

From Likes to Libraries: Insights From #Booktok and Kindle

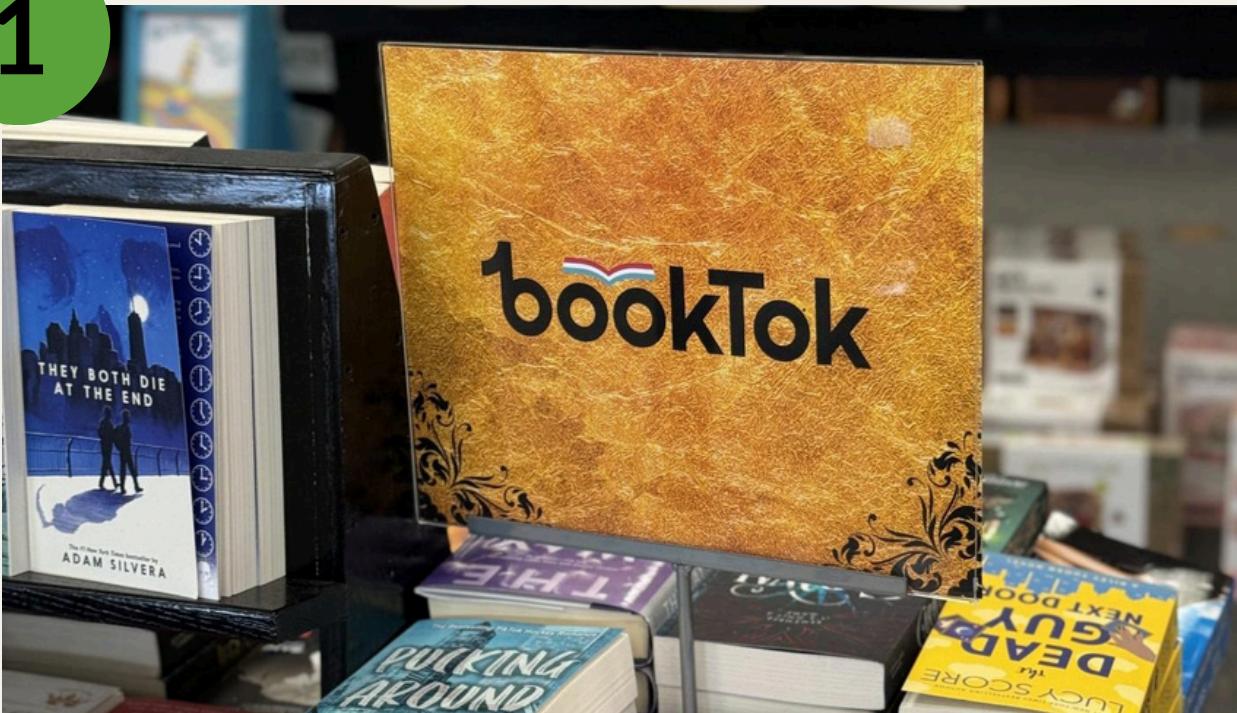
Jennifer Toppins

Nashville Software School | 2024



Context

1



#BookTok:

- Hashtag on TikTok commonly used by book reviewers, authors, and general readers
- Used as jumping point for book discussions, recommendations, book hauls, and general content about reading
- Now being seen in brick-and-mortar stores, as well as on other platforms like Goodreads and Amazon

Goodreads:

- Online book catalogue characterized by its users discussing, reviewing, and tracking books
- Users can join reading challenges, leave reviews for books, and tag them using 'shelves'
- Goodreads has a user-generated shelf called 'BookTok'

The screenshot shows a user's library on Goodreads. The main interface includes a search bar, navigation links (Home, My Books, Groups, Recommendations, Explore), and various filters and settings. The 'My Books' section is titled 'read (84)'. A sidebar on the left provides options for managing shelves and adding books. The main content area displays a grid of book covers for the selected shelf.

2



3



- Amazon owns both the Kindle e-reader product and Goodreads (July '23).

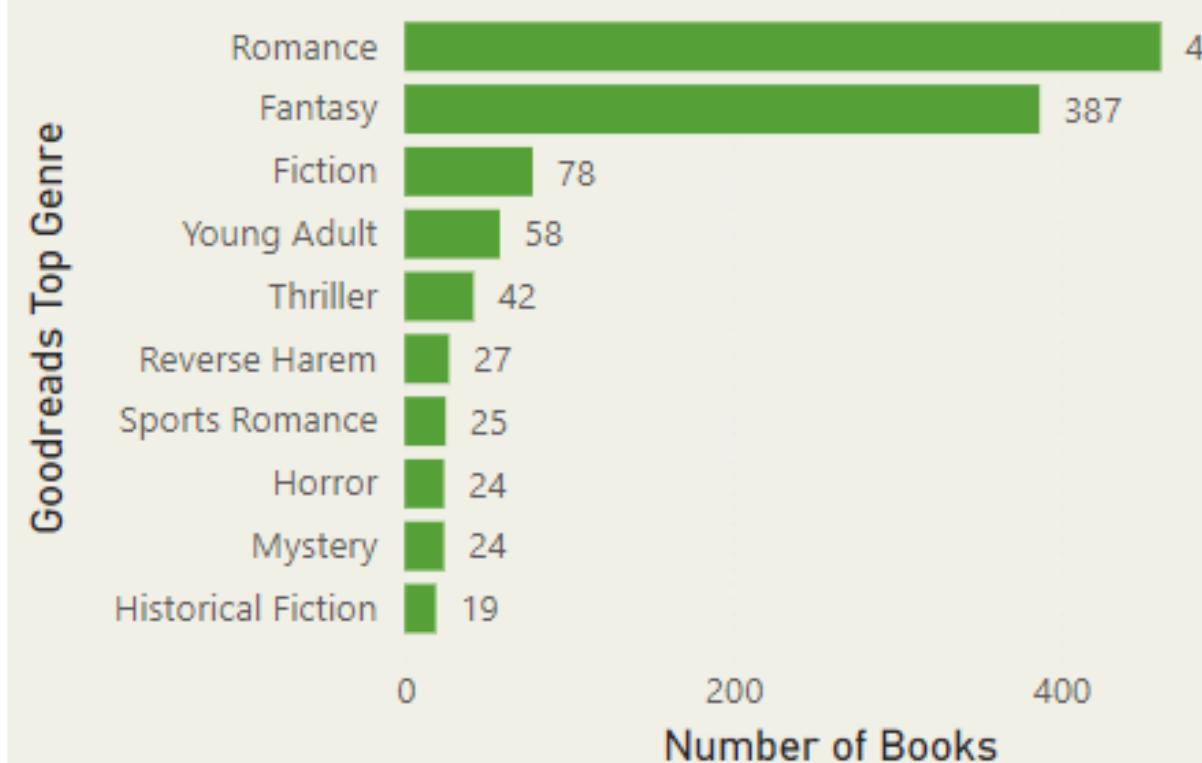
This confluence of ownership points to possible connections between TikTok virality, Goodreads' mediation of that virality, and the way Amazon interprets and markets it.

goodreads BookTok Shelf At A Glance

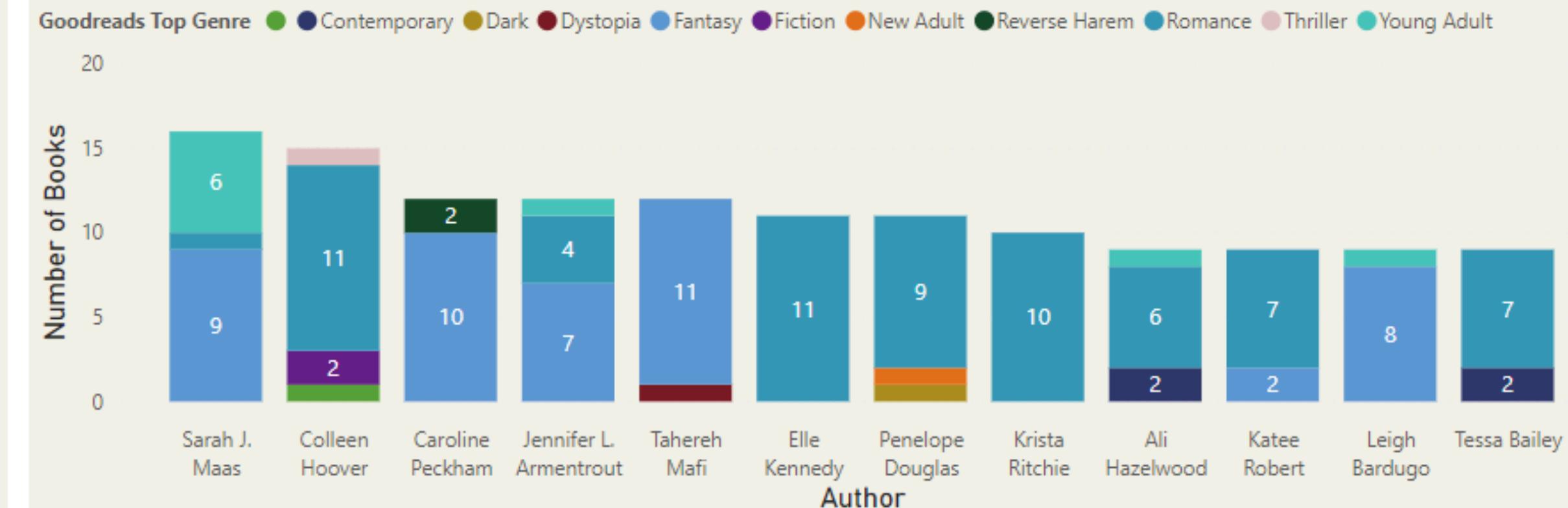
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BookTok Books

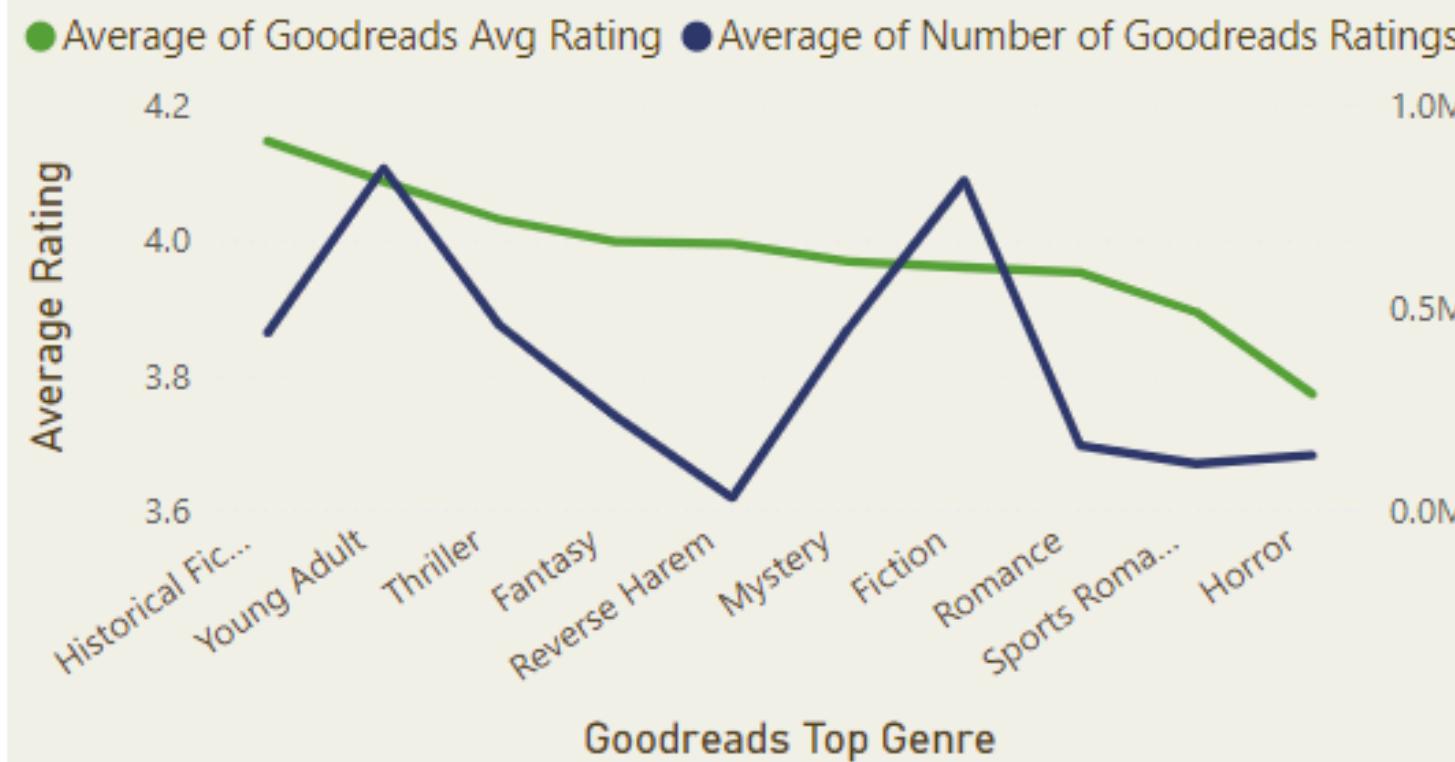
BookTok Top 10 Genres



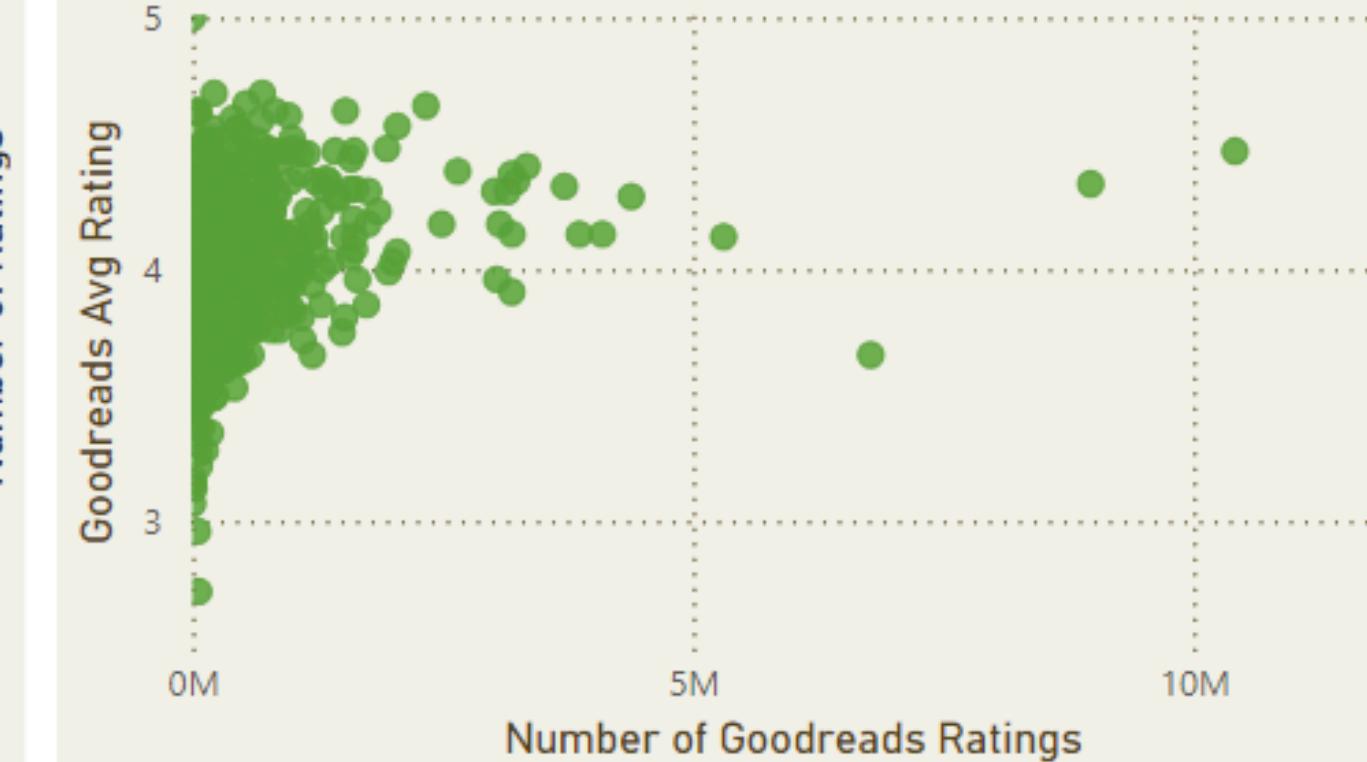
BookTok Top 10 Authors



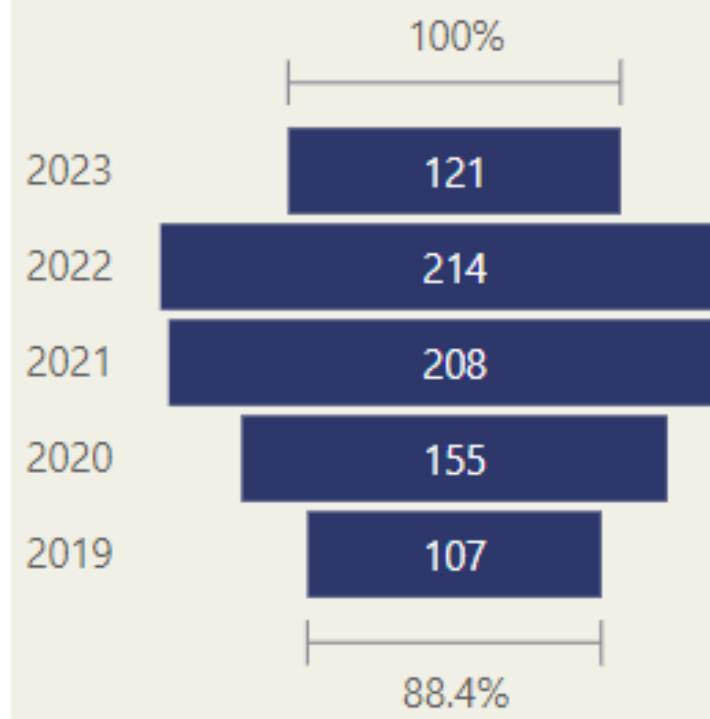
Goodreads Average Ratings and Number of Ratings By Top Genre



Number of Goodreads Ratings and Goodreads Avg Rating

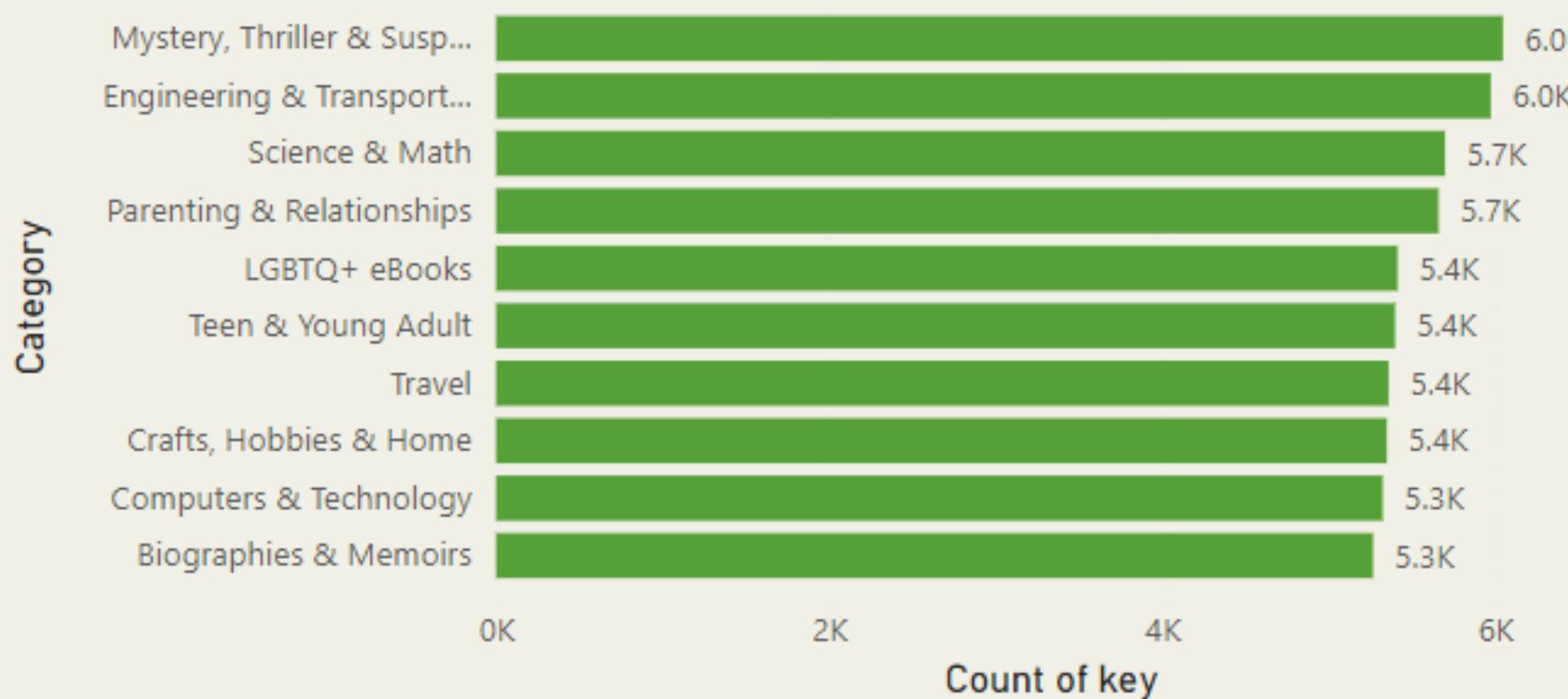


What years are most represented?

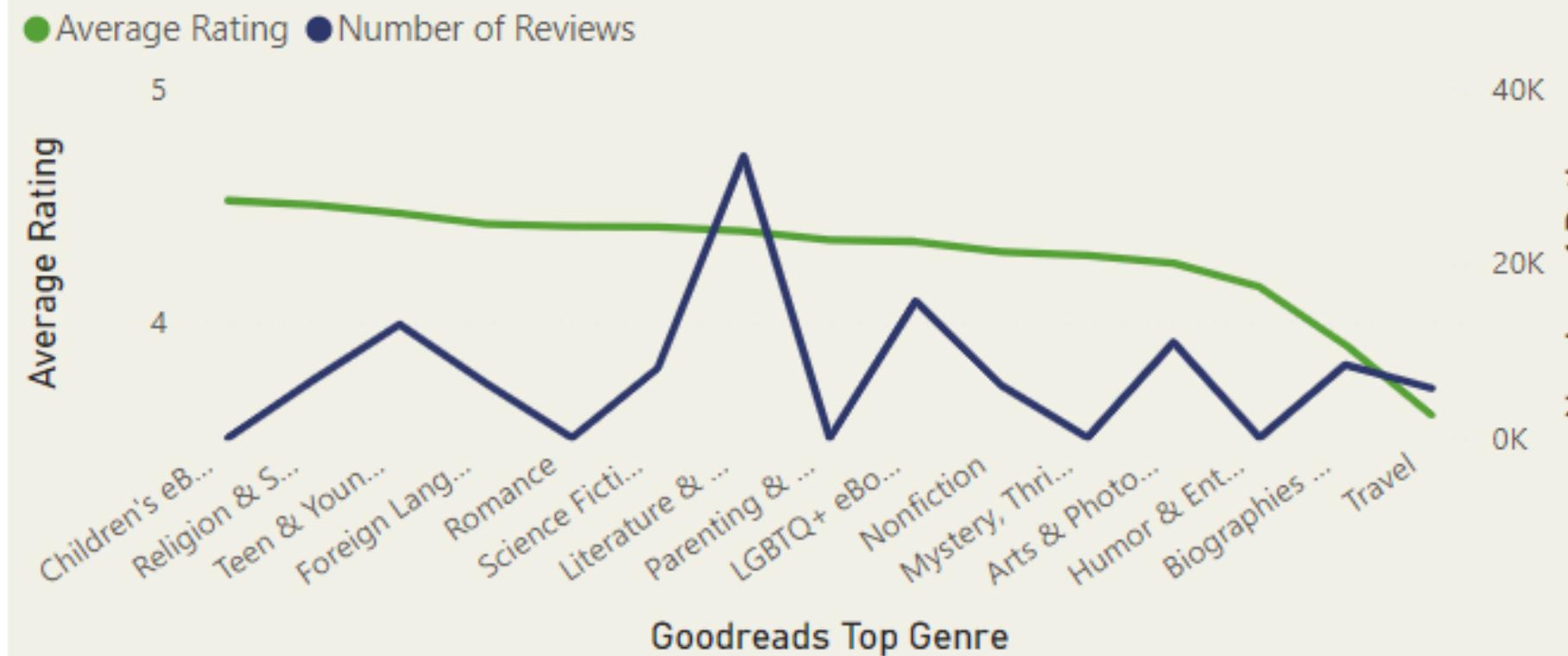


amazon kindle Books At A Glance

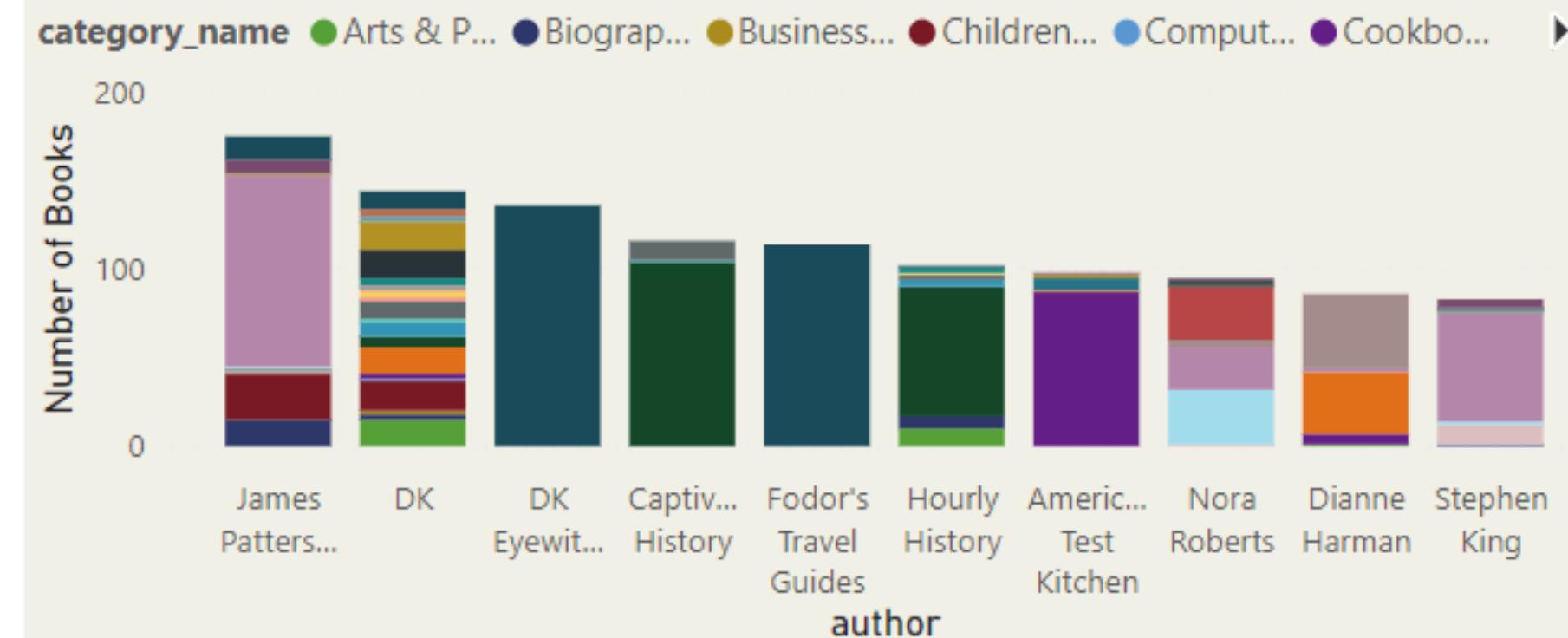
Kindle Top 10 Categories



Kindle Average Rating and Number of Reviews



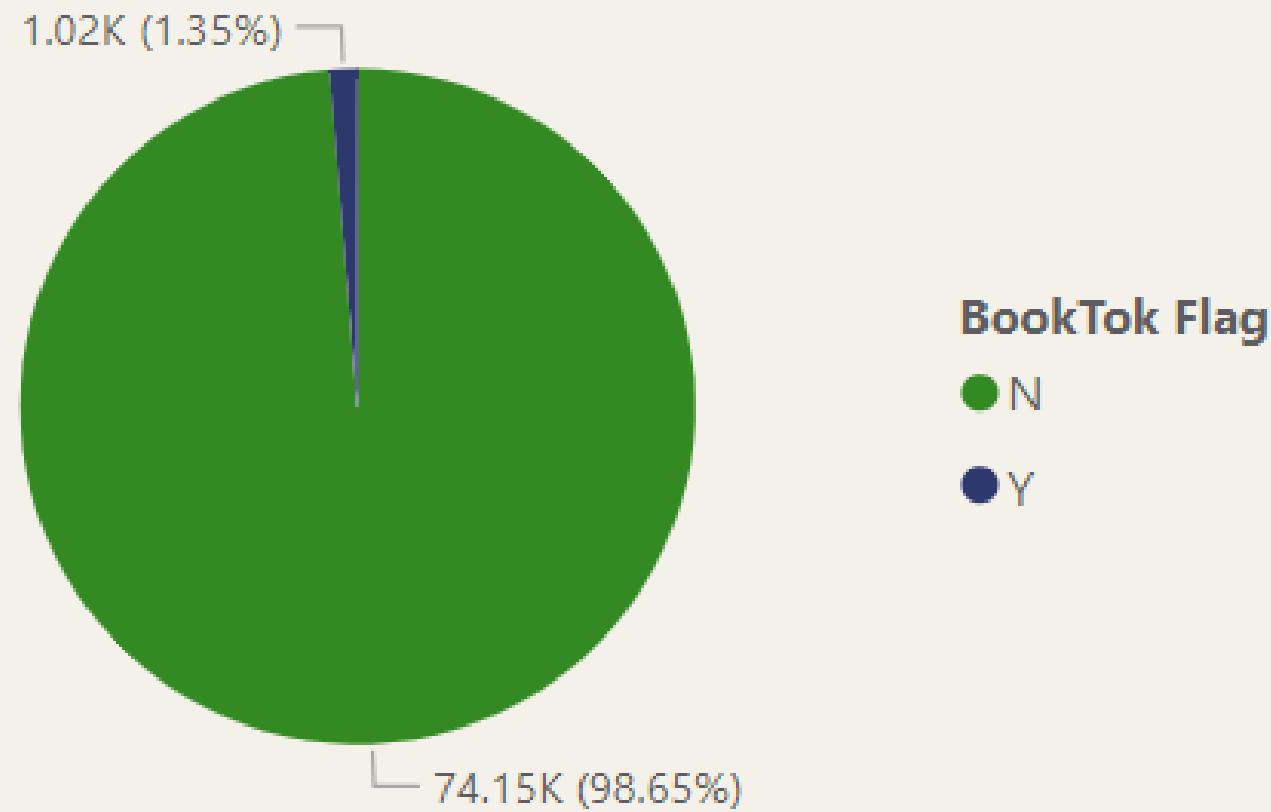
Kindle Top 10 Authors and their Categories



Limitations and exclusions

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Percent of Kindle Books Viral on BookTok



Goodreads BookTok Shelf

- Goodreads users are only a portion of TikTok or BookTok users.
- Not all Goodreads users shelf their books.
- Not all Goodreads users are also TikTok users.

Amazon Kindle

- Where possible, languages other than English have been excluded.
- When making comparisons with the Goodreads BookTok shelf, I excluded irrelevant categories (e.g. Reference books).

Essential Questions

1

What are the noticeable differences between **BookTok** books and **non-BookTok** books, in terms of Kindle price, ratings, reviews, and certain flags?

2

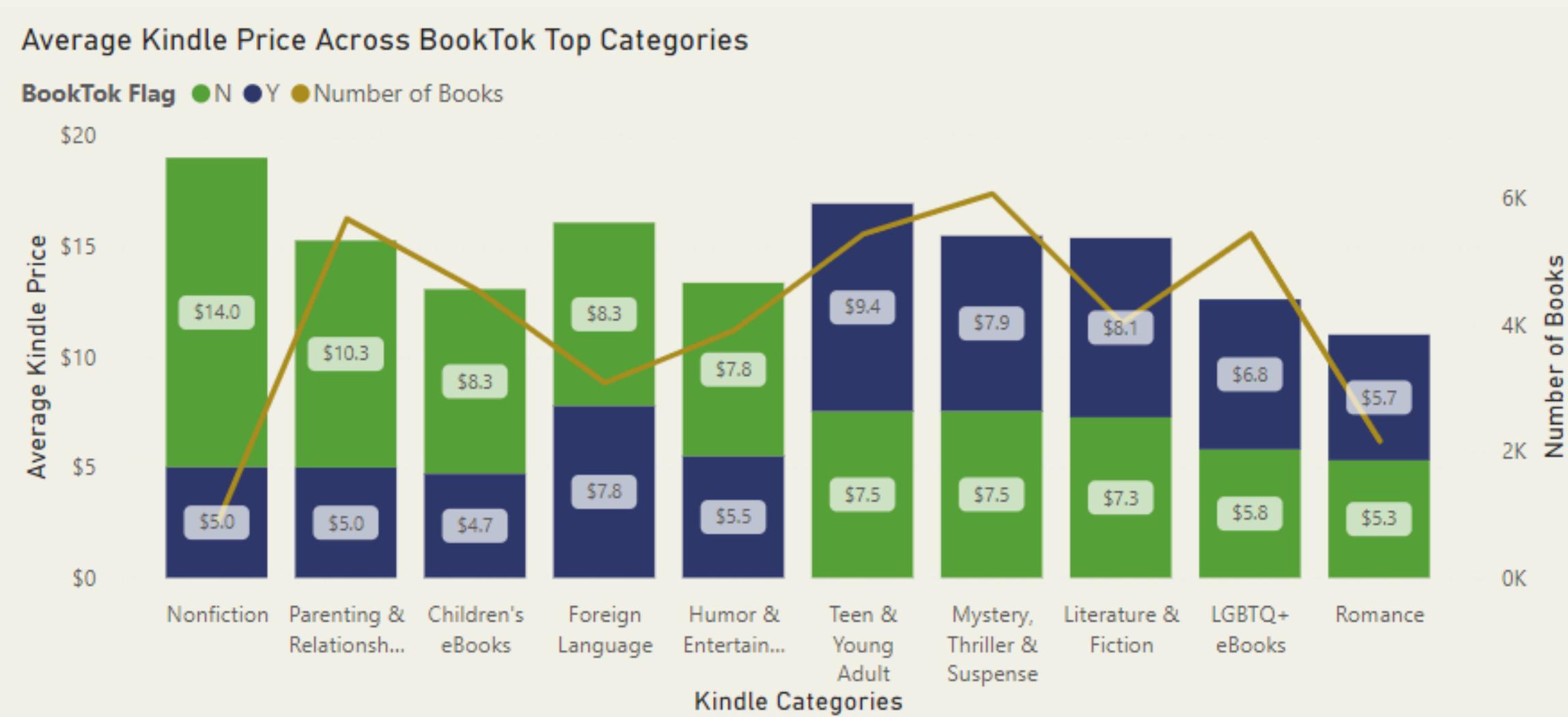
What is the impact of the **Kindle Unlimited** library on BookTok and Kindle books?

3

Are books rated differently by **Goodreads users** and **Kindle users**?



Insight 1: BookTok books don't tend to cost more than non-BookTok books.



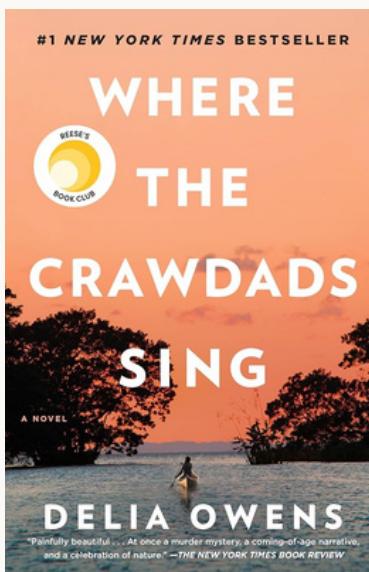
Even in categories where BookTok is well represented, they don't tend to cost more than regular Kindle books. The exceptions are:

- Teen & YA: \$1.9
- Mystery, Thriller & Suspense: \$0.20
- Literature & Fiction: \$0.8
- LGBTQ+: \$1.0
- Romance: \$0.04

However, the number of books may be playing a role in these price differences. The five categories where BookTok books cost more than regular books tend to have more books than non-BookTok books.

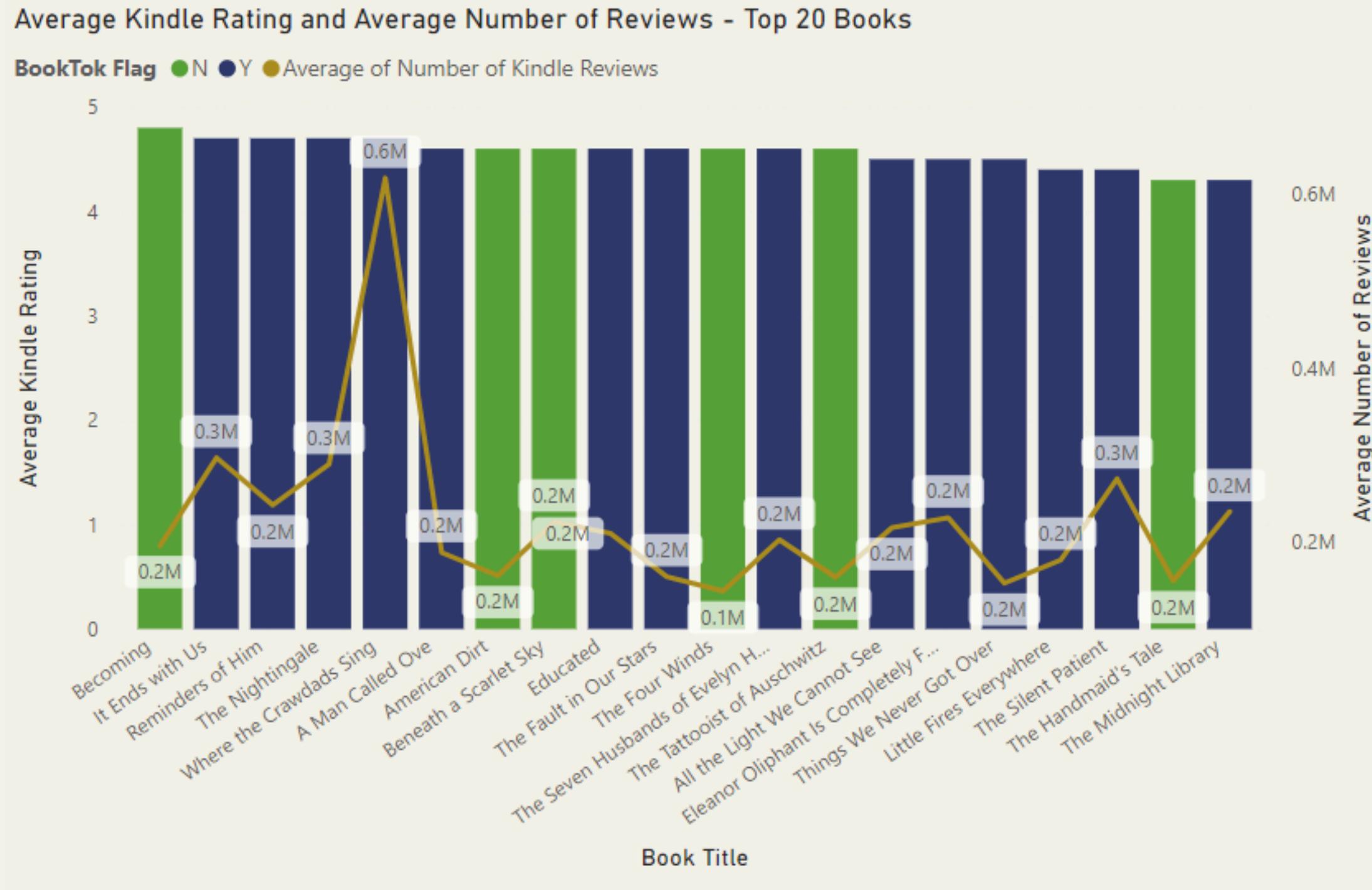
Insight 2: BookTok books may have more engagement online through numbers of reviews.

BookTok and non-BookTok books have fairly consistent ratings in this top 20 list. However, BookTok presence may predict more engagement through sheer number of reviews. This could be due to the “virality” of a particular book: it reaches a wider audience more generally. The book with the most engagement here is shown below (it was also made into a movie).



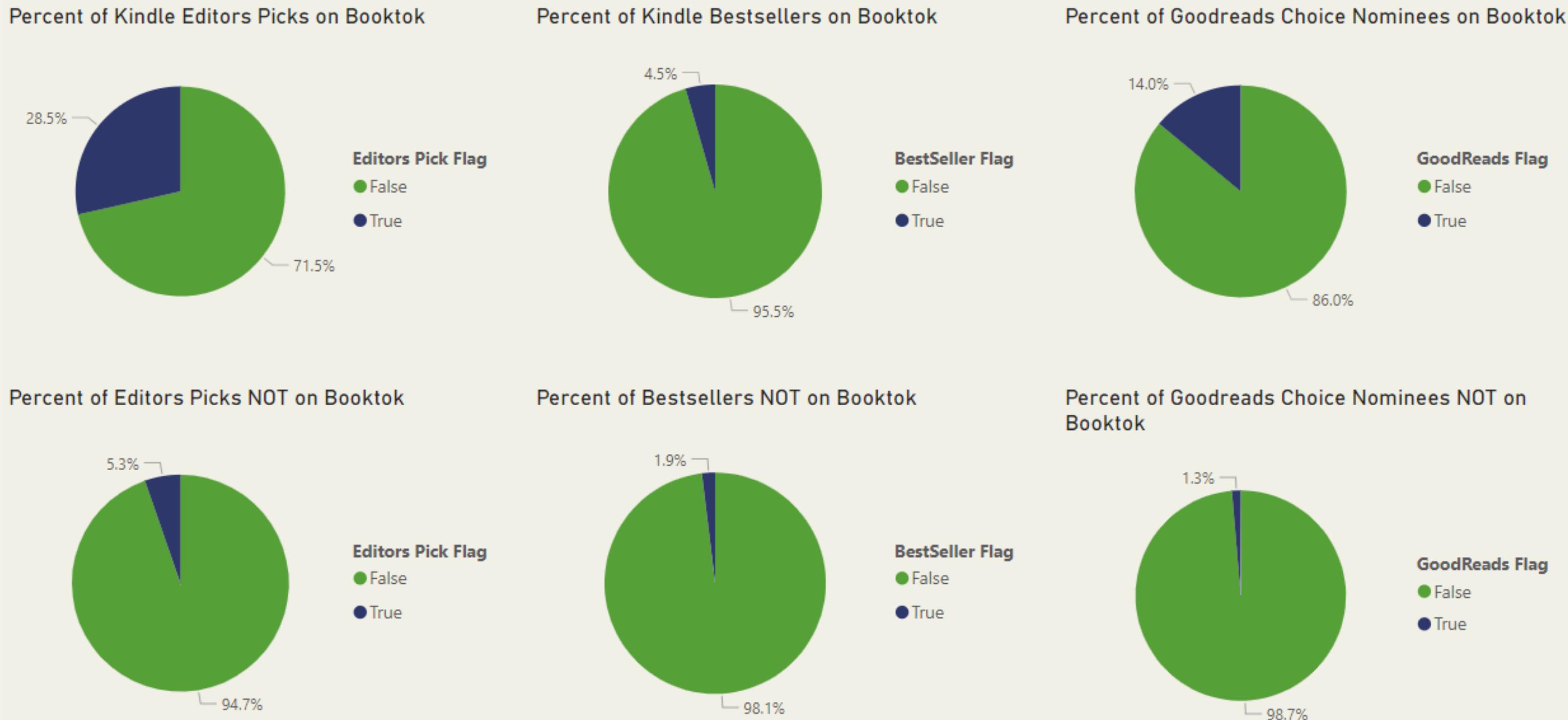
4.38 ⭐

618,227 reviews



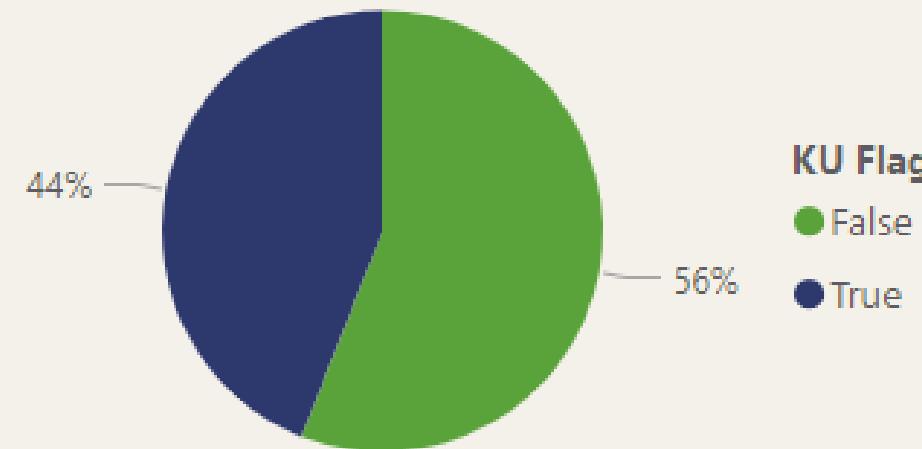
Insight 3: BookTok is a predictor of certain successes on Kindle.

BookTok presence is a predictor for success on Kindle - defined as Editor's Picks, Bestsellers, and Goodreads Choice Nominees. The strongest correlation below is the percent of BookTok books that make it to Editor's Lists. These flags are in turn advertised to buyers on Amazon's site with the book.



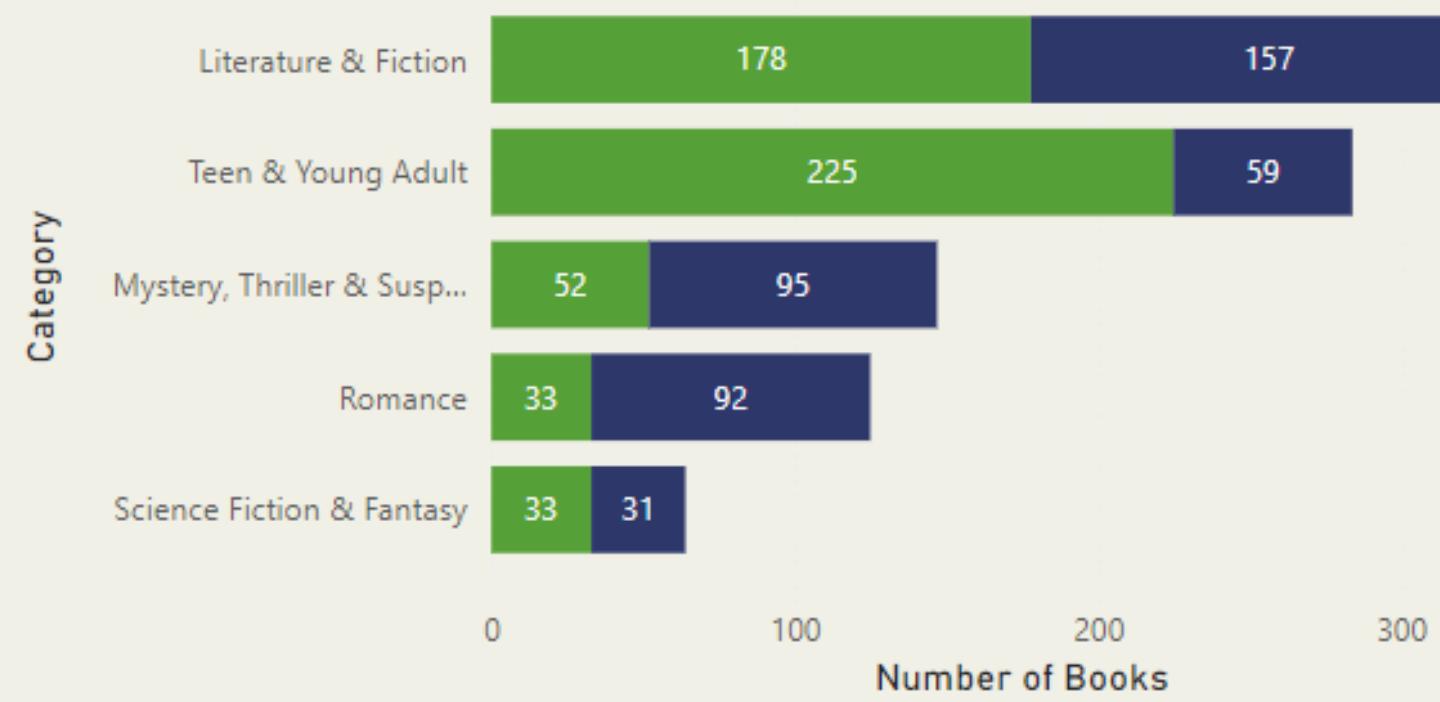
Insight 4: Kindle Unlimited is well-represented on BookTok.

What percent of BookTok books are on KU?



BookTok Books by KU Flag and Category

KU Flag • False • True



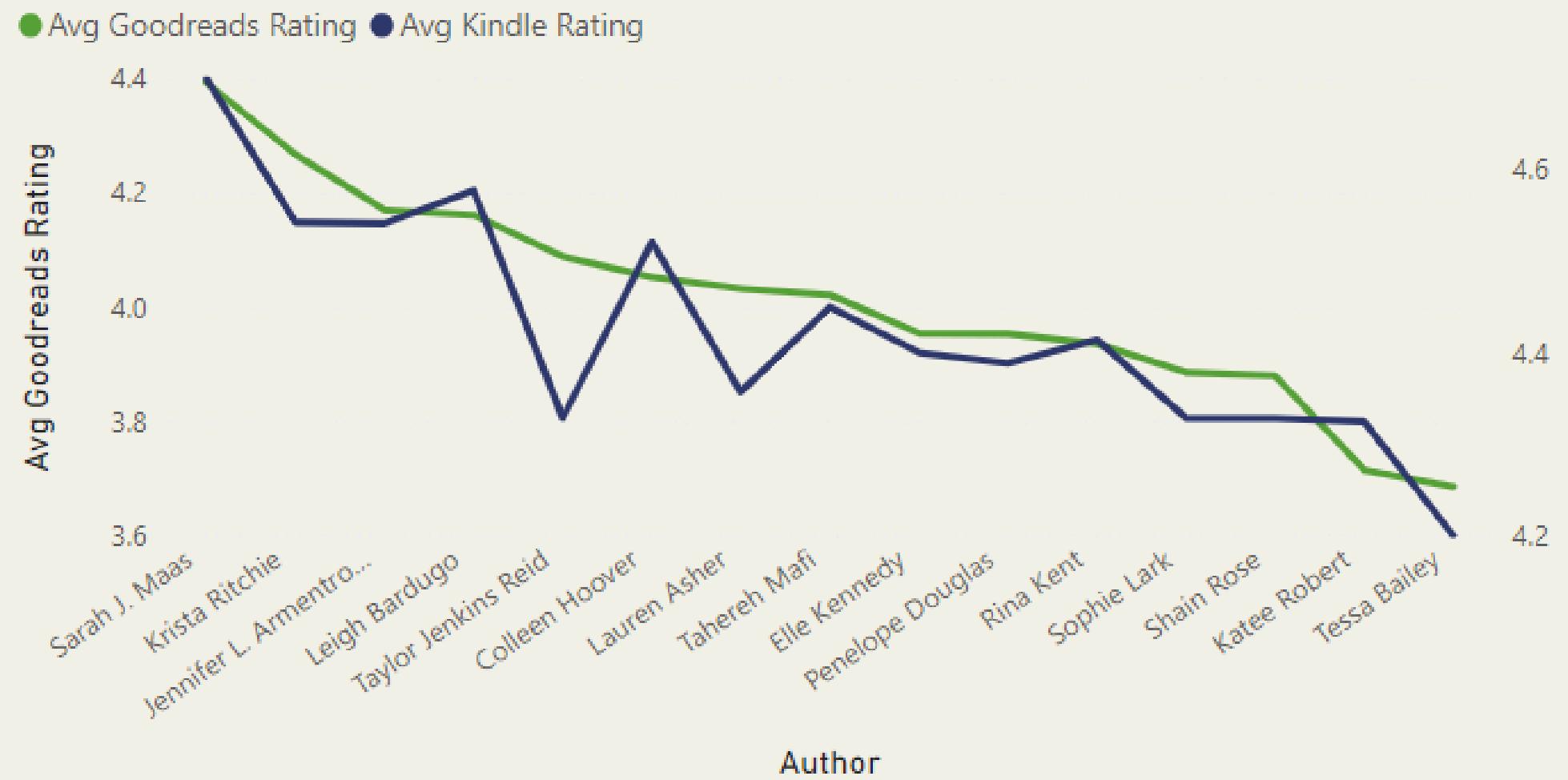
Cover	Title	Author	Kindle Avg Rating
	All The Lies	S.T. Abby	4.70
	Gleam	Raven Kennedy	4.70
	Paint It All Red	S.T. Abby	4.70
	Reminders of Him	Colleen Hoover	4.70
	The Last Letter	Rebecca Yarros	4.70

The most common category in the BookTok x KU matrix is Literature and Fiction - which speaks back to the previous insight, noticing that these are categories where BookTok is particularly strong on Kindle.

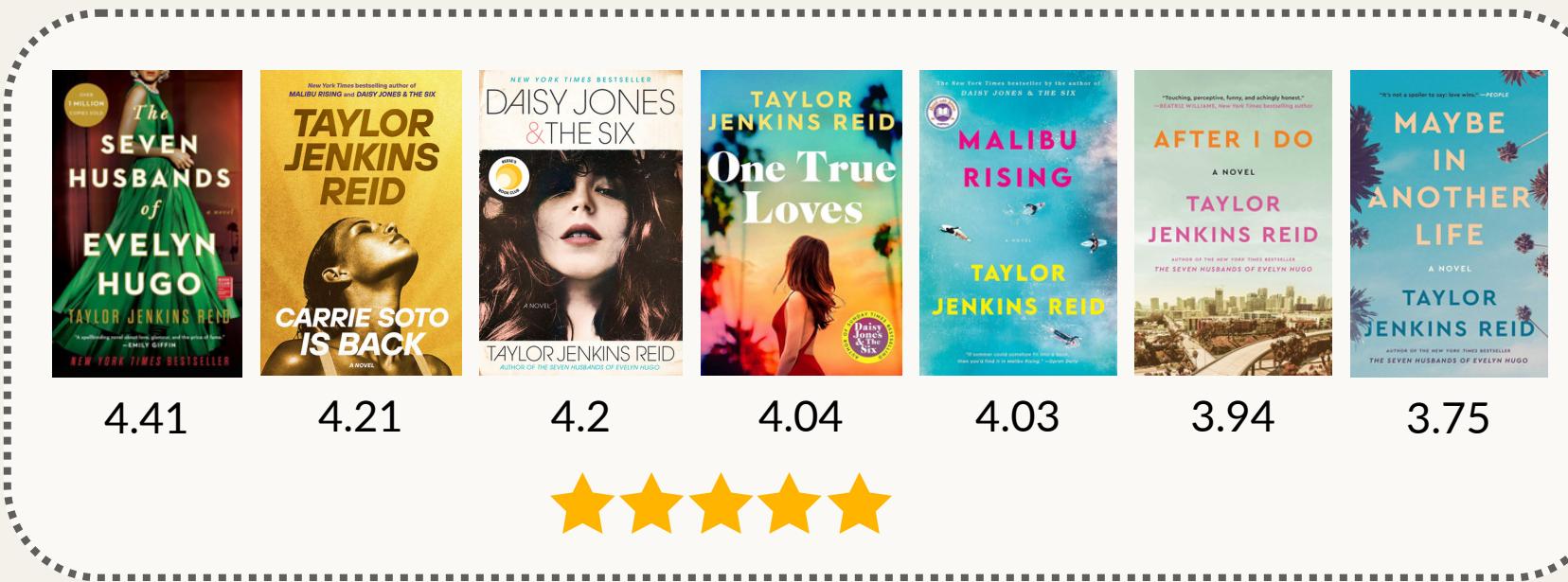
Insight 5: Goodreads and Kindle ratings are typically consistent for BookTok books.

3

Avg Goodreads Rating v Avg Kindle Rating for Top 10 BookTok Authors



The most polarizing author shown above is Taylor Jenkins Reid - author of *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*, which, coincidentally, is also the book most shelved as BookTok on Goodreads at 1,023.



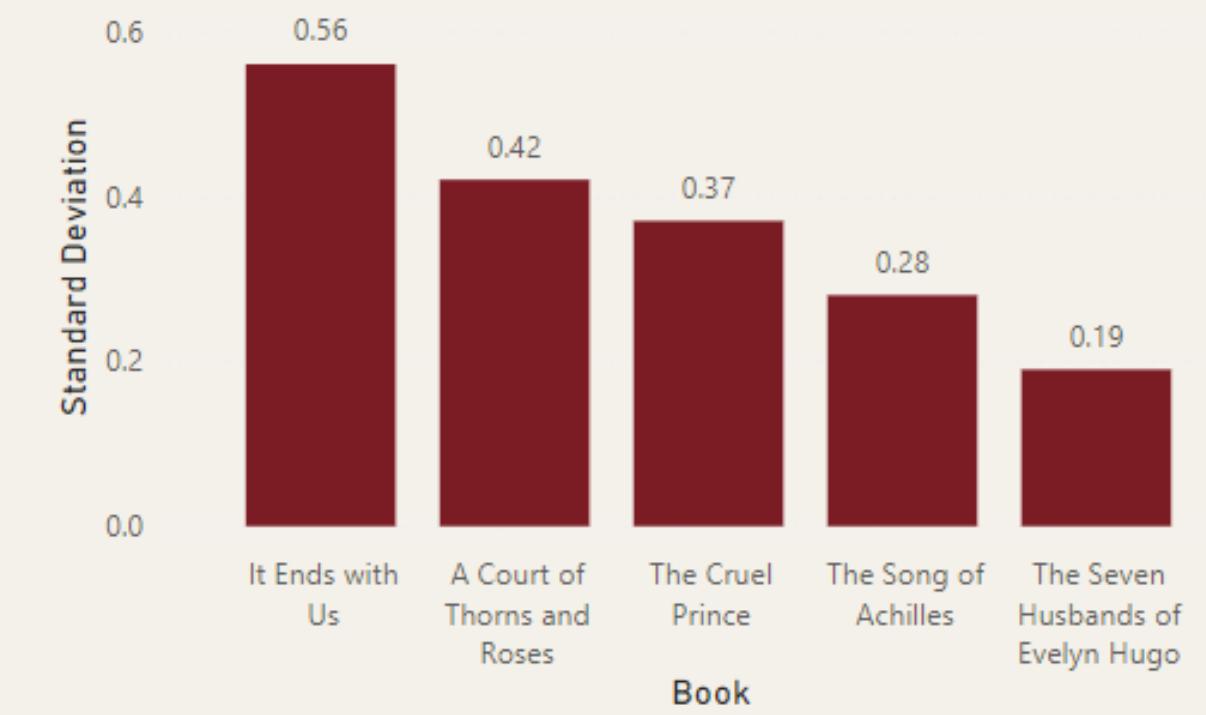
0.12

Standard deviation of Kindle Avg Rating

0.24

Standard deviation of Goodreads Avg Rating

Difference of Goodreads v Kindle Reviews for Most Shelved BookTok Books



Insight 6: The BookTok book with the most polarizing ratings is...



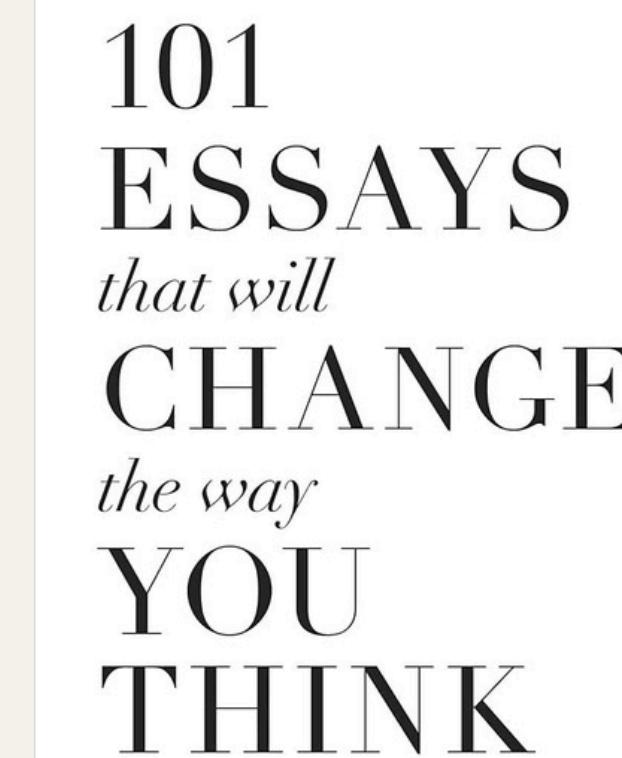
Goodreads Avg Rating: 3.66

Kindle Avg Rating: 4.7

Total Goodreads ratings: 6,775,547

Total Kindle Reviews: 35,635

Shelved as 'Booktok': 40



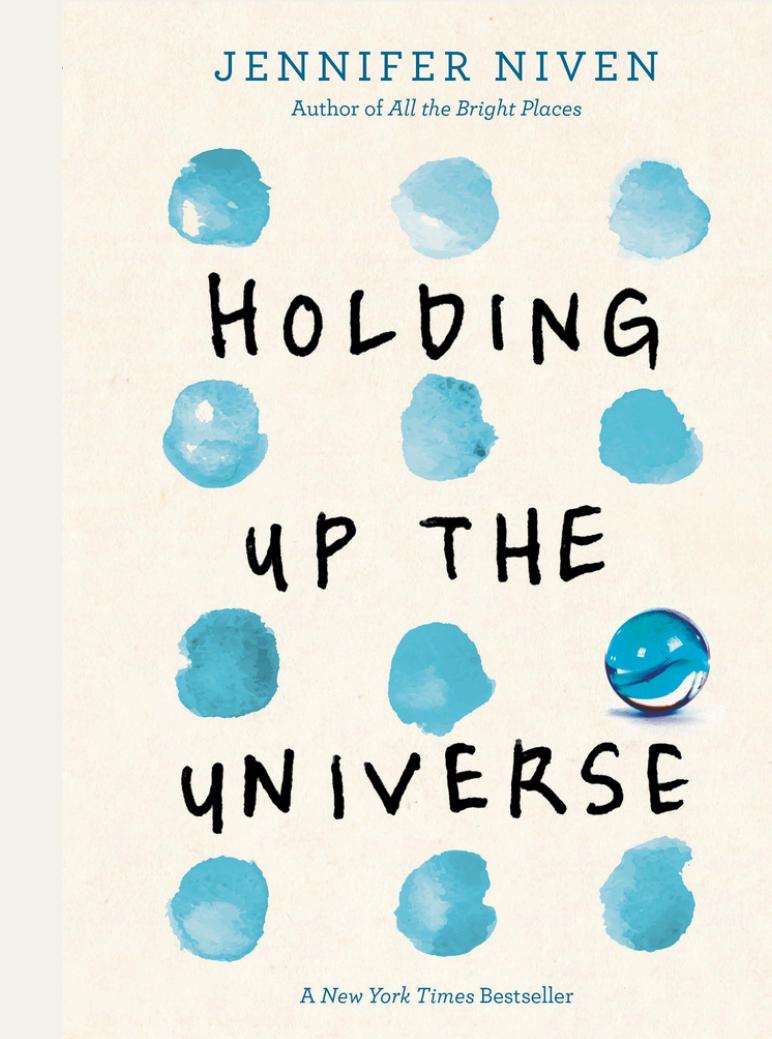
Goodreads Avg Rating: 3.75

Kindle Avg Rating: 4.7

Total Goodreads ratings: 53,285

Total Kindle Reviews: 14,147

Shelved as 'Booktok': 21



Goodreads Avg Rating: 3.69

Kindle Avg Rating: 4.6

Total Goodreads ratings: 135,608

Total Kindle Reviews: 5,965

Shelved as 'Booktok': 39

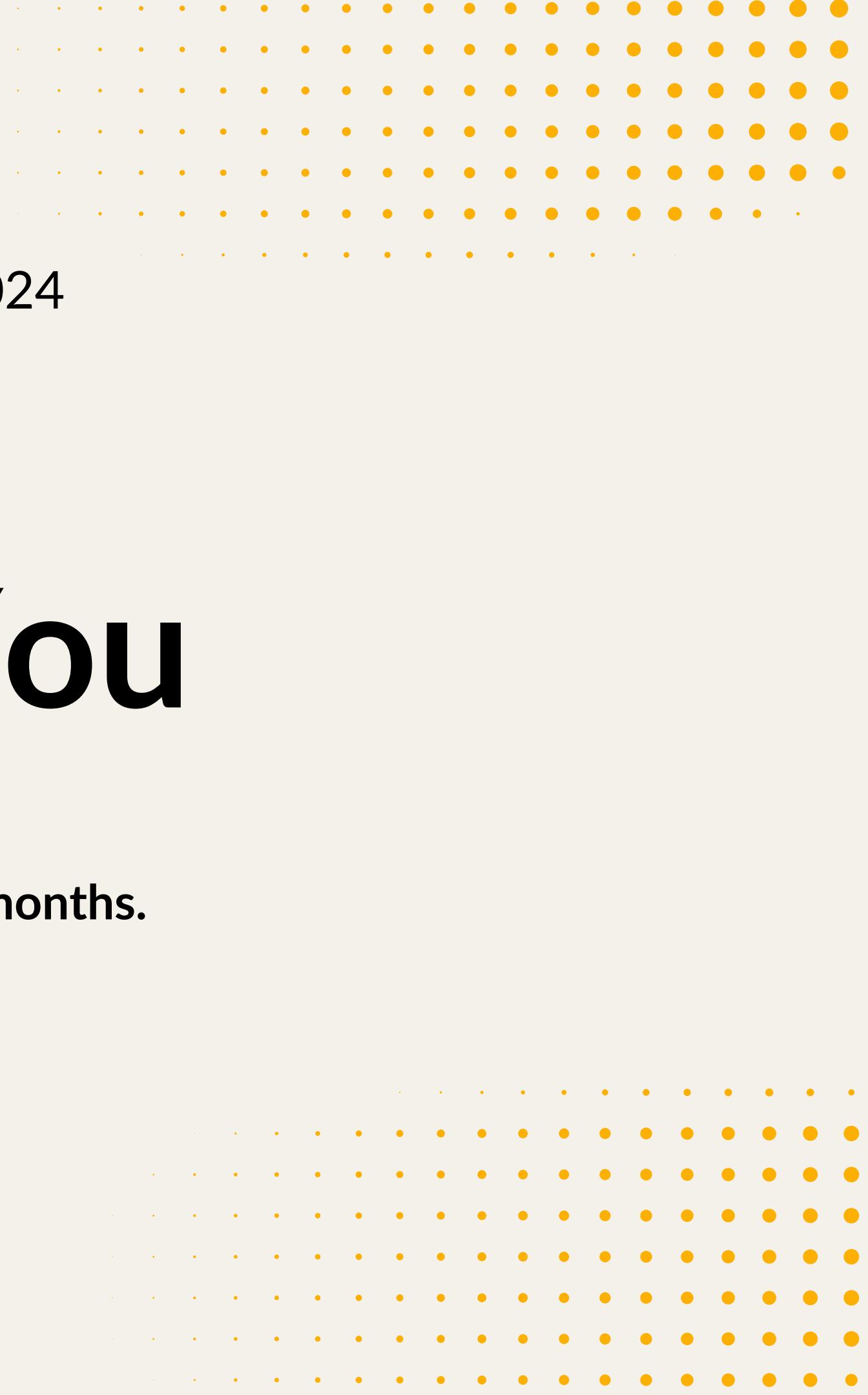
Key Takeaways

- Amazon's new acquisition of Goodreads data about BookTok can certainly be fruitful for its future as a bookseller.
- The **relatively higher level of engagement** by users on BookTok books, as well as the **predictors** of Editor's Choice and Bestseller lists, demonstrate that Amazon is starting to use this data to market its products to readers online.
- However, this may just be a testing period for Amazon, as this new data from Goodreads about BookTok has **not yet translated to increased prices** generally.
- The best connection as of today between BookTok and Amazon remains in its Kindle Unlimited Library, with **nearly half of all BookTok books also being available on KU**. This may be a result of the wider availability of KU BookTok books.
- Goodreads reviewers and Kindle reviewers tend to **review BookTok books similarly** - with the greatest deviation between the two being only 1 star.



goodreads





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Thank You

for joining me!
It's been a wonderful six months.