

NIELSEN BOOK ANNOUNCES MICHELLE OBAMA'S *BECOMING AS THE #1 CHRISTMAS BESTSELLER*

LONDON, 18 December 2018 - For the week starting 9 December through 15 December, Michelle Obama's autobiography *Becoming* has reached the top of Nielsen's "2018 Christmas Bestsellers" list with 91.9k copies sold in this week alone. According to Nielsen Book, the leading provider of search, commerce, consumer research and retail sales analysis services for the book industry, the memoir from the former First Lady of the United States surpassed two-time seasonal chart-topper David Walliams and Joe Wicks to reach number one.

At launch, Michelle Obama initially took the number two spot behind David Walliams' *The Ice Monster*. *Becoming* kept pace for the first three weeks climbing to the top spot in the week ending 8 December and remained there to claim the Christmas number one, week ending 15 December.

This is a huge feat as *Becoming* blazes past the Christmas veteran Walliams and his latest Children's book, *The Ice Monster*, which sold 80.4k books in the same week. In the lead up to Christmas, David Walliams had held the top spot for the preceding four weeks and *The Ice Monster* has so far sold over half a million copies (519.5k) in its six weeks since publication. This puts sales of Walliams' latest title ahead of his previous two Christmas number ones *The Midnight Gang* (2016) and *Bad Dad* (2017) over the same period.

Joe Wicks' *Lean in 15: 15-minute Veggie Meals with Workouts*, released on 13 December, rounded out the top of the Christmas bestsellers list with the number three spot. His last-minute claim for the third spot was secured by selling 51.3k copies in the Christmas week.

The "Top 10 Christmas Bestsellers" list contains a mix of Fiction (two titles), Children's (three titles) and Non Fiction (five titles) books showing the breadth of Christmas purchasing by consumers. This year's surprise contender is *Wonky Donkey* and marks the first time a book for preschoolers has been in the Christmas Top 10 since records began. Its success is attributed to the viral internet sensation of "The Scottish Granny" who delighted in reading this story to her grandchild.

Nielsen Book Top 10 Christmas Bestseller List (ranked by copies sold in the week 9-15 December 2018):

1. *Becoming* (91,882 copies, totalling £1.36m)
2. *The Ice Monster* (80,413 copies, totalling £547.2k)

3. *Veggie Lean in 15: 15-minute Veggie Meals with Workouts* (51,316 copies, totalling £437.7)
4. *Guinness World Records 2019* (48,177 copies, totalling £431.8k)
5. *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Meltdown* (37,713 copies, totalling £217.5k)
6. *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* (33,881 copies, totalling £184.4k)
7. *The Wonkey Donkey* (29,312 copies, totalling £147.9k)
8. *Private Eye Annual: 2018* (24,733 copies, totalling £206.2k)
9. *Past Tense: (Jack Reacher 23)* (24,525 copies, totalling £252.0k)
10. *The Ordnance Survey Puzzle Book* (24,387 copies, totalling £286.6k)

“Nielsen BookScan is celebrating its 25th year anniversary measuring book sales in the UK. Every year, we’ve seen a sizeable increase in book sales over the Christmas shopping season and this year is no exception,” said Andre Breedt, Managing Director, Nielsen Book Research International. “The four week Christmas period accounts for approximately 15% of annual book sales — over double the figure of an average four-week period (6%).”

This Christmas buying season is good news for authors, publishers and retailers of all sizes, not just those concerned with the Top 10 charts. During an average Christmas sales week, approximately 390k different book titles are sold. That is more than 100k titles in an average week in the year, showing the extent to which buyers go beyond the normal title range when it comes to filling up their Christmas shopping baskets.

Nielsen BookScan has tracked an increase in book sales year-over-year in 2018 and so far, the total consumer market has increased £22m over last year and is even up compared to two years ago. This is no small achievement considering 2016 saw the return of Harry Potter, the kickstart to Joe Wicks’ *Lean In* phenomenon and multiple parody books such as Enid Blyton’s books for grown-ups.

Nielsen BookScan is the industry-leading measurement of physical book sales collecting point-of-sale data from 6,500 book stores throughout the UK from high street and internet book shops, supermarkets, museums, specialist shops and independent bookshops. The data is collected on a transactional level from across the whole of the UK in a single week. The week’s sales are counted starting on Sunday through Saturday and reported on the following Tuesday. The Christmas week sales are the sales reported on the final Tuesday before Christmas (the seven days ending Saturday 15th December).

Notes to Editors:

#XmasBookNo1

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