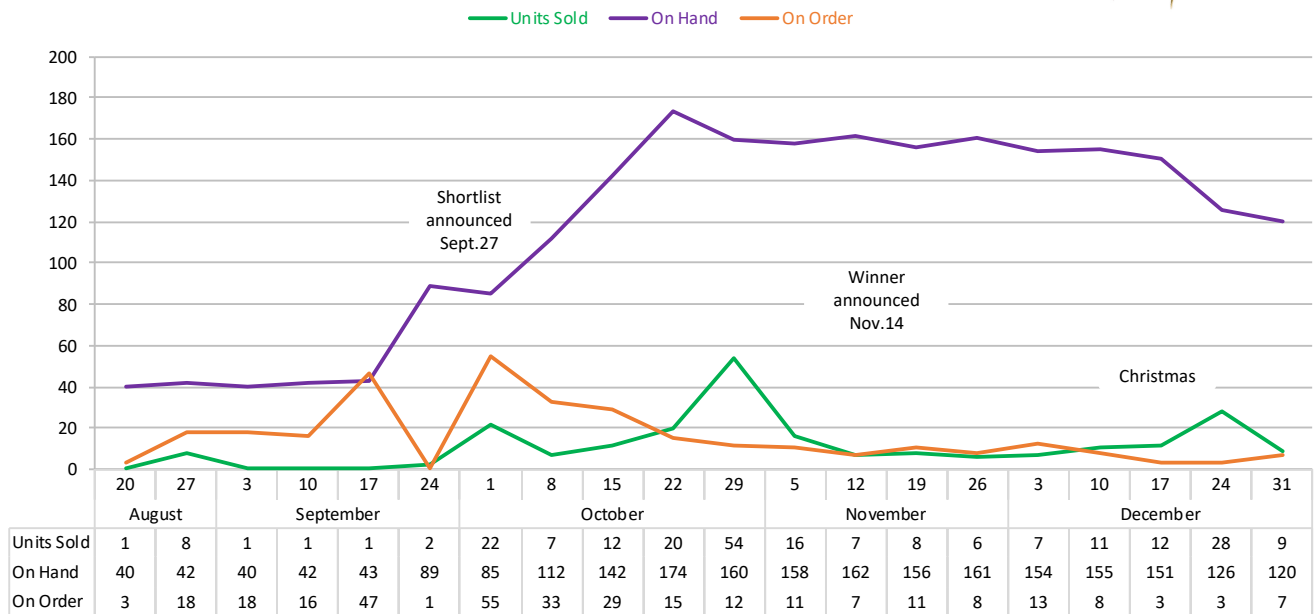
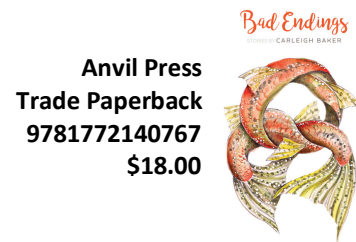
Winner announcement (Nov. 14, 2017):

The winning title, *Brother*, experienced a sales increase of 20% following the winner announcement. *This Accident of Being Lost* and *The Last Neanderthal* experienced the greatest increases in unit sales during this week. *American War* had the largest decrease in sales but sold the second highest number of units over the 20-week period, selling over 1,500 units. *Brother* had the highest number of units sold, selling over 5,000 copies.

Nominee

Carleigh Baker's *Bad Endings*

Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order

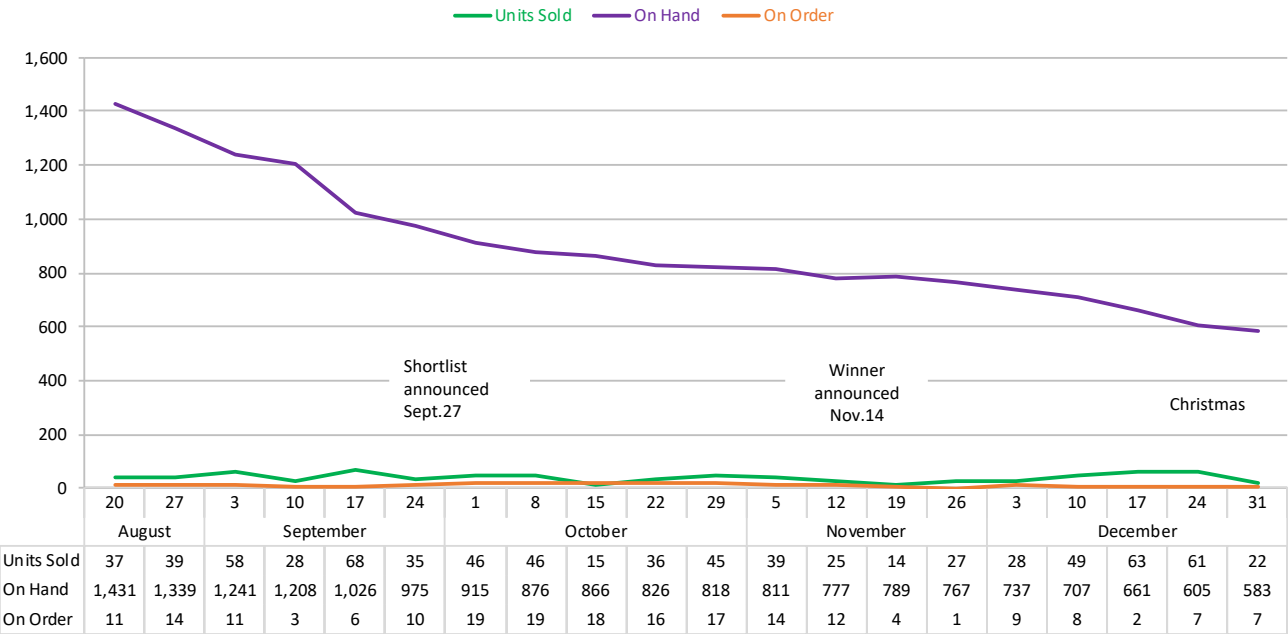
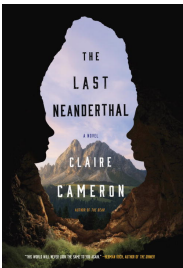


Nominee

Claire Cameron's *The Last Neanderthal*

Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order

Doubleday Canada
Hardcover Trade
9780385686785
\$29.95

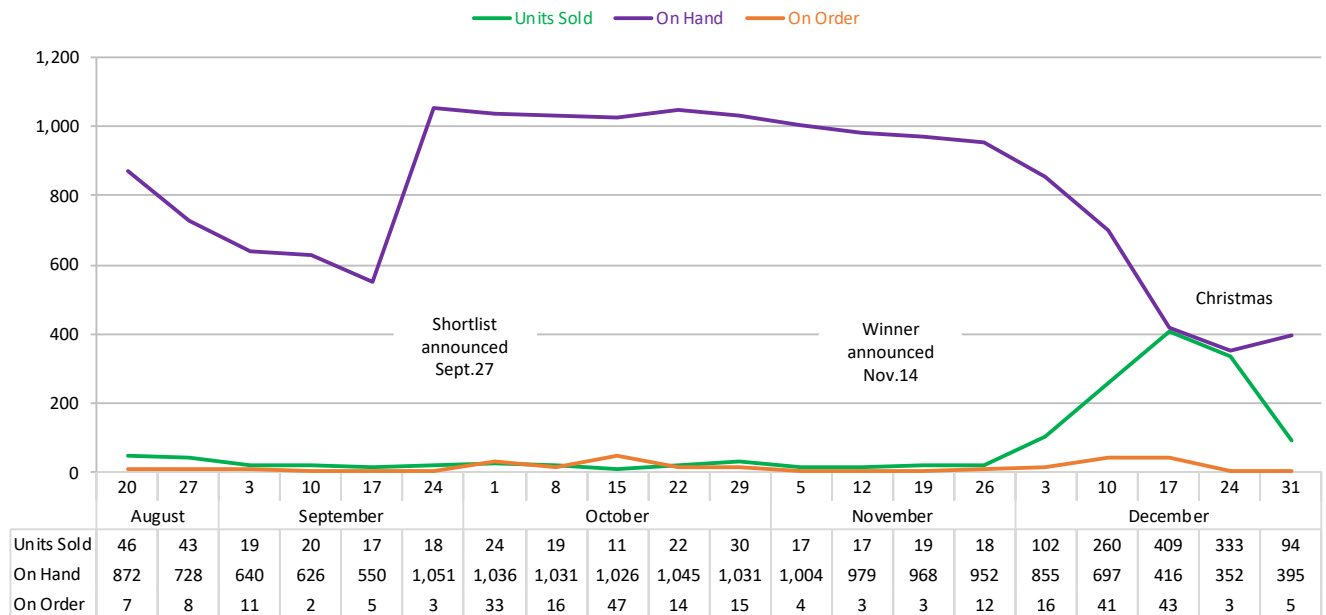
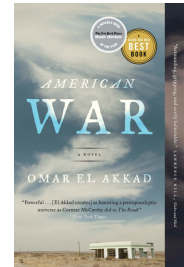


Nominee

Omar El Akkad's *American War*

Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order

**McClelland &
Stewart**
Hardcover Trade
9780771009396
\$32.95



American War went on to be nominated for Canada Reads 2018 on Jan. 30, 2018.

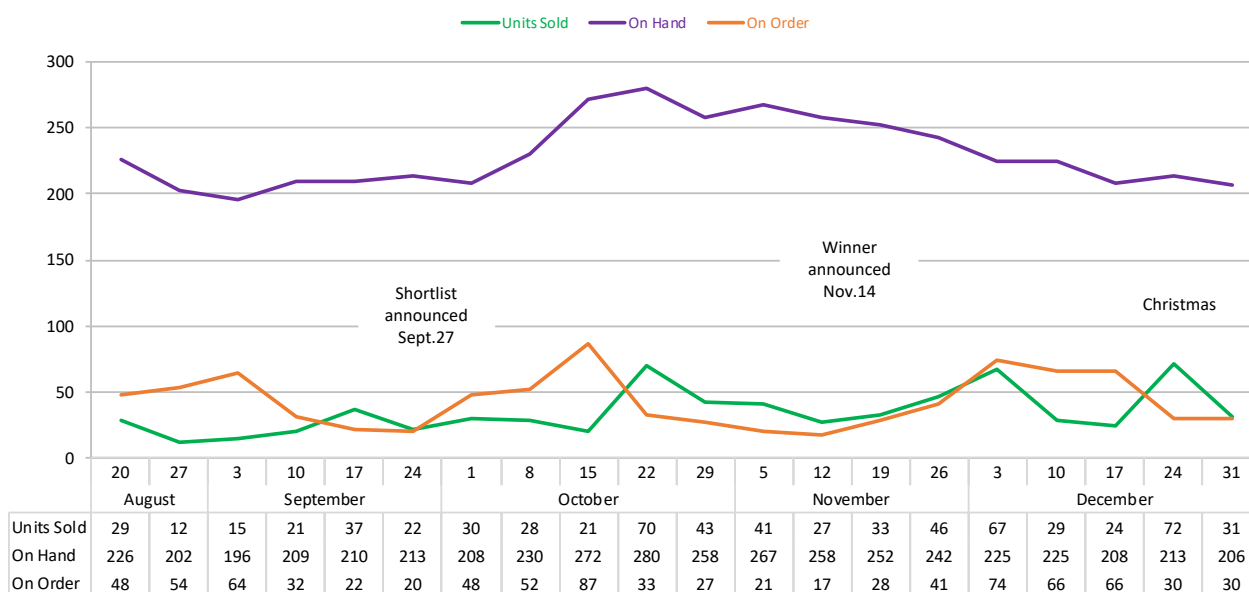
Nominee

Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's *This Accident of Being Lost*

House of Anansi Press
Trade Paperback
9781487001278
\$19.95



Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order

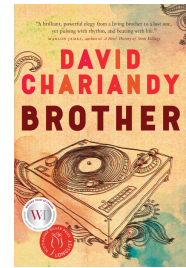


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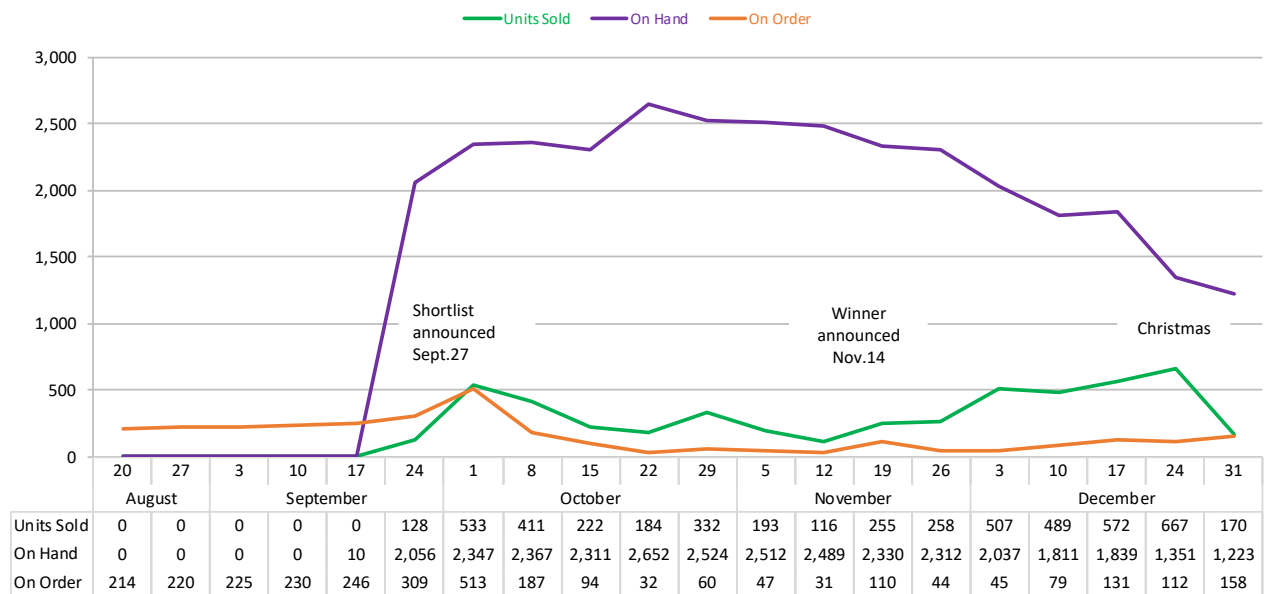
Winner

David Chariandy's *Brother*

McClelland &
Stewart
Hardcover Trade
9780771022906
\$25.00



Sales vs. On Hand vs. On Order



Brother was published on Sept. 26, 2017.

Year-Over-Year Comparison 2013–2017

2017

David Chariandy's *Brother*

McClelland & Stewart

Hardcover Trade | 9780771022906 | \$25.00

2015

André Alexis's *Fifteen Dogs*

Coach House Books

Trade Paperback | 9781552453056 | \$19.95

2013

Colin McAdam's *A Beautiful Truth*

Penguin Publishing Group

Hardcover Trade | 9780670066360 | \$30.00

2016

Yasuko Thanh's *Mysterious Fragrance of the Yellow Mountains*

Penguin Canada

Trade Paperback | 9780670068784 | \$24.95

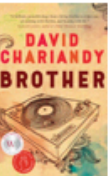
2014

Miriam Toews's *All My Puny Sorrows*

Knopf Canada

Hardcover Trade | 9780345808004 | \$29.95

Winner Comparison – Volume Sold

	 Christmas	 Shortlist announced	 Winner announced		
	<i>A Beautiful Truth</i> Colin McAdam	<i>All My Puny Sorrows</i> Miriam Toews	<i>Fifteen Dogs</i> André Alexis	<i>Mysterious Fragrance of the Yellow Mountains</i> Yasuko Thanh	<i>Brother</i> David Chariandy
					
Week	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
1	26	225	20	11	0
2	19	209	18	5	0
3	12	246	22	4	0
4	14	170	53	8	0
5	5	209	79	6	128
6	19	286	90	10	533
7	28	303	131	15	411
8	30	275	84	11	222
9	18	507	356	59	184
10	30	1,162	283	8	332
11	27	413	237	7	193
12	38	428	357	13	116
13	86	637	1,018	49	255
14	116	948	4,315	24	258
15	107	729	4,131	33	507
16	59	720	3,826	55	489
17	157	1,151	6,961	47	572
18	69	1,402	8,554	107	667
19	20	2,479	9,882	122	170
20	15	1,890	9,420	226	112



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A Beautiful Truth (2013) was shortlisted for the 2013 Governor General’s Fiction Award, in addition to winning the 2013 Rogers Writers’ Trust Fiction Prize. *Fifteen Dogs* (2015) experienced the highest sales peaks of the winning titles; it was also nominated for several other awards: it won the 2015 Scotiabank Giller Prize, was a finalist for the 2015 Toronto Book Awards, and went on to win Canada Reads in 2017. *Fifteen Dogs* experienced a sales increase of 256% the week of the shortlist announcement and sold the most units (49,000) over the 20-week period of all the winning titles since 2013. *Brother* experienced the largest sales increase of 863% the week of the shortlist announcement and had the third highest unit sales over the 20-week period. All winning titles experienced a sales increase the week of the winner announcement. Most titles peaked in the week before and of Christmas.

Conclusion

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

- Being shortlisted for the award does not necessarily have a large impact on sales. Historically, the winning titles have slightly higher sales numbers than other non-winning shortlisted titles.
- Titles with multiple nominations fare better than those with one. The winning title with the highest sales is André Alexis's *Fifteen Dogs*. *Fifteen Dogs* won the Scotiabank Giller Prize in addition to the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize, as well as receiving other nominations.
- Winning an award increases sales. However, this may be influenced by the winner announcement being made six weeks before Christmas.