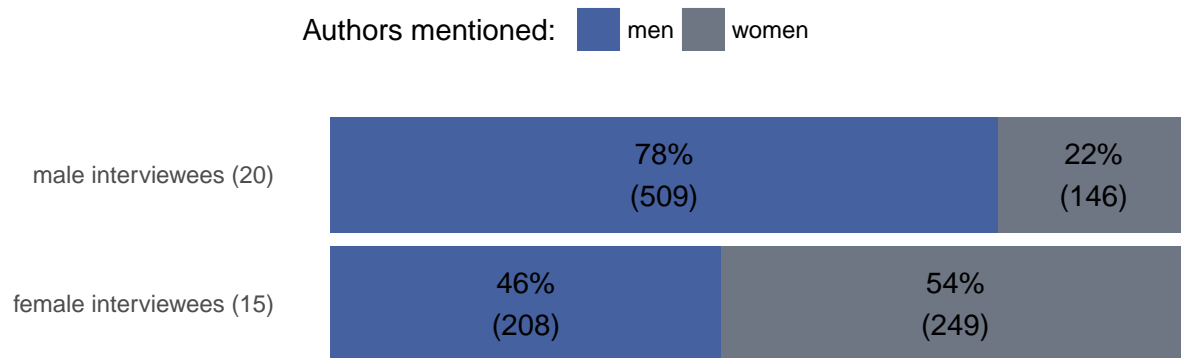# BTB

New York Times By The Book interviews
December 8, 2016 - August 10, 2017

Total interviews: **35**
Total unique authors mentioned: **881**

This data comes from the New York Times Book Review's "By the Book" feature - a weekly interview with a literary figure in which the subject is asked a series of questions about their reading habits, past, present, and planned. The interviews yield a number of author and book recommendations - an average of **32** authors mentioned by name in each interview. This dataset is a result of some code that looks at the text of each interview, identifies strings of text that look like author names, verifies them by looking for corresponding names in the Goodreads author database. The gender information comes from the data in the Goodreads database, with missing data filled in manually.

It's not a huge surprise that women are more likely to mention authors who are women and men are more likely to mention men. The ratios are striking: men are four times more likely to recommend authors of their own gender, whereas women only just make it past a 1:1 ratio.

Authors mentioned: ▮ men ▮ women

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| male interviewees (20) | 78% (509) | 22% (146) |
| female interviewees (15) | 46% (208) | 54% (249) |

The chart below shows each interviewee and the number of authors they mentioned, plotting the authors by gender.
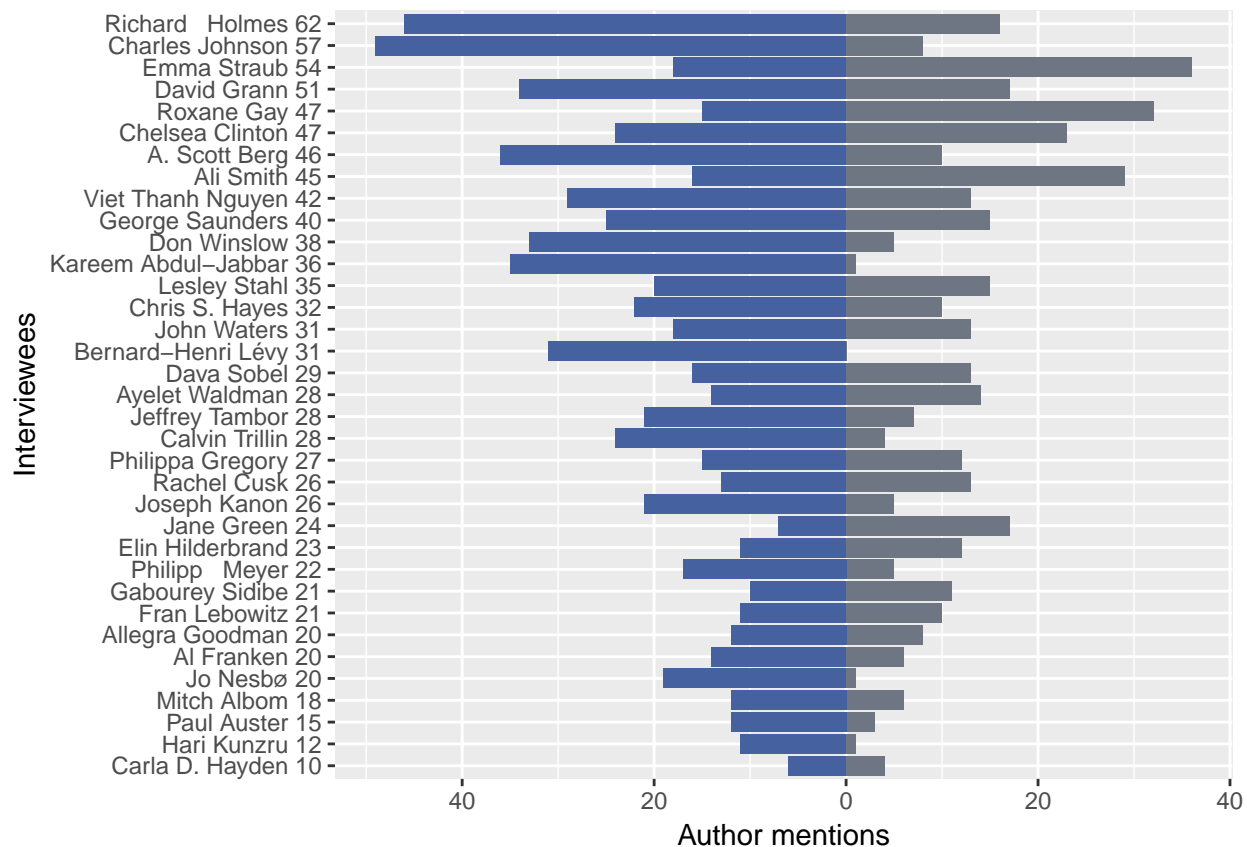
This data has a long tail - there are **881** unique authors mentioned across the **35** interviews, and **741** of them are only mentioned once. The most frequently mentioned authors are mentioned by a fifth of all interviewees. The chart below shows the twenty most frequently mentioned authors, the number of times they were mentioned, and the dates they were mentioned. A longer time horizon might help us start to see patterns of trendy authors.
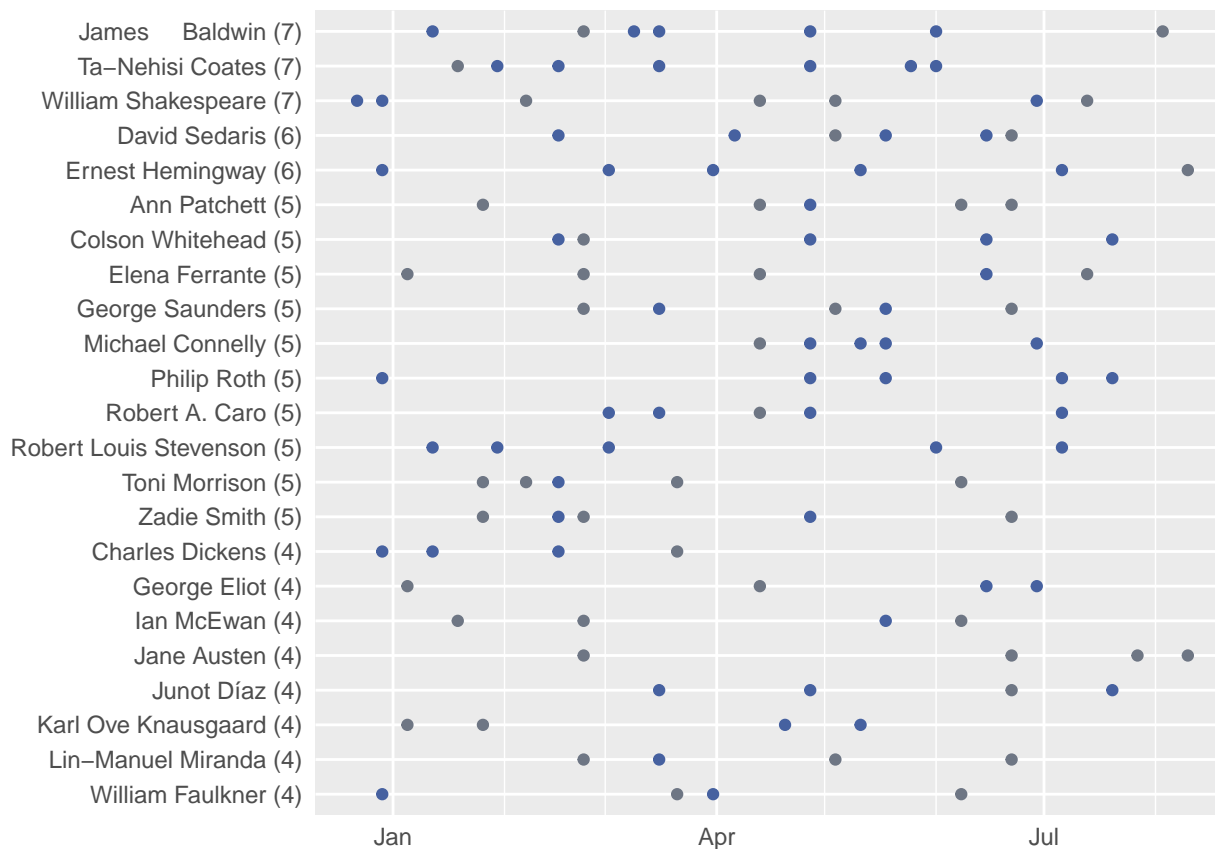
Below we can see instances where two interviewees mentioned the same author. Note that although some interviewees mentioned dozens of authors, the maximum overlap in authors mentioned between any two interviewees was 5.

Count of authors mentioned in common by each pair of interviewees
(Diagonal shows total authors mentioned by that interviewee)

We can also see how many times pairs of authors were mentioned together in the same interview.

Top authors: count of interview overlap

author.y

Karl Ove Knausgaard — 4
William Faulkner — 4
Robert Louis Stevenson — 5
George Eliot — 4
Charles Dickens — 4
Jane Austen — 4
Ernest Hemingway — 6
Toni Morrison — 5
Ian McEwan — 4
William Shakespeare — 7
Elena Ferrante — 5
Junot Díaz — 4
Lin–Manuel Miranda — 4
Michael Connelly — 5
Philip Roth — 5
David Sedaris — 6
Robert A. Caro — 5
Ta–Nehisi Coates — 7
Ann Patchett — 5
Colson Whitehead — 5
George Saunders — 5
James Baldwin — 7
Zadie Smith — 5

author.x: Zadie Smith, James Baldwin, George Saunders, Colson Whitehead, Ann Patchett, Ta–Nehisi Coates, Robert A. Caro, David Sedaris, Philip Roth, Michael Connelly, Lin–Manuel Miranda, Junot Díaz, Elena Ferrante, William Shakespeare, Ian McEwan, Toni Morrison, Ernest Hemingway, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Robert Louis Stevenson, William Faulkner, Karl Ove Knausgaard

Legend: 1, 2, 3, 4, NA