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BAS Computing Technologies and Software Development

Summer 2025

# PLOT POINTS

What makes a book go viral on TikTok?

# PLOT POINTS MEETS PYTHON

- » I explored which traits help books go viral on TikTok:
  - » Genre, trend reason, adaptation status, diversity representation, and more.
- » I used small data + APIs to track these patterns:
  - » Collected real feed data, enriched with Open Library and TMDb
- » Compared my feed with other reader personas:
  - » To see how TikTok algorithms shape what goes viral

```
# === Movie DB Adaptation Lookup ===
def check_adaptation(title):
    params = {
        "query": title,
        "include_adult": "false",
        "language": "en-US",
        "page": 1,
        "api_key": TMDB_API_KEY
    }
    response = requests.get(TMDB_BASE_URL, params=params)
    if response.status_code == 200:
        results = response.json().get("results", [])
        for result in results:
            media_type = result.get("media_type", "")
            if media_type == "movie":
                return "Film"
            elif media_type == "tv":
                return "TV"
        return "In Dev" if results else "Not Yet Considered"
    else:
        return "Not Yet Considered"

# === Open Library Metadata Lookup ===
def get_open_library_data(title, author):
    params = {
        "title": title,
        "author": author,
    }
    response = requests.get(OPENLIB_BASE_URL, params=params)
    if response.status_code == 200:
        docs = response.json().get("docs", [])
        if docs:
            top = docs[0]
            return {
                "first_publish_year": top.get("first_publish_year", ""),
                "publisher": top.get("publisher", [""])[0],
            }
        return {"first_publish_year": "", "publisher": ""}

# === Loop and Enrich ===
for i, row in df.iterrows():
    title = row["Title"]
    author = row["Author"]
    print(f"\u25b6 Checking: {title} by {author}")

    # Adaptation (only if blank)
    if row["Adaptation"].strip() == "":
        df.at[i, "Adaptation"] = check_adaptation(title)

    # Open Library enrichment
    result = get_open_library_data(title, author)

    # Fill in missing values only
    if row["First_Publish_Year"] == "":
        df.at[i, "First_Publish_Year"] = result["first_publish_year"]
    if row["Publisher"] == "":
        df.at[i, "Publisher"] = result["publisher"]

    time.sleep(0.5) # avoid rate-limiting

    df["Content_Warning_Category"] = df["Content_Warnings"].apply(map_cc)
```

# LANGUAGES AND TOOLS

PYTHON

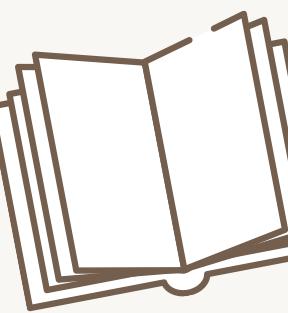
Automated enrichment,  
API calls for metadata and  
adaptations

TABLEAU

Visualized genre, trends,  
and comparison patterns

CANVA

Designated slides, added  
BookTok inspired visuals  
and captions



# IMPLEMENTATION CHANGES

- ▶ Started small: Began with my BookTok feed only
- ▶ Expanded personas: Added other profiles to compare algorithms.
- ▶ Enriched dataset: Used OpenLibrary and TMDb APIs to add missing metadata
- ▶ Created custom categories: Mapped genre, trend reason, diversity and adaptation status
- ▶ Visualized patterns: Built multiple Tableau charts to show key findings

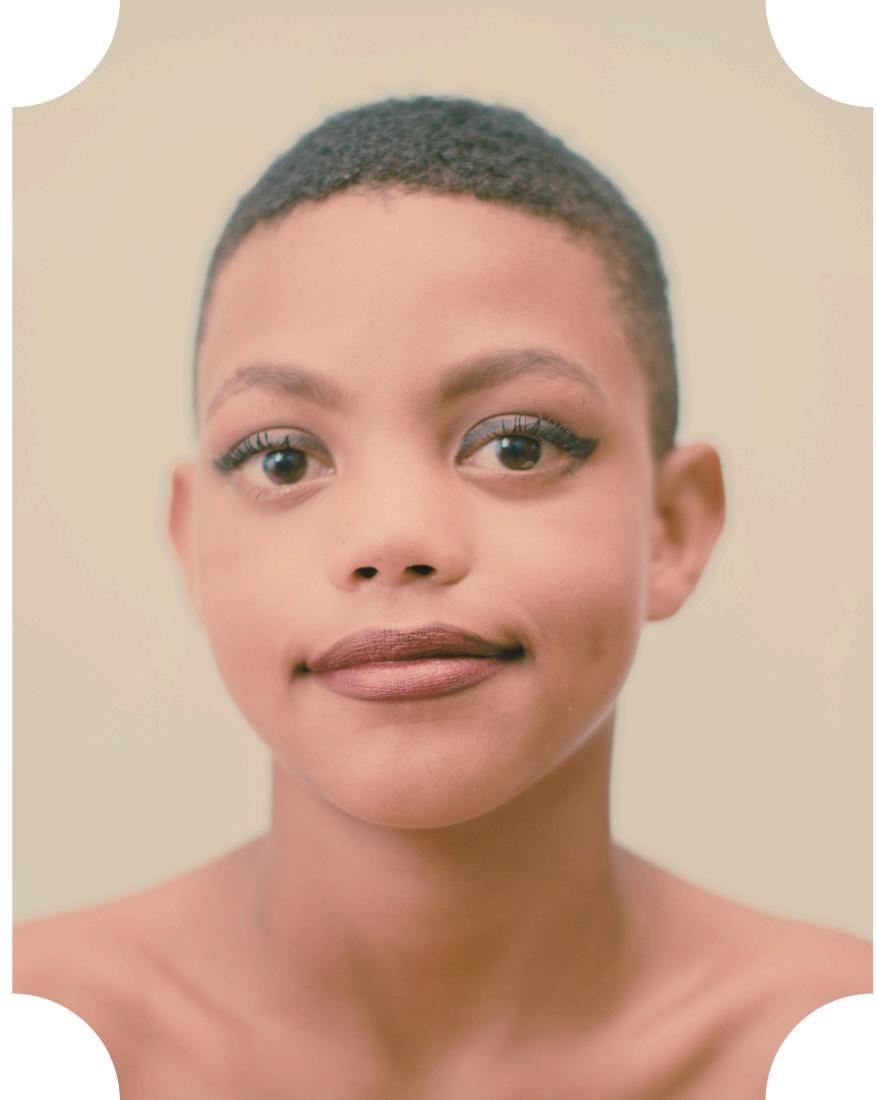
# READER PROFILES



@alex.horrorstories  
Sci-Fi, Thrillers, Afrofuturism  
Cyberpunk Junkie | Plot Twist Hunter | Black BookTok Recs



@kenna.fantasyreads  
Romantasy, Fantasy, Found Family  
Bingeworthy Series | Trauma Arcs | Vampires,  
Witches & More

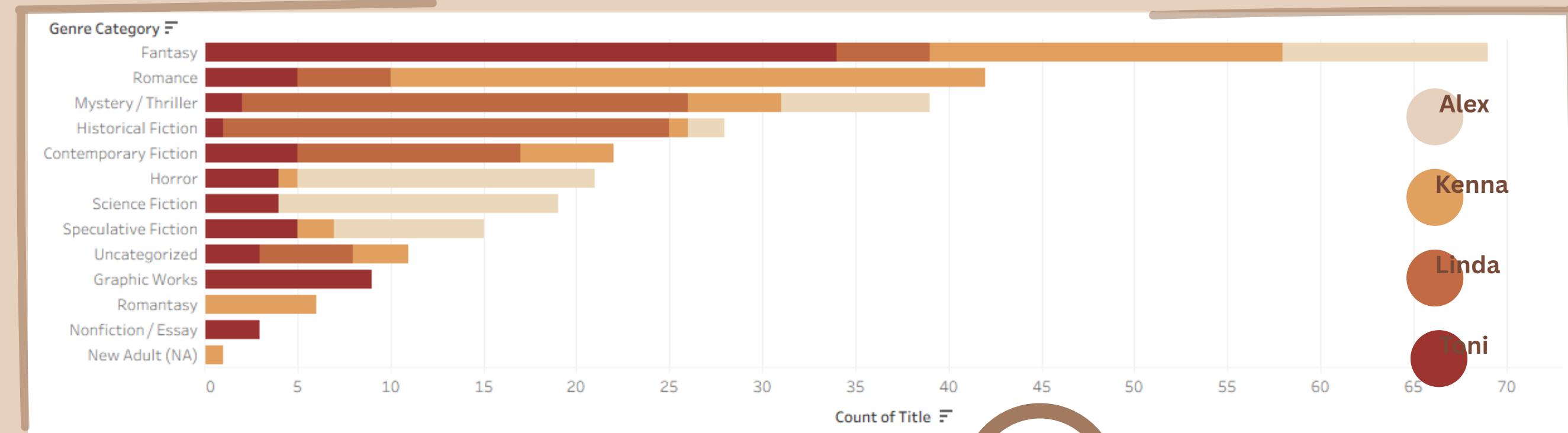
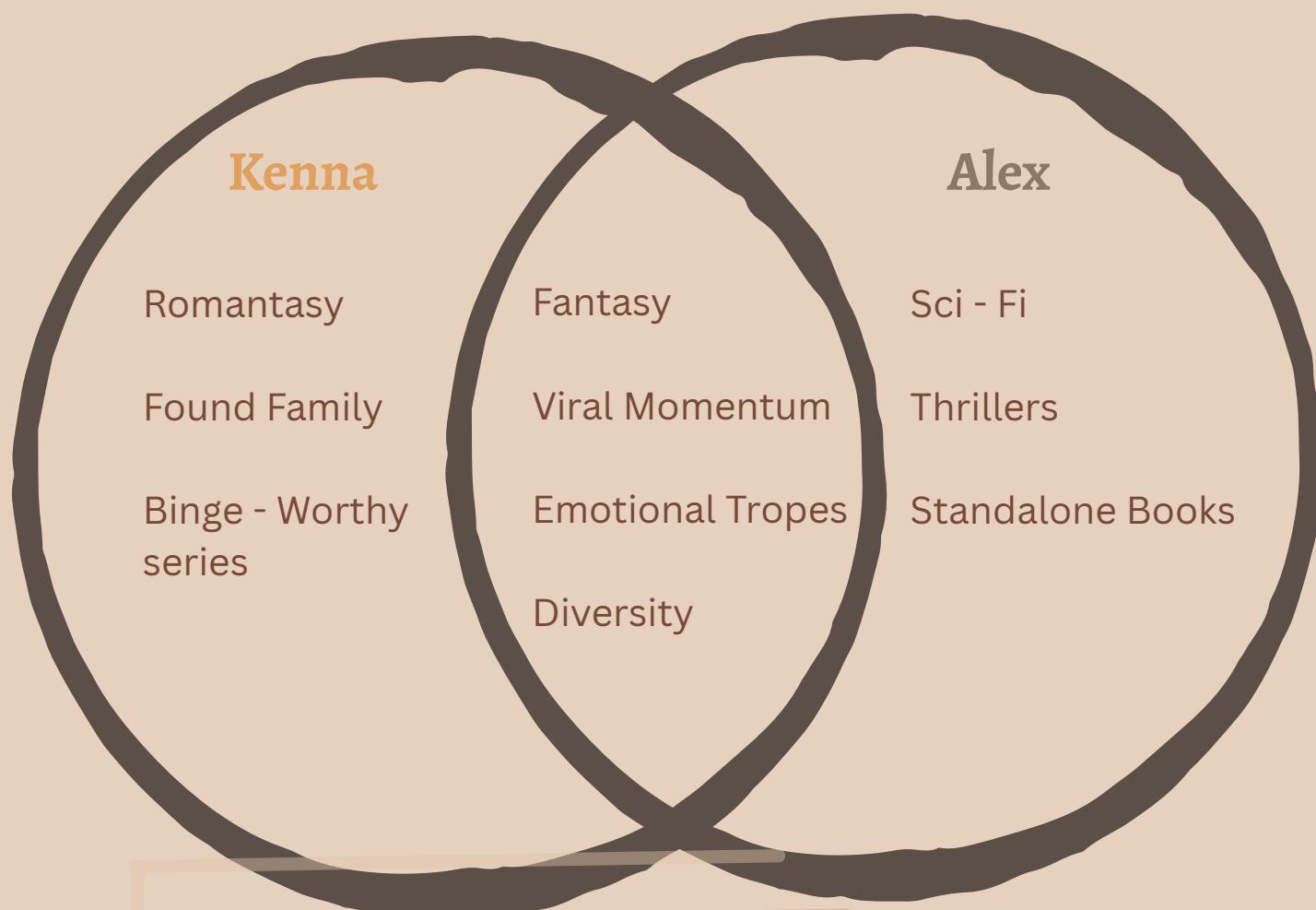


@toni.altlit  
Queer SSF, Magical Realism, Graphic Novels  
They/Them | Latinx | Adaptation Hunter



@linda.cozyfinds  
Cozy Mysteries, Book Club, Historical Fiction  
Book Club Queen | Cat Cuddles | Page-Turners

# BATTLE OF THE PERSONAS

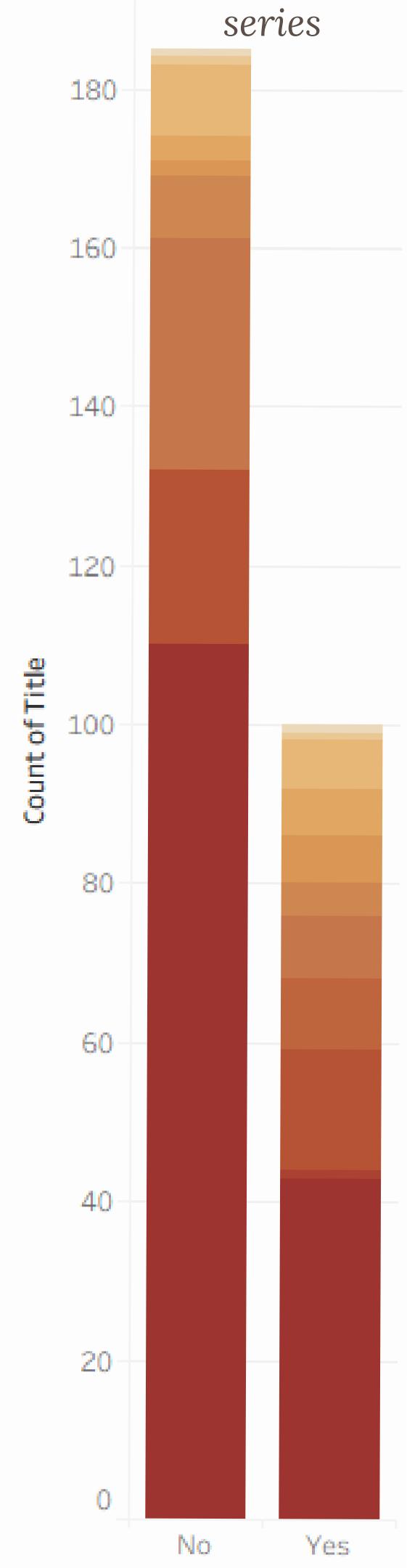


# FANTASY RULES, SERIES REIGN

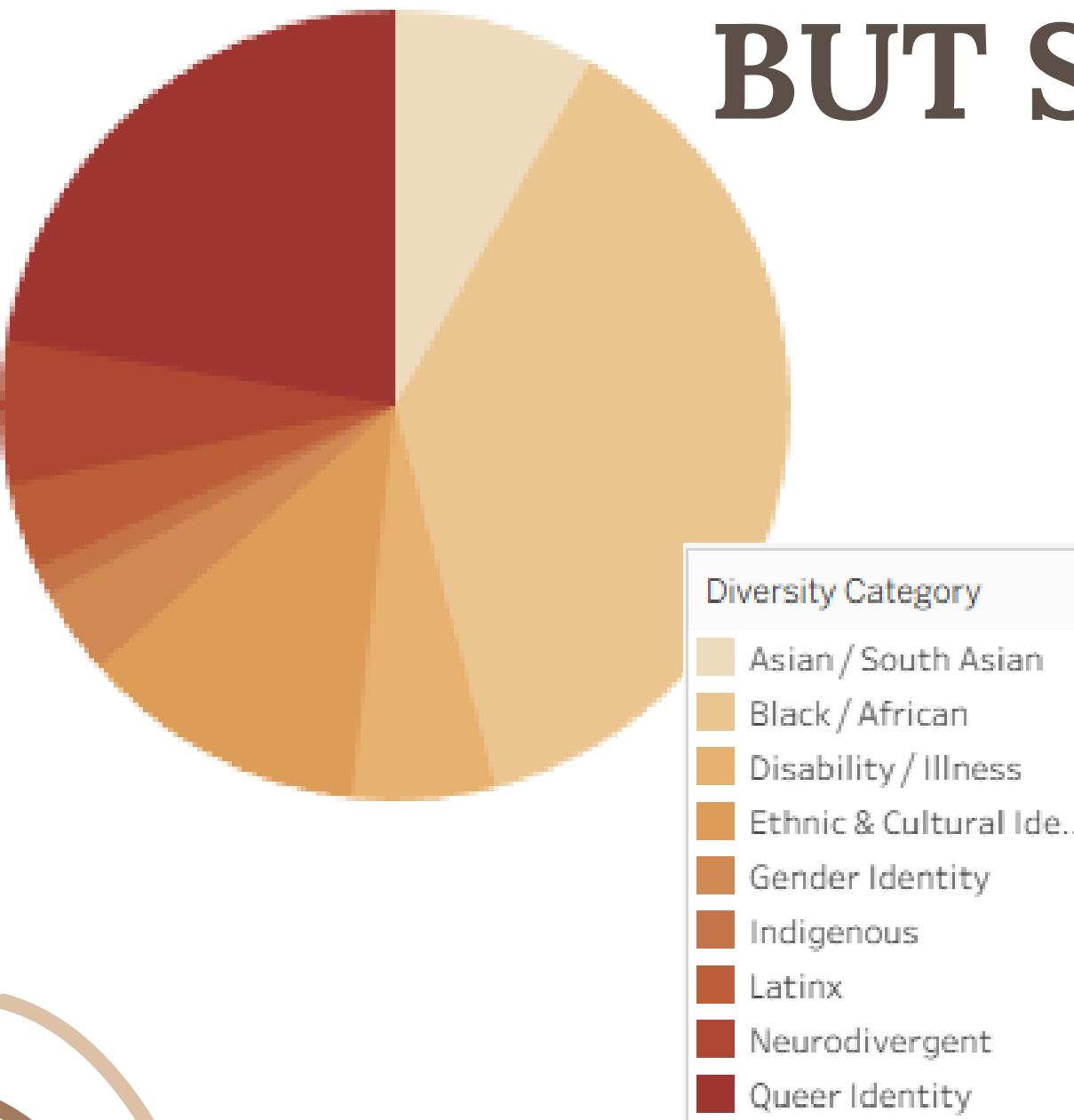
*Fantasy, Romance, and Mystery / Thriller dominate, with a strong preference for series over standalones*



- » Fantasy is the clear favorite for viral moments
- » More standalone overall, but series dominate emotional engagement
- » Genre lines blur - readers follow emotional tone, not shelves

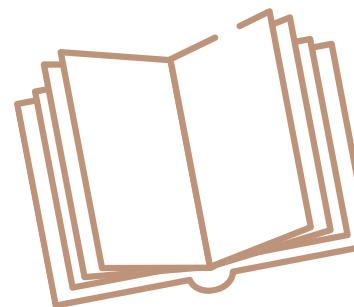


# DIVERSE STORIES GO VIRAL - BUT STILL GET OVERLOOKED



Over half of viral BookTok titles include diverse representation, even if mainstream media hasn't caught up

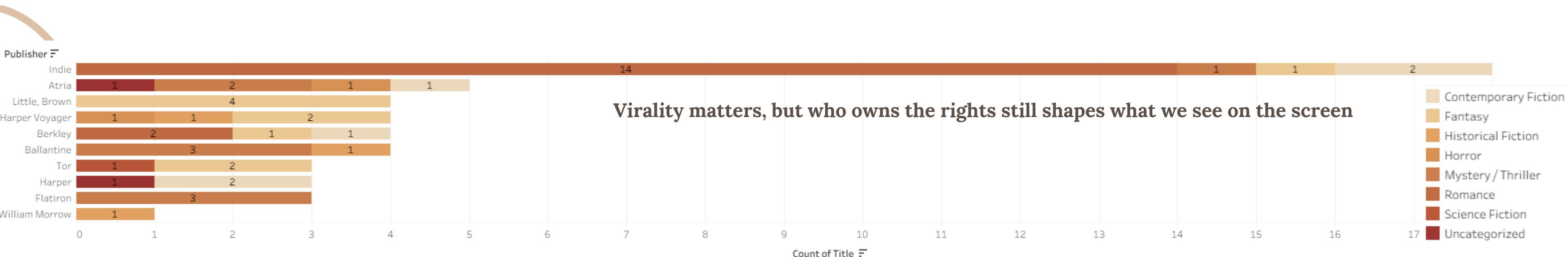
- Queer identity and Black representation top the chart for viral diversity
- Intersectional stories build loyal reader engagement across genres
- Diverse books often stay niche for screen deals, showing the gap between viral and visible



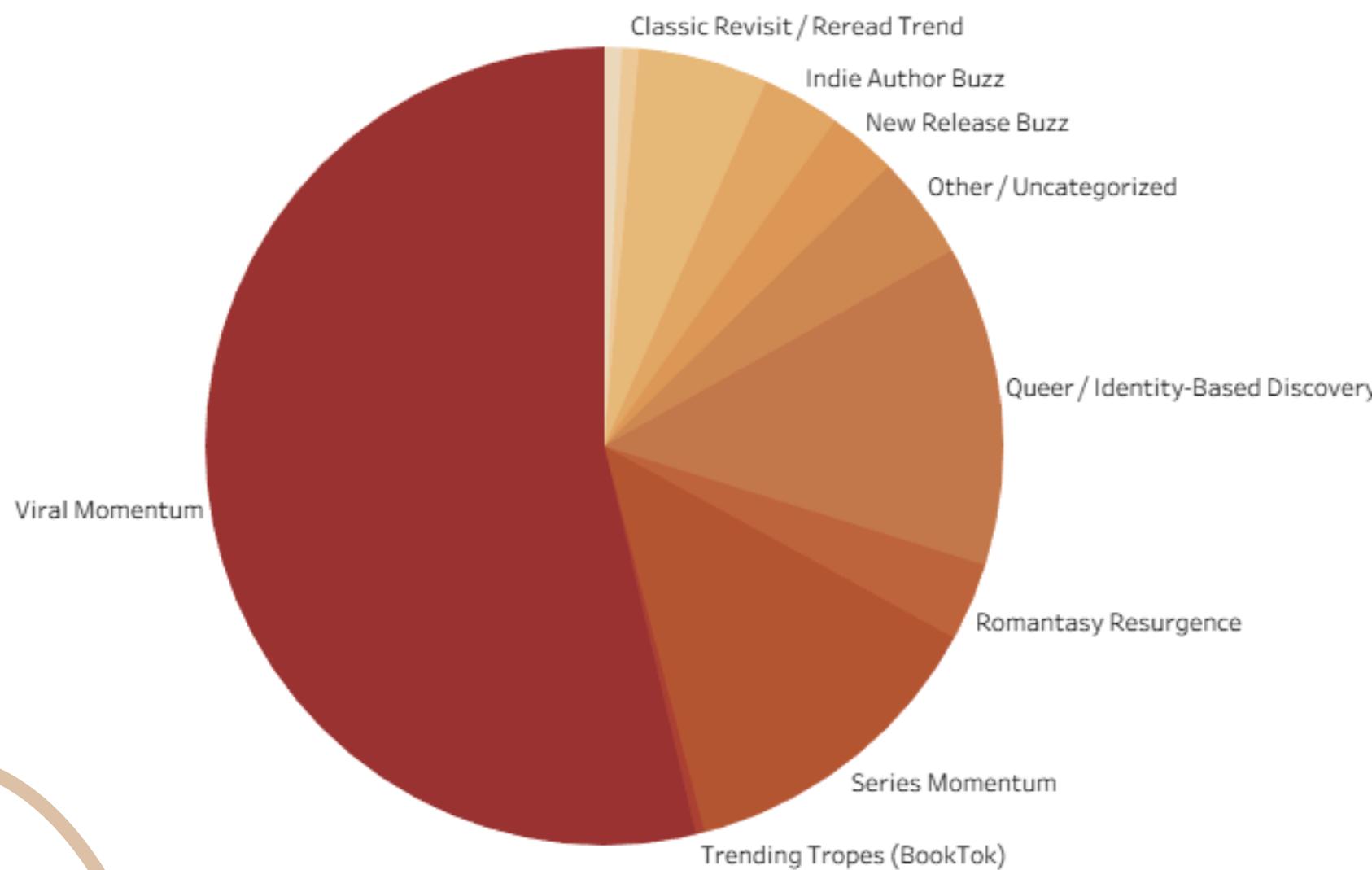
# WHO GETS ADAPTED?

Indie presses collectively drive the most viral buzz for adaptations, but big publishers still land the biggest screen deals.

- ④ Fantasy and Romantasy span both indie and trad publishers
- ④ Indie hits rely on BookTok to break through, one viral moment at a time
- ④ Big trad names place multiple titles each year, backed by marketing budgets

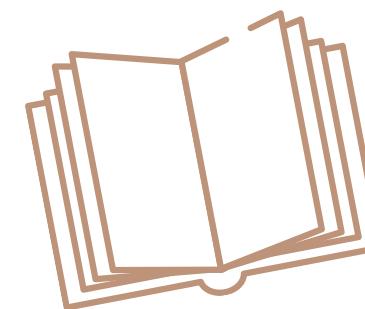


# WHY DO BOOKS GO VIRAL?



*Viral momentum reflects the emotional and community-driven force behind BookTok's top trends. Nearly half of viral books thrive not from marketing budgets, but from raw reader response*

- Organic buzz often outpaces marketing, especially for binge-worthy series
- Queer Rep and found family remain among the most shared TikTok themes
- Indie and classic revisits show small but loyal engagement



# TECHNICAL CHALLENGES & SUCCESSES

- 
- ▶ Messy metadata
  - ▶ Python script troubleshooting
  - ▶ Data consistency and categories
  - ▶ API enrichment not reliable

CHALLENGES

- 
- ▶ Learned Tableau quickly
  - ▶ Refined python scripts
  - ▶ Publisher insights
  - ▶ Clear visuals

SUCCESSES ❤





# PROJECT DO-OVERS

Reflecting on what I'd do differently next time with small data collection, enrichment, and visualization

## Lessons Learned

- » Define categories and tags early
- » Automate more enrichment
- » Expand persona windows across time periods
- » Document each round of collection

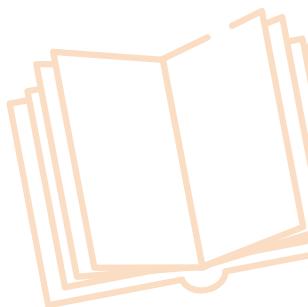
# Fiction Readers & The Fantasy Boom

Fiction readers, especially for fantasy, romantasy, and thrillers, lead viral trends on BookTok and drive huge shelf demand

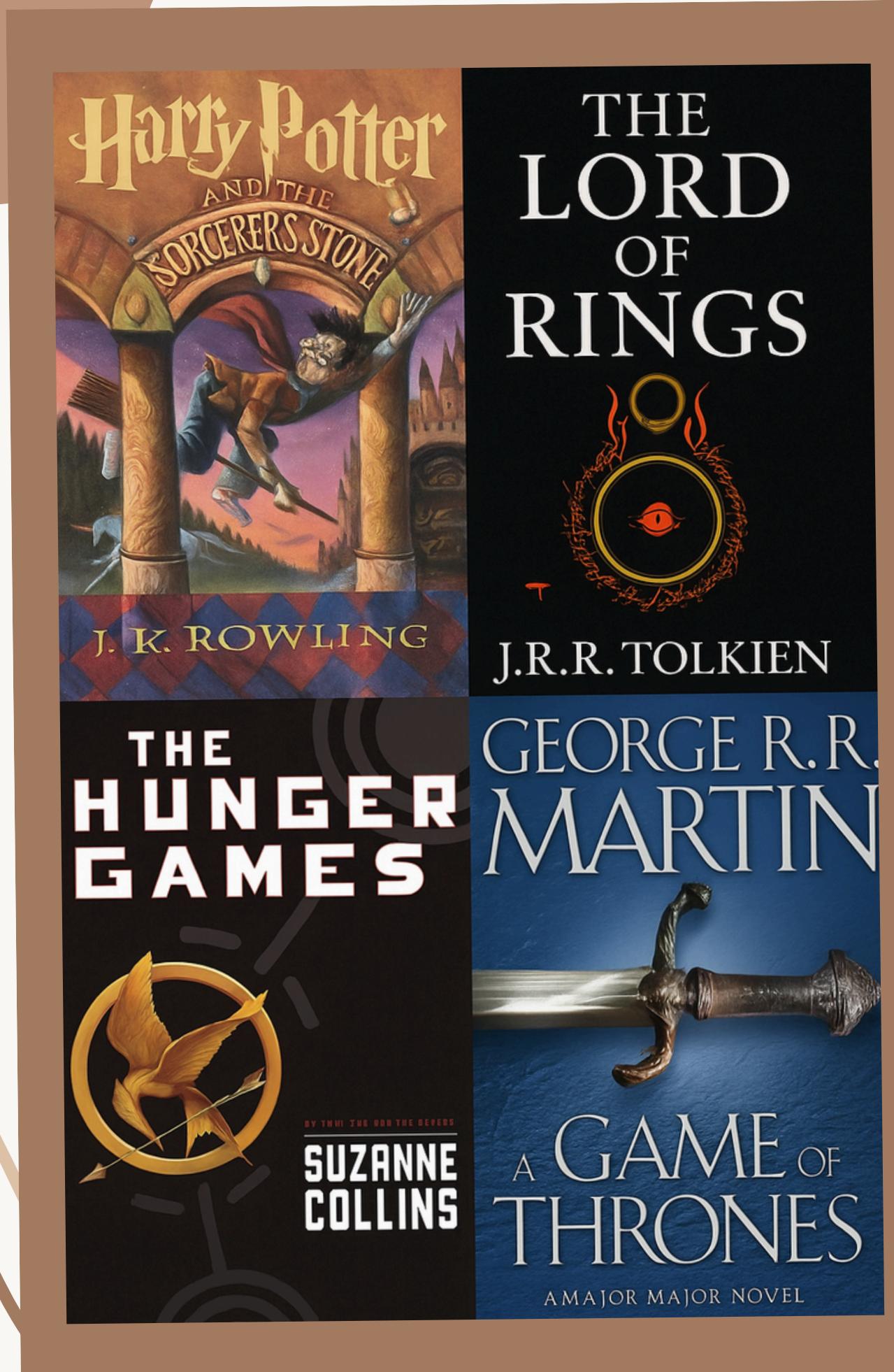
- ▶ Fantasy is the top viral genre in my small data
- ▶ Adult romantasy and fan-fic style tropes bring in new readers
- ▶ Series trends show we love binge-worthy universes



More men are reading fantasy too - busting old myths



# BOOK LOVERS IMPACT: TRENDING BOOKS FUEL ADAPTATIONS



- ▶ Small fandoms create buzz
- ▶ Word of mouth sells backlist titles overnight
- ▶ Viral tropes like 'found family' and 'queer rep', move to the top of the TBR shelves
- ▶ Diverse stories still see fewer adaptation deals

## SMALL DATA, BIG SHELF POWER

- ▶ BookTok trends keep Barnes & Noble alive
- ▶ Indie bookstores see spikes for backlist authors
- ▶ Libraries track holds to buy more viral books
- ▶ Fans create lifelong community and loyalty
- ▶ Readers create fanart, digital covers, and character art that spreads trends further





# THE END

DIY API SMALL DATA | OPEN LIBRARY | TMDB | TABLEAU | PYTHON



[WWW.MPASQUELE.COM](http://WWW.MPASQUELE.COM)



[GITHUB.COM/MPASQUELE3](https://GITHUB.COM/MPASQUELE3)