



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada

Public Lending
Right Program

Programme du droit
de prêt public

PUBLIC LENDING RIGHT COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT

on the activities

of the PLR Commission

and

of the PLR Program

2014–2015



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The Public Lending Right (PLR)

Program aims to encourage

Canadian authors to maintain their

rightful place in the development

of our cultural life. PLR payments

constitute fair compensation for

free public access and enjoyment

of library books.

THE PUBLIC LENDING RIGHT PROGRAM

Canada's Public Lending Right (PLR) program was created in 1986, and has delivered annual compensation ever since. Canadian authors are invited to register their titles with the program during the registration period, which is open from February 15-May 1 each year. Literary and scholarly works across a range of genres (fiction, poetry, drama, non-fiction, and children's literature) are eligible for consideration. Eligible contributions to a registered title include original writing, illustration, photography, and translation. Titles are checked annually against the catalogued holdings of a selection of public library systems serving each official language group, including public reference libraries and provincial networks where possible.

Payments to authors begin at \$50 and are determined by the extent to which eligible titles are discovered in the annual library catalogue surveys. The rate of compensation accorded to an eligible title is determined by a payment scale. This sliding scale comprises four levels which correspond to the number of years a title has been registered with the program. Each year the available budget, in tandem with the results of the library sampling and the number of eligible claims, serves to determine the maximum amount that an author can receive. In 2014-15, this amount was \$3,563. Authors have now registered a remarkable 94,975 eligible books with the PLR Program.

The Public Lending Right Commission (PLRC) is a permanent advisory body of the Canada Council for the Arts charged with administrative oversight of the program, with responsibility for maintaining the program's eligibility criteria, sampling methodology, and general policies. The PLRC is comprised of individuals from both official language communities, who provide expertise and guidance to the program as authors, publishers, librarians, and government representatives.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As I arrive at the half way mark of my two-year mandate as Chair, I feel that the Public Lending Right Commission has turned an important corner. This past February \$9,737,850 was distributed to 16,865 Canadian authors. The implementation of the new minimum payment level of fifty dollars, combined with the sliding scale introduced in past years, have brought a degree of modernization to the manner in which compensation for authors is allocated. This means that newer titles are remunerated more robustly, mirroring more closely the arc in the life of the book itself. While these measures were introduced to address the challenge of calibrating a constant increase in registered titles against a static budget, establishing a “floor” has resulted in a minimum payment that is meaningful in terms of monetary value. I am of the opinion that through careful and informed deliberation, over the years the Commission has introduced methods to make the PLR budget go far. As the Commission’s Chair, I am committed to working with the Canada Council to respond to the constant growth in the program and to advocate for continued support and augmentation of the program’s ability to provide compensation to authors for public use of their books.

I have had occasion to meet for one-on-one discussions with the Canada Council’s Director, Simon Brault, twice since assuming my mandate as Chair of the Public Lending Right Commission. In both instances, I was impressed by how well he understands the program, and the challenges authors, libraries and publishers face. In March of this year, Mr. Brault came to the Commission’s Executive Committee meeting and described his vision, as well as the process of change he has set in motion for the Canada Council and its management of arts funding. Mr. Brault was very clear about the fact that PLR compensates authors for the use of their books in Canadian public libraries, that it is therefore distinct from the other Council programs by its nature. Throughout, Mr. Brault has been open and supportive, while demonstrating depth of understanding and knowledge of the history of Public Lending Right.

In the fall of 2014 consultant Paul Whitney and his associates were engaged to carry out a research study that will inform future means of sampling titles in public libraries, one which more readily reflects regional diversity in the use of books by the Canadian public. That study is now in its final stages, with the research team set to report to the Commission at its June meeting. As well, 2016 will see the introduction of PLR registration for payment for use of eBooks by Canadian authors held in Canadian public library collections. Importantly, the Canada Council has set forth a review of governance best practices for the PLRC, in consultation with the Commission proper, to assure a vibrant future.

Looking forward, I am optimistic that PLR will flourish and continue to be a strong cultural force in Canada.

Beatriz Hausner
Chair

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

These are challenging, exciting times. The Public Lending Right Commission prepares for its annual June meeting at a moment when Ottawa itself is engaged in its own spirited conversation about the possible future of a new central library, the Canadian Library Association is set to hold its 2015 conference at a venue across Confederation Park from our home inside the Canada Council for the Arts at 150 Elgin Street, and the impact of digital culture and new modes of accessing content has become undeniable. We are in the midst of an age of renewal and anticipation – as the Canada Council follows through on its public commitment to restructure and renew its suite of granting programs, the Public Lending Right program has been pursuing further research into renewal and modernization of its own, just as public libraries are becoming increasingly essential and dynamic institutions in our rapidly-changing world.

In February of this year, PLR staff once again delivered results to Canadian authors registered for compensation with the program, payment which reflects the value of free public use and enjoyment of their work in Canadian libraries. As always, the preparation and assembly of the results was a team effort, involving many colleagues from across the Canada Council, in areas of expertise ranging from Finance and Information Technology to Communications and Administrative Services. Once again, PLR is fortunate to have at its disposal the core team of Benoît Rollin, Rachelle Lanoue, and Danielle Guindon who work so tirelessly on behalf of the program and its participants.

The Public Lending Right Commission, by virtue of the dedication of the talented writers, publishers, and librarians who comprise its voting membership, has been successful on numerous fronts in the past year. With this year's program cycle, a revised payment threshold was introduced to widespread acceptance by the author community, who recognize the need for any program of support to remain relevant and contemporary. The Commission also continued its pursuit of knowledge on behalf of building an even stronger program, by endorsing extensive research work into library holdings and potential new methods of calculating author payments. This work builds on the program's longstanding and productive collaboration with library professionals across the country and in both official language communities.

In 2011, the members of the Commission moved to recognize electronic books as potentially eligible for inclusion in the program. Following years of further study and incremental development, the active registration of certain ebook formats will begin in February, 2016.

The images we have selected for inclusion in this year's report continue our tradition of saluting excellent and innovative architectural design in Canadian public libraries. Last year, we recognized striking new buildings in Montréal and Toronto. In 2015, we expand our regional focus to highlight the opening of new libraries in Edmonton and Halifax, events which have stirred great public interest and justifiable civic pride.

To all the members of the Commission, and especially current Chair Beatriz Hausner, I extend my sincere thanks for a productive year.

Peter Schneider
Executive Secretary and Program Manager



The Edmonton Public Library - Jasper Place Branch | La succursale Place Jasper de la Bibliothèque publique d'Edmonton

Architect: Hughes Condon Marler Architects in joint-venture with Dub Architects, an Edmonton-based firm

Architecte : Hughes Condon Marler Architects en partenariat avec la firme Dub Architects, d'Edmonton

The Jasper Place branch officially opened in February 2013.
L'ouverture de la nouvelle succursale Place Jasper a eu lieu en février 2013.

Photos: © Edmonton Public Library

MEMBERS AND STAFF

(AS OF MARCH 31ST, 2015)

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ET DES TECHNIQUES DE LA DOCUMENTATION

Erin Creasey
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Mae Denby
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THE WRITERS' UNION OF CANADA

Genni Gunn

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Louis-Philippe Hébert
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Philippe Sauvageau

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Robert Hunter (ex-officio member)
DEPARTMENT OF CANADIAN HERITAGE

Peter Schneider (Executive Secretary)

Benoît Rollin (Program Officer)

Rachelle Lanoue (Administrative Coordinator)

Danielle Guindon (Clerk)

* Writer appointed as member by the PLR Commission

COMMENTS ON THE STATISTICAL REPORT

The report on the 29th year of the Public Lending Right (PLR) program provides an overview of the repercussions of the program's growth, the ongoing results of the application of the payment scale and the impact of the new minimum payment threshold.

As is standard practice, the program statistics are based on three elements: number of authors, number of titles, and payments.

The tables on program growth indicate a steady increase in the number of authors and titles registered, with annual growth comparable to the rate of increase seen in previous years. The number of registered authors now stands at 20,504, a new record. The program's permanent staff of four persons now uses digital technology to preserve and access archival records of 95,610 registered titles. As noted in previous years, the further development of online author registration tools and direct deposit of payments will only enhance our ability to manage the volume of registrations effectively.

Significantly, the number of authors receiving payment declined in this program cycle, owing to the introduction of a higher minimum payment floor of \$50. The number of cheques issued by the program decreased from 18,668 in 2014 to 16,865 this year. The revised payment floor, which had remained unchanged over many years, ensures that the value of a PLR payment continues to have impact and provide meaningful value to recipients. In this year's program cycle, the average payment increased slightly, from \$523 to \$577; the median author payment also increased by more than sixteen percent, rising from \$237 to just under \$275. At the same time, owing to a higher number of titles found in this year's sampling, the maximum payment per title dipped slightly, from \$367.99 in 2013-14 to \$356.30. Despite the introduction of the growth management scale in the program's 24th year, the predictable increase in both registered authors and eligible titles discovered in the annual library surveys suggest that continued refinement of the sliding scale will be required in order to assure that current and future generations of literary creators continue to benefit meaningfully from the program.

Although we can foresee that the financial resources available to create payments are unlikely to keep pace with the level of author interest in the program, the changing demographics of Canada and evolving public use patterns in libraries call for a responsive approach to calculating PLR compensation that is both fair and forward-looking. As noted in previous years, the inclusion of more regional library collections in the determination of payments and the possibility of considering the numbers of copies of eligible works that are circulating are key elements that can help to provide additional precision in the calculation of payments. With the anticipated arrival of PLR payments for electronic books in the 2016-17 program cycle, nuanced management of the available budget will become even more critical.

STATISTICAL ACTIVITY REPORT

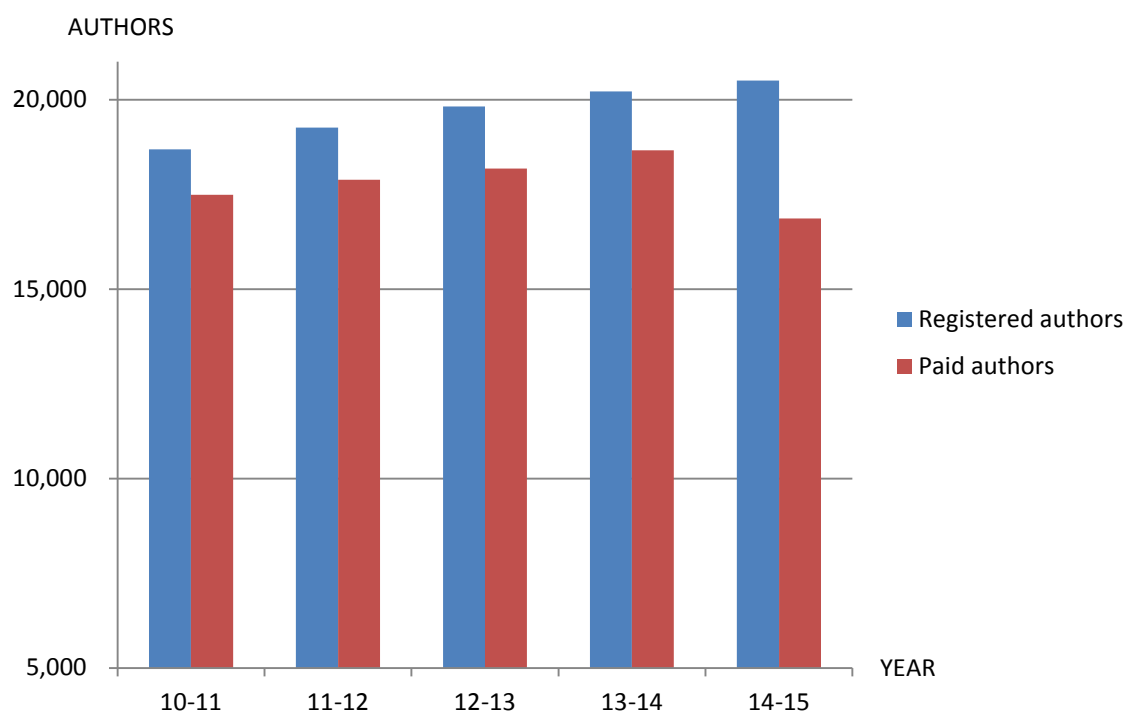
OVERVIEW OF THE 29TH YEAR OF THE PLR PROGRAM

	2013–2014	2014–2015	VARIATION
Authors registered	20,218	20,504	1.41%
Authors receiving a payment	18,668	16,865	-9.66%
Authors not meeting the \$50 threshold		2,335	
Registered titles	92,330	95,610	3.55%
Eligible titles	91,738	94,975	3.53%
Titles receiving a payment	77,479	80,034	3.30%
Amount distributed to authors	\$9,762,247	\$9,737,850	-0.25%
Average payment	\$523	\$577	10.33%
Minimum payment	\$25	\$50	
Median payment	\$236.56	\$274.86	16.19%
Maximum payment	\$3,679.90	\$3,563.00	-3.18%
Maximum amount paid per book (category I)	\$367.99	\$356.30	-3.18%
Maximum amount paid per book (category II)	\$294.42	\$285.04	-3.19%
Maximum amount paid per book (category III)	\$257.60	\$249.41	-3.18%
Maximum amount paid per book (category IV)	\$220.78	\$213.78	-3.17%

Growth: new authors

	2012–2013	2013–2014	2014–2015
New authors registered			
English			412
French			308
Total	890	731	720
New authors receiving payment			
English			300
French			234
Total	637	585	534
Amounts paid to new authors			
English			\$71,823
French			\$76,640
Total	\$194,520	\$165,251	\$148,463

Growth: registered authors and paid authors (2010–2015)



Distribution of author payments

1. PAYMENTS BY RANGE AND BY LANGUAGE (2014–2015)

Payments	Language	Authors	% of total authors	Total paid	% of total budget
From \$50.00 to \$274.86	E	5,773	34.23%	\$797,036	8.18%
	F	2,672	15.84%	\$400,666	4.11%
	E+F	8,445	50.07%	\$1,197,702	12.29%
From \$274.87 to \$577.00	E	2,208	13.09%	\$878,263	9.02%
	F	1,439	8.53%	\$574,261	5.90%
	E+F	3,647	21.62%	\$1,452,524	14.92%
From \$577.01 to \$999.99	E	1,157	6.86%	\$879,327	9.03%
	F	883	5.24%	\$673,584	6.92%
	E+F	2,040	12.10%	\$1,552,911	15.95%
From \$1,000.00 to \$1,999.99	E	883	5.24%	\$1,223,451	12.56%
	F	750	4.45%	\$1,035,392	10.63%
	E+F	1,633	9.69%	\$2,258,843	23.19%
From \$2,000.00 to \$2,999.99	E	283	1.68%	\$689,963	7.09%
	F	252	1.49%	\$617,487	6.34%
	E+F	535	3.17%	\$1,307,450	13.43%
From \$3,000.00 to \$3,562.99	E	76	0.45%	\$247,398	2.54%
	F	71	0.42%	\$231,688	2.38%
	E+F	147	0.87%	\$479,086	4.92%
Maximum \$3,563.00	E	171	1.01%	\$609,273	6.26%
	F	247	1.46%	\$880,061	9.04%
	E+F	418	2.47%	\$1,489,334	15.30%
Total	E	10,551	62.56%	\$5,324,712	54.68%
	F	6,314	37.44%	\$4,413,138	45.32%
	E+F	16,865	100%	\$9,737,850	100%

Median: The median of a population is the point that divides the distribution of scores in half.

In February 2015, 8,445 authors (50%) received \$274.86 or less. They shared 12.29% of the budget.

Average: In February 2015, the average payment was \$577. 12,092 authors (71.69%) received \$577 or less.

They shared 27.21% of the budget. 4,773 authors (28.31%) received more than \$577. They shared 72.79% of the budget.

Distribution of author payments

2. PAYMENTS BY PROVINCE AND TERRITORY (2014-2015)

Province/ Territory	Registered authors	% of total registered authors	Number of payments	% of total paid authors	% of authors receiving a payment	Total paid	% of total budget
Newfoundland and Labrador	282	1.38%	226	1.34%	80.14%	\$93,335	0.96%
Nova Scotia	721	3.52%	581	3.45%	80.58%	\$258,828	2.66%
Prince Edward Island	92	0.45%	68	0.40%	73.91%	\$32,503	0.33%
New Brunswick	448	2.18%	365	2.16%	81.47%	\$163,055	1.67%
Quebec	7,126	34.75%	6,280	37.24%	88.13%	\$4,351,457	44.69%
Ontario	6,435	31.38%	5,053	29.96%	78.52%	\$2,709,057	27.82%
Manitoba	492	2.40%	355	2.10%	72.15%	\$134,690	1.38%
Saskatchewan	374	1.82%	321	1.90%	85.83%	\$153,076	1.57%
Alberta	1007	4.91%	766	4.54%	76.07%	\$403,946	4.15%
British Columbia	2,869	13.99%	2,301	13.64%	80.20%	\$1,152,670	11.84%
Northwest Territories	17	0.08%	17	0.10%	100.00%	\$8,740	0.09%
Yukon	32	0.16%	29	0.17%	90.63%	\$11,468	0.12%
Nunavut	2	0.01%	2	0.01%	100.00%	\$115	0.00%
Outside Canada	607	2.96%	501	2.97%	82.54%	\$264,909	2.72%
Total	20,504	100%	16,865	100%	82.25%	\$9,737,850	100%

Example: In 2014-15, 80.20% of registered British Columbia authors received a payment. This represents 13.64% of paid authors. These authors received 11.84% of the payment budget.

Growth: new titles

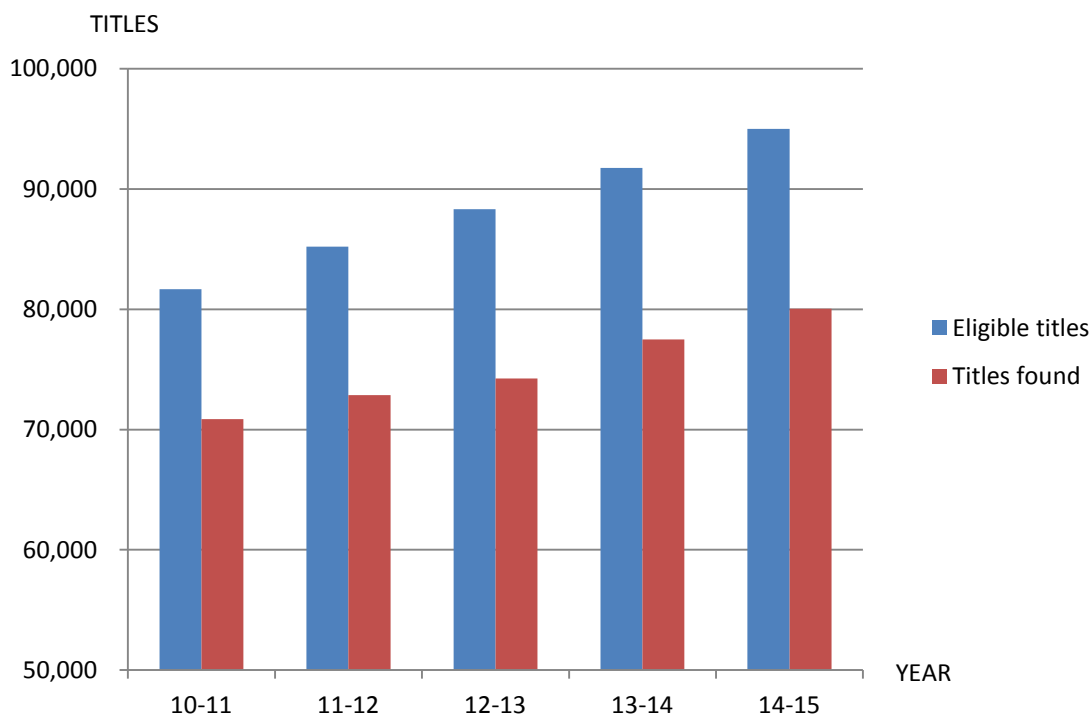
	2012–2013	2013–2014	2014–2015
New titles			
English			2,609
French			2,160
Bilingual			29
Other			154
Total	5,176	5,137	4,952
New eligible titles			
English			2,320
French			1,870
Bilingual			18
Other			136
Total	4,400	4,565	4,344
New titles found in sampled libraries			
English			1,699
French			1,734
Bilingual			9
Other			46
Total	3,512	3,685	3,491
Amounts paid for new titles			
English			\$305,867
French			\$353,847
Bilingual			\$1,124
Other			\$4,650
Total	\$681,295	\$705,183	\$665,488

New eligible titles by language and by category (2014–2015)

Category	English	French	Other	Bilingual	Total	% of total titles
Children's	598	756	36	1	1,391	32.02%
Fiction	658	554	33	3	1,248	28.73%
Poetry	221	168	21	6	416	9.58%
Drama	40	32	1	0	73	1.68%
Non-Fiction*	803	360	45	8	1,216	27.99%
Total	2,320	1,870	136	18	4,344	
Total in %	53.41%	43.05%	3.13%	0.41%		

*Non-fiction includes scholarly works

Growth: eligible titles and titles found (2010–2015)



Growth: eligible titles by language

Language	Year	Number of titles	Growth in comparison to previous year
English	2012–2013	52,125	2.93%
	2013–2014	53,892	3.39%
	2014–2015	55,563	3.10%
French	2012–2013	33,567	5.35%
	2013–2014	35,120	4.63%
	2014–2015	36,581	4.16%
Bilingual	2012–2013	411	4.85%
	2013–2014	423	2.92%
	2014–2015	435	2.84%
Other	2012–2013	2,197	-4.64%
	2013–2014	2,303	4.82%
	2014–2015	2,396	4.04%
Total	2012–2013	88,300	3.64%
	2013–2014	91,738	3.89%
	2014–2015	94,975	3.53%

Eligible titles found in 2014–2015

Language	Number of titles	Percentage
English	45,039	56.27%
French	33,834	42.27%
Bilingual	348	0.44%
Other	813	1.02%
Total	80,034	100%

Eligible titles by category and language

Category	Language	Number of titles	% of all same language titles	% of all titles of this category	% of all registered titles
Children	ENGLISH	11,966	21.54%	48.59%	12.60%
	FRENCH	11,964	32.71%	48.58%	12.60%
	OTHER	656	27.38%	2.66%	0.69%
	BILINGUAL	39	8.97%	0.16%	0.04%
	TOTAL	24,625			25.93%
Fiction	ENGLISH	10,872	19.57%	53.24%	11.45%
	FRENCH	9,054	24.75%	44.34%	9.53%
	OTHER	464	19.37%	2.27%	0.49%
	BILINGUAL	30	6.90%	0.15%	0.03%
	TOTAL	20,420			21.50%
Poetry	ENGLISH	5,586	10.05%	55.93%	5.88%
	FRENCH	3,908	10.68%	39.13%	4.11%
	OTHER	373	15.57%	3.73%	0.39%
	BILINGUAL	120	27.59%	1.20%	0.13%
	TOTAL	9,987			10.51%
Drama	ENGLISH	1,374	2.47%	58.47%	1.45%
	FRENCH	930	2.54%	39.57%	0.98%
	OTHER	37	1.54%	1.57%	0.04%
	BILINGUAL	9	2.07%	0.38%	0.01%
	TOTAL	2,350			2.48%
Non fiction*	ENGLISH	25,765	46.37%	68.54%	27.13%
	FRENCH	10,725	29.32%	28.53%	11.29%
	OTHER	866	36.14%	2.30%	0.91%
	BILINGUAL	237	54.48%	0.63%	0.25%
	TOTAL	37,593			39.58%
Total	ENGLISH	55,563			58.50%
	FRENCH	36,581			38.52%
	OTHER	2,396			2.52%
	BILINGUAL	435			0.46%
TOTAL OF ALL CATEGORIES		94,975			100%

Example: The 25,765 English-language non-fiction titles represent: 46.37% of all English-language eligible titles; 68.54% of all non-fiction titles; and 27.13% of all eligible titles.

* Non-fiction includes scholarly works.