

Understanding Booktok: How a Corner of TikTok Created a Publishing Phenomenon

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Abstract

In 2021, a shift occurred in the book publishing industry which saw unexpected books growing increasingly popular and becoming best-sellers, seemingly out of nowhere. This phenomenon has been attributed to BookTok, the book related segment of social media app, TikTok. On BookTok, users create and engage with videos relating to books, sharing recommendations, opinions and entertaining content. The purpose of this thesis is to explore how BookTok has been able to impact book sales in the publishing industry and understand how its content has been so successful in shifting the patterns observed in the industry for decades. Due to a lack of literature pertaining directly to BookTok's influence on publishing, a literature review covered material involving BookTok in relation to library sciences and literacy, social media use in the publishing industry, and the existence of bookish communities. A qualitative methodology used a textual analysis conducted on ten TikTok videos related to two books most notably impacted by this phenomenon. Criteria focused on analyzing visual, auditory, plot/storytelling and viewer response components of each video. Results uncovered three key themes amongst the videos: authenticity, emotional displays and community building. Together, these themes form a level of trust amongst BookTok users creating the perfect environment for sharing book recommendations and acting upon them. Ultimately, these themes point to the reason why readers engage with this content, and explain how BookTok has been so successful in influencing book sales. The organic and trustworthy nature of this community and platform has and will continue to influence the publishing industry in the coming years. For this reason, it needs to be continued to be studied and understood.

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Introduction

In 2021, booksellers and publishers began noticing a significant shift in the book publishing industry. Generally, book sales grew over the year, with unit sales rising 8.9% in 2021 compared to 2020 (Milliot, 2022). However, a more interesting trend was identified within best-seller lists. Suddenly, books that had been published many years prior were receiving an increased demand, selling an anomalous number of units and becoming best sellers. One of these books was *The Song of Achilles* by Madeline Miller. Initially published in 2011, this fantasy novel based on Greek mythology performed well at the time, but the sudden rise in demand was uncharacteristic for a book published nearly ten years prior. Many other books followed this same unprecedented pattern, including *We Were Liars* by E. Lockhart, published in 2014 (Harris, 2021). This pattern was not only recognized amongst older books, but also recently self-published novels like Olivie Blake's *The Atlas Six*, which saw a large and unexpected uptick in sales a few months after its publication (Fadroski, 2022). Many other books, primarily in the young-adult fiction genre, gained the same rise in popularity, creating a shift never seen before in the publishing industry.

This phenomenon can be traced back to popular social media app, TikTok, particularly the book related community on the app, known as BookTok (Harris, 2021). On BookTok, users make short form TikTok videos, usually under two minutes long, relating to the books they are reading or want to read in the future. Today, the influence of BookTok is responsible for dictating the popularity of many books across various genres, and is recognized and utilized throughout the industry. To the general public, BookTok's most visible impact on the publishing space is apparent at independent and chain bookstores. Major retail booksellers including Indigo and Barnes & Noble set up display tables featuring popular books from BookTok (Kaplan, 2022). This allows for BookTok viewers to easily locate the books they heard about, but also introduces new readers to BookTok, feeding the cycle (Harris, 2022). Marketing and publicity has also been impacted, as marketing teams have invested in creating their own content on BookTok, and have started sending free books to BookTok influencers and working with them through paid sponsorships (Harris, 2022). Authors are also encouraged to have a presence on the app to easily interact with their readership and promote their books in hopes of boosting sales. Some folks even claim that this phenomenon is influencing the design of book covers by driving trends and reaffirming the importance of aesthetics as a factor in the book buying process (Chrysostomou, 2022). BookTok has also been recognized by TikTok, leading to partnerships with different players in the publishing industry. In 2022, TikTok had a stage at the 74th Frankfurter Buchmesse, the world's largest book fair. This partnership included programming highlighting BookTok through workshops, performances, and talks featuring authors and influencers in the community (Anderson, 2022). Most notably, Barnes & Noble partnered with TikTok to create a summer reading challenge, which involved hosting curated content on a

BookTok landing page on the TikTok app and an in-store campaign leading Barnes & Noble customers to the BookTok hub (Harris, 2022). This thesis seeks to understand how BookTok has been able to create this phenomenon and influence in a way that hasn't been achieved by any social media platform before.

While the use of social media in the publishing industry has been documented in the past, there is currently little literature addressing TikTok specifically. Some research has been conducted related directly to literature and library sciences, and aims to understand how BookTok can be utilized in schools and libraries. However, there is next to no research seeking to understand this recently observed shift in book sales, and the role BookTok has played in it. This thesis attempts to begin to fill this gap in the literature, by researching what makes BookTok videos appealing to users, to the extent that it impacts their book buying decisions.

The objective of this research is to conduct a textual analysis of top TikTok videos relating to two books whose sales have been impacted by this phenomenon: *The Song of Achilles* by Madeline Miller and *The Atlas Six* by Olivie Blake. In order to understand how BookTok influences its users, the TikTok videos themselves will be analyzed through criteria driven by the question, "What aspects of this TikTok video make people want to read this book?"

This thesis will begin by conducting a literature review of work related to the BookTok segment of TikTok, the role of social media in the publishing industry and the existence of bookish communities. Next, the methodology section will outline the selection process of the ten TikTok videos being analyzed, and outline the criteria for the textual analysis involving visual, auditory, plot/storytelling and viewer response components. The results section will show the findings of this analysis and provide answers to the questions related to each analysis criterion. This will be followed by the discussion section which will examine themes found within each criterion, determine overall themes relating to understanding the appeal and influence of TikTok, and provide recommendations for further research.

Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to understand how the book community on TikTok, known as BookTok, has impacted book sales in the publishing industry; why has it been so successful in suddenly shifting the patterns observed in the publishing industry for decades? In order to answer this question, this literature review will explore the existing research on BookTok as a platform, the presence and importance of digital communities surrounding literature, and the way in which social media apps have been historically used as a marketing tool in the publishing industry. Ultimately, this literature review seeks to provide context to better understand the

elements and themes influencing this phenomenon and fill in the gaps in the research pertaining to BookTok.

Understanding BookTok

Due to the recent nature of TikTok and BookTok's success, there is currently little research available analyzing BookTok's impact and its potential applications in the publishing industry. Brenda K. Wiederhold's *BookTok Made Me Do It: The Evolution of Reading* is the only piece of literature, currently, which studies BookTok from a publishing industry standpoint. Wiederhold explores the rise of BookTok from the lens of publishing, noting its timely gain in popularity during the COVID-19 pandemic, presence as a digital space and its capacity for community building, authenticity and storytelling (Weiderhold, 2022). While Weideherhold's paper is the only piece of literature about BookTok related to publishing thus far, there are a few papers exploring BookTok in relation to young adult literacy and library sciences, including Sarah Jerasa and Trevor Boffone's *BookTok 101: TikTok, Digital Literacies, and Out-of-School Reading Practices*, and Margaret K. Merga's *How can Booktok on TikTok inform readers' advisory services for young people?* This section of the literature review analyzes these sources in addition to Weiderhold's work in order to understand BookTok and its content.

What is BookTok?

Defining BookTok can be quite challenging as it is both a digital space within the TikTok platform, collection of content and community of users. For Weiderhold, BookTok is a subdivision of TikTok and the newest way for people to share their love of books with fellow readers (Weidherhold, 2022). In *BookTok 101: TikTok, Digital Literacies, and Out-of-School Reading Practices*, authors Sarah Jerasa and Trevor Boffone define BookTok as "the TikTok subculture dedicated to reading and discussing (mostly) young adult literature." and "the sub-community within TikTok specifically for readers and book lovers." (Jerasa & Boffone, 2021). They note the success of BookTok amongst Gen Z due to TikTok's promotion of authenticity, idiosyncrasy, and self-deprecating humour, and describe the platform's aesthetics as "largely messy, chaotic, campy, and genuine." (Jerasa & Boffone, 2021). Weiderhold also notes the "messy authenticity" promoted on TikTok and BookTok, which values honesty and personal experiences, (Weiderhold, 2022). While many are quick to write off TikTok as a meaningless app featuring dancing teenagers and short-form comedic skits, Jerasa and Boffone point out its capacity for meaningful engagement, "TikTok is not a frivolous digital space for adolescents to escape to, but rather is a critical site for digital literacies, identity formation, and community building centered around shared interests that are not always given agency in the mainstream or traditional school spaces." (Jerasa & Boffone, 2021).

What Type of Content Forms BookTok?

In regards to the content featured on BookTok, its variety is quite vast and far-reaching, and is often created with the use of filters, audio clips, and/or theatrical productions (Jerasa & Boffone, 2021). Jerasa and Boffone note that two general types of content found on BookTok: the first replicates conversations typically had in book clubs, in the form of condensed book reviews which invite the viewers to share their own thoughts on the book in question through the comments section, (Jerasa & Boffone, 2021). The second type of videos are described to engage with popular TikTok trends, which allow users to form a short creative book project that “marry the book’s content with TikTok aesthetics.” (Jerasa & Boffone, 2021). When speaking of the content on BookTok, Weiderhold notes that most highlights emotional reactions to the plots and characters of the book being discussed, and often features “evocative imagery and dramatic soundtracks.” (Weiderhold, 2022). Research has been conducted to dissect the content of BookTok videos and identify the themes exhibited through them. In *How can BookTok on TikTok inform readers’ advisory services for young people?* Margaret K. Merga uses a hybrid content analysis of 116 BookTok videos to research how libraries can use BookTok as a tool for promoting books to young people. Through this research, Merga identifies key themes promoted in videos shared in the BookTok community, “Videos focused on recommendations (40.5%), reader experience (24.1%), emotional reader response (14.6%), reader community and identity (13.8%), characters and places (11.2%), writer (6.9%), personal library management (6%), and reader in the family (4.3%).” (Merga, 2021). While some of the 116 videos contained overlap, most were clearly positioned to fit one of the themes. Findings also included a concentration on the authors being featured in videos and the genre of books being discussed, which mainly revolved around young adult fiction (Merga, 2021). Weiderhold echoes these findings, citing young adult fiction and contemporary fictions to be the most represented genres on BookTok, (Weiderhold, 2022).

The Role of Social Media in Publishing

As with many other industries, the growth of social media has greatly impacted the publishing industry and serves as a vital marketing tool, as explained by Hoang Viet Nguyen, Le Van Huy, The Ninh Nguyen, Van Son Dinh, and Viet Thao Tran in *The Role of Social Media in the Purchase of Books: Empirical Evidence from Vietnam’s Publishing Industry*. Through their research, they investigated the role of social media in the customer decision-making process regarding books. Research showed that 81.2% of survey respondents used social media in order to access user-generated content like reviews, comments and posts (Nguyen, 2019). Additionally, a majority of respondents used social media to seek information about book fairs and other events, find new book recommendations, and learn about promotional programs (Nguyen, 2019). The information sought on social media also played a role in the decision-making process; 24.6% of participants stated that it was an

important factor in their final decision, and 17.6% stated it changed their opinion of the book (Nguyen, 2019). Ultimately, the study found that social media is most commonly used in the post-purchase stage, since apps like Twitter and Facebook allow readers to share their opinions on a book and compare them with others.

Social media's use as a marketing tool in the publishing industry is also researched by Jamie Criswell and Nick Canty in *Deconstructing Social Media: An Analysis of Twitter and Facebook Use in the Publishing Industry*. In comparing the social media marketing for *The Song of Achilles* by Madeline Miller and *The Wind Through the Keyhole* by Stephen King, research showed that social media marketing in publishing is most effective when there is a pre-established community, and less effective for debut books and authors, (Criswell & Canty, 2014). The social media marketing strategy for *The Song of Achilles* was initially less effective due to the lack of an existing readership, but once the book was awarded the Orange Prize less than a year after it was published, the book gained traction and the strategy shifted to become reactive. Still, the final engagement was less impactful than that of the social media marketing strategy for *The Wind Through the Keyhole*. However, an important finding in this study was that higher social media engagement did not equal higher sales, as *The Song of Achilles* ended up selling more titles than *The Wind Through the Keyhole*, indicating that social media marketing's impact is limited by the size of the targeted audience (Criswell & Canty, 2014).

Bookish Communities

A key theme observed throughout all the literature included in this review, is the importance of community on social media in the book buying process. In their research on TikTok and specifically its BookTok segment, Sarah Jerasa and Trevor Boffone note that individuals are able to engage with social media and digital literacies as spaces that allow users freedom to communicate, create and collaborate with others. A sense of community is built through the ways users are able to create content featuring challenges or popular trends that their peers also create and engage with; these challenges and trends allow users to contribute their own voices, perspectives and ideas to the trend (Jerasa & Boffone, 2021). Merga echoes this in her own research, particularly through one of the themes she finds included in BookTok content: reader community and identity (Merga, 2021). TikTok content carrying this theme allows readers to build a sense of reader community and identity, by portraying being a reader as an attractive common identity (Merga, 2021). Key vehicles for commonality through content are sharing quotes from shared favourite books and expressing opinions about books that are either shared with others or controversial (Merga, 2021).

However, BookTok is not the first community on social media surrounding books. Weiderhold notes the existence of bookish communities on other social media platforms, prior to the rise of TikTok. BookTube, the community on Youtube

dedicated to making book-related videos, and #Bookstagram, the hashtag and community sharing bookish content on Instagram, have both been used as spaces where readers can gather and host book critiques (Weiderhold, 2022). This theme of community is also mentioned in Nguyen et. al's study, which found that 53% of respondents felt engaged with their friends and the book community using social media (Nguyen, 2019). Ultimately, social media is able to provide readers with emotional values and a sense of community engagement (Nguyen, 2019).

Conclusion

This literature review uncovered that there is an increased interest in understanding the BookTok segment of TikTok, and the relationships between social media platforms and publishing. There is a key interest in exploring how users engage with social media and how it affects the book buying process, and also how marketers can make use of social media to sell more books. The idea of community was mentioned in each piece of literature examined, demonstrating its value in the lives and consumer decision-making processes of readers. However, there is currently a gap in the literature regarding TikTok's role within the publishing industry and the effect it has on dictating the popularity and therefore sales of books. While some research has been done to analyze the content of BookTok, none seeks to understand why this particular platform and community is creating an impact that has not been seen before in the publishing industry.

Methodology

This thesis seeks to understand how the BookTok community on TikTok has been able to influence book popularity and book sales, creating a phenomenon never seen before in the publishing industry. In order to do so, the content of TikTok videos belonging to the BookTok community must be analyzed to understand their influence. For this reason, this methodology was designed to investigate how TikTok videos are able to influence users to read and/or purchase the book(s) featured in the video, through the video's content. Using qualitative research methods, we are able to understand the different themes communicated through TikTok videos that cause this influence, and the ways in which these themes are communicated through the different features and capabilities of TikTok video content.

Two books whose popularity and sales have been greatly impacted due to BookTok, and best exemplify this phenomenon, were selected for this study: *The Song of Achilles* by Madeline Miller, and *The Atlas Six* by Olivie Blake. Both books have been cited in articles discussing the BookTok phenomenon, including The Observer's How BookTok Is Changing Publishing With New Voices and Influence, and Forbes' How TikTok Helped Fuel The Best-Selling Year For Print Books. By choosing to analyze TikTok videos made about these two popular books, it was uncovered what

creators find most important to share about these novels and identify how they share this information in an effective way that prompts users to read the book themselves.

The methodological approach used in this study was a textual analysis conducted on five TikTok videos per book. The videos were selected based on their relevance and popularity on TikTok. On March 31st, 2022, Videos were selected through TikTok’s search function located on the app’s Discover page. When conducting a search on TikTok, results are organized through the following sections: Top (includes the top results for all of the following categories), Users, Videos, Sounds, Live, and Hashtags. In order to choose videos that best represented these books popularity, the TikTok videos chosen were the first five to appear in the Video section, using the default filter settings which displays videos based on relevance to the search. By doing so, the first videos to appear best represented the content on TikTok related to the two books on that date, providing a well-rounded look at the type of content users see, engage with and are influenced by in relation to that particular novel.

In creating the criteria for textual analysis of these ten TikTok videos, the following question was used to guide criteria selection: “What aspects of this TikTok video make people want to read this book?” Criteria used for the textual analysis includes visual content, auditory content, plot and viewer response. Each piece of criteria asks a number of questions to better understand how each piece is used within each video, and how this may impact the viewer. The full list of questions can be found in the chart below:

Category	Key Questions
Visual Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the video show? • Are images included in the video? • Does text appear in the video? • What does the caption say? • What hashtags are used?
Auditory Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What type of audio was used (if any)? • Is the audio original (the default audio-recorded) or secondary (audio initially created for a different video by a different creator) • Is it a popular audio? • Is the audio-related in any way to the book?
Plot/ Storytelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is happening in this video? (Plot description)
Viewer Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many times has the video been shared? • How many comments are there? • How many likes are there? • What sort of sentiment is reflected in the top 10 comments?

Given the limitations of TikTok’s search filters and available data on its videos, this methodology suits this study best since it allows for analysis of visual, auditory, written, and thematic components which shape each video and collectively influence how a user views and engages with the content. This allows us to answer the question, “How are videos from the BookTok segment of TikTok able to influence users to read and/or purchase books,” which then helps us understand how TikTok has been able to influence book sales, creating a phenomenon in the publishing industry, and how it continues to do so.

Results

The Song of Achilles

Video #1: posted by @emmyslibrary on April 7th, 2021, 766.1K views

- Visual Content: The opening shot is a clip showing a copy of *The Song of Achilles* laid out on a bed next to a lit candle. White text reads “most beautiful books in ten seconds.” This TikTok includes images as the video proceeds to flash photographs and artwork depicting themes, settings and characters within the novel. The caption reads, “i am made of memories” Hashtags listed: #booktok #tsoa #thesongofachilles #greekmythology #bookworm #bookish #patrochilles #foryoupage #fyp #bookhaul #circe #lgbtq
- Auditory Content: The audio attached to this video is a secondary audio attached by the TikTok creator titled, Achilles Come Down. This audio is a song by the musical group, Gang of Youths, and has been used in 17K videos. Achilles Come Down is a trending audio often used for videos regarding *The Song of Achilles* and Greek mythology since its lyrics relate to the Greek God Achilles, one of the main characters in the book.
- Plot: In this video, the creator opens the video with a clip of their copy of *The Song of Achilles*, and proceeds to edit together many photos that are able to capture the “vibe” or atmosphere of the novel. This includes fan art of the main characters, images of greek sculptures and architecture, and key symbols found in the book. By creating this video, the creator conveys the feeling and vibe users will likely experience when reading the book.
- Viewer Response: 103.2K likes, 2072 comments, 4480 shares. In this video, the top comments are mostly quotes from *The Song of Achilles* that evoked an emotional response from the readers, and their thoughts after having read the book.

Video #2: posted by @throne.of.pages on January 1st, 2022, 42.6K views

- Visual Content: The opening shot is a clip showing a copy of *The Song of Achilles* laid out on a bed. Overlaid text reads “This fanart </3.” The video then shows a piece of fan art which depicts the two main characters, Patroclus and Achilles. In the artwork, Achilles is crying as the ghost of Patroclus meaningfully looks into his eyes and holds his face. Text on the

artwork reads, “Name one hero who was happy.” The caption reads, “Only love can hurt like this...” Hashtags listed: #thesongofachilles #patrochilles #booktok #bookworm #fyp

- Auditory Content: The audio attached to this video is a secondary audio attached by the TikTok creator titled, “only love can hurt like this.” This audio is a snippet of the song Only Love Can Hurt Like This by Paloma Faith, and was uploaded by @favsoundds. This audio has been used in 67.8K videos, and is not directly related to *The Song of Achilles*.
- Plot: In this video, the creator opens the video with a clip of their copy of *The Song of Achilles*, and proceeds to edit together many photos that are able to capture the “vibe” or atmosphere of the novel, and convey that feeling to viewers. This includes fan art of the main characters, images of greek sculptures and architecture, and key symbols found in the book.
- Viewer Response: 9074 likes, 191 comments, 163 shares. In this video, the top comments vary. Some comments express the emotional reactions viewers had after reading the book. Generally, the comments express viewers’ reactions to the art and/or book, an interest in reading the book and knowing who the artist is of the featured work. A number of comments tag other users who they know might be interested in this video.

Video #3: posted by @mana.banana28 on January 26th, 2022, 819.6K views

- Visual Content: This video does not use any images; it shows the creator sitting in a room with a bookshelf in the background, holding up a copy of *Circe* by Madeline Miller. White text on a brown background appears on the screen as closed captioning for the audio. The video then shows the author holding up a copy of *The Song of Achilles*, and white text on a blue background shows up on the screen. The caption reads, “this audio HURTS !!” Hashtags listed: #soa #thesongofachilles #circe #patroclus #achilles #patrochilles #madelinemiller #greekmythology #greekretelling #reading #booktok
- Auditory Content: The audio attached to this video is a piece of secondary audio titled “half of my soul” uploaded by TikTok creator morgan. This audio is a recording of a person reading a quote from *Circe* by Madeline Miller, which describes the love between Achilles and Patroclus, “Would I be like Achilles, wailing over his lost lover, Patroclus? I tried to picture myself running up and down beaches, tearing at my hair, cradling some scrap of old tunic he had left behind. Crying out for the loss of half my soul.” Towards the end of the last line, there is an overlap in the audio with a different voice reading a quote from *The Song of Achilles*, in which Patroclus says, “He is half my soul, as the poets say.” This audio is not popular or trending, with only 328 videos using it as of April 4th, 2022. It is relevant to the book because it is sharing a quote from the book itself, and also speaks to the relationship between the two main characters by quoting *Circe*.

- Plot: In this video, the creator holds up a copy of *Circe* by Madeline Miller and lipsyncs to an audio reciting a quote from the book which mentions the relationships between Achilles and Patroclus, the main characters in *The Song of Achilles*. The creator then holds up a copy of *The Song of Achilles* and continues lipsyncing as the voice changes and a quote from that book is heard. By doing so, she highlights a connection between two of Madeline Miller's books.
- Viewer Response: 169.9K likes, 1888 comments, 2745 shares. In this video, the top comments mostly express the commenters emotional response to these quotes and the relationship. Others express their reactions to the connections between the two novels, and the moments when they realized Miller had given Patroclus and Achilles a cameo in *Circe*.

Video #4: posted by @saracarstens on March 10th, 2022, 571.6K views

- Visual Content: This video does not use any images. It shows the creator holding up a copy of *The Song of Achilles* and flipping through it a couple of times in a frustrated manner. White text reads, "Me scared to read the ending of 'the song of Achilles'" The caption reads "Finally back with the booktoks" Hashtags listed: #thesongofachilles #booktok
- Auditory Content: The audio attached to this video is a piece of secondary audio titled "Happy and in love" uploaded by TikTok creator @asiapaoloni. This audio is a recording of the creator reacting to a book she's reading, saying, "Right, so we're happy and in love, right? What's this then? We're happy and in love, what is this? What, what is this? We're happy and in love. What's this?!" This is not a trending audio, used in only 1209 videos. It is not directly related to *The Song of Achilles*.
- Plot: In this video, the creator flips through her copy of *The Song of Achilles* while lip-syncing, and holds the book open to a section in which the characters are "happy and in love" as the audio says. She then flips through the rest of the pages looking concerned, while lip-syncing "what is this then?" referring to the feeling that something bad will happen to the couple, and the book will not end with the two of them "happy and in love."
- Viewer Response: 141.9K likes, 1006 comments, 902 shares. In this video, the top comments vary. Some share the commenters' favourite quotes from the book and their reactions to reading the book. Others warn the author about the emotional ending of the book, or express their own interest in reading the book.

Video #5: posted by @saracarstens on March 17th, 2022, 791.3K views

- Visual Content: No images are used in this video. The creator looks off into the distance lip-syncing to the audio. Text on the screen reads, "*The song of Achilles* not making me cry at all." The next clip shows the creator's face close up with a blank look on her face and tears in her eyes. Text reads, "The

last page.” The caption reads, “A single page has no business being that emotional” Hashtags listed: #thesongofachilles #booktok #pov

- Auditory Content: This video uses a secondary audio titled “original sound” created by @destroyedmyself. It includes snippets of a song that sings, “Did you get enough love, my little dove? Why do you cry?” This is a trending audio, having been used in 94.3K videos. It is not directly related to *The Song of Achilles*.
- Plot: In this video, the creator dreamily lip-syncs to a song and as the lyrics change and say, “why do you cry?” she shows herself crying in reaction to reading the last page of *The Song of Achilles*.
- Viewer Response: 187.4K likes, 1507 comments, 1517 shares. The top comments on this video primarily share commenters’ favourite quotes from the book’s ending and their reactions.

The Atlas Six

Video #1: posted by @aymansbooks on March 2nd, 2022, 120.9K views

- Visual Content: The first clip shows a copy of *The Atlas Six* laying on top of a piece of furniture. Text reads, “The Atlas Six Tor Edition art spoilers ahead” The creator then proceeds to cut together clips showing different aspects of the book including the hardcover without the dust jacket, endsheets, and illustrations of the main characters spread throughout the book. Caption reads, “they’re so hot” Hashtags listed: #theatlassix #darkacademia
- Auditory Content: The audio used is secondary audio titled “Use this audio if you are gay” created by @yuukqr1. Lyrics: “Don’t call me selfish I ain’t sharing. The 60 40 isn’t working. I want 100 of your time. Your mind.” This is a popular audio used in over 282.9K videos, and is not directly relevant to the book.
- Plot: In this video, the creator shows off the physical features of the hardcover copy of *The Atlas Six*, including specialty finishings including foil and embossing, cover art, illustrations and endpages. Many readers value the physical appearance and design of books, so by displaying all these features in a video, viewers may see them and feel compelled to read and/or buy the book strictly based on its appearance. Additionally, some of the illustrations shown depict characters from the book.
- Viewer Response: 19.7K likes, 283 comments, 339 shares. Most of the top comments under this video are related to the illustrations in the book which were featured in the video. Since this TikTok video features the recently re-published edition of *The Atlas Six*, many comments ask about the new edition and what has changed from the previous one.

Video #2: posted by @li.reading on March 8th, 2022, 91.2K views

- Visual Content: This video does not use images. This video shows the creator sitting in front of a bookshelf holding up both versions of *The Atlas Six* as she speaks about them. Text is used in this video for closed captioning purposes. Caption reads, “I have page numbers if people want them” Hashtags listed: #booktok #books #theatlassix #olivieblake #darkacademia #lgbtbooktok
- Auditory Content: This video uses its original audio recorded by the creator, @li.reading. She discusses what has been changed in the re-published edition of *The Atlas Six*.
- Plot: In this video, the creator sits down and discusses the similarities and differences between the original, independently published version of *The Atlas Six* and the recently republished one from Tor Books. She primarily focuses on discussing changes in major plot points without outright giving spoilers, and recommends whether or not viewers should read both copies.
- Viewer Response: 12K likes, 252 comments, 275 shares. Many comments include questions for the creator about the book and are tied to the difference in book editions.

Video #3: posted by @astoldbyalahn on January 21st, 2022, 21.1K views

- Visual Content: The creator sits in front of a Christmas tree and speaks. Text reads “3 things you need to know to enjoy *The Atlas Six*” shown next to a small picture of the original edition. Text and image disappears as she speaks, replaced by text that summarizes the points she is making as she speaks. Caption reads, “gorgeous gorgeous girls leave their christmas tree up well into January...” Hashtags listed: #booktok #bookrec #bookreview #theatlassix #olivieblake #fantasybooks #libbyrhodes #bookish
- Auditory Content: This video uses its original audio recorded by the creator, @astoldbyalahni. She discusses three things viewers should know before reading *The Atlas Six* in order to enjoy it.
- Plot: In this video, the creator provides potential readers of *The Atlas Six* with three things to know before reading in order to better enjoy it. She speaks from her experience of just having finished the book.
- Viewer Response: 1498 likes, 29 comments, 27 shares. The majority of the comments are from people who have read the book and are responding to the points she made in the video, most of them in agreement. Some just express their appreciation for the book or their intent to read it.

Video #4: posted by @eloisehamp on December 12th, 2021, 21.6K views

- Visual Content: This video does not use any text or images. The creator is sitting on a couch and speaks to the camera, occasionally reading from her copy of *The Atlas Six*. Caption reads, “DID YALL LIE TO ME? Maybe im just dumb.” Hashtags listed: #theatlassix #barnesandnoble

- Auditory Content: This video uses its original audio recorded by the creator, @eloisehamp, as well as secondary audio titled Love Grows (Where My Rosemary Goes) created by Edison Lighthouse. It is important to note that the secondary audio is muted, and only the original audio from the creator can be heard. Since the secondary audio is a trending audio used in 1.8M videos, the creator likely used it in order to get more views.
- Plot: In this video, the creator expresses her frustration with the writing style of *The Atlas Six*, reading an oddly worded passage and claiming the rest of the book sounds the same way. She mentions that she is struggling to finish the novel.
- Viewer Response: 2869 likes, 117 comments, 39 shares. The majority of the top comments for this video agree with the creator’s comments regarding the writing style, and express their own frustration with it. Some note that this type of writing is not for them, and they won’t be reading the book.

Video #5: posted by @bogwitchbooks on March 10th, 2022, 14.9K views

- Visual Content: This video uses images to show the original illustrations of the main characters from *The Atlas Six*. The first image depicts the group of 6 characters, and the following images show each individual character. Text is used for closed captioning of the audio. Caption reads, “BEST BOOK” Hashtags listed: #booktok #books #bookish #bookclub #bookworm #book #theatlassix #olivieblake #mgbellavance
- Auditory Content: This video uses a secondary audio titled “original sound” created by @solqrias. It is a sped-up and otherwise edited version of a part of Oh No! By singer MARINA. It is not a trending audio, used on only 211 videos. This audio is not related to *The Atlas Six*.
- Plot: In this video, the creator shows the original illustrations of the characters from *The Atlas Six*, which are featured in the original edition. The creator pairs each character with a lyric from the song that most closely suits them. For example, the illustration of the most studious character is paired with the lyric “one track mind.”
- Viewer Response: 2215 likes, 19 comments, 16 shares. The majority of the top comments express the accuracy with which the creator paired the lyrics to the characters. Some point out the heightened accuracy for certain characters.

Discussion

After conducting research on the top five TikTok videos about *The Song of Achilles* by Madeline Miller and *The Atlas Six* by Olivie Blake, two books whose popularity have been greatly impacted by the BookTok community on the TikTok app, research showed a vastness in the type of content displayed on BookTok and a few key themes were identified. Each video was analyzed using four pieces of criteria: visual content, auditory content, plot, and viewer response. Within each

category, different patterns and themes emerged, some of which were contained within a single category, while others overlapped. Based on these findings, three overarching themes were identified, which inform how BookTok has been able to influence book sales and boost the popularity of certain books. This discussion section will begin by looking at the findings for each criterion, and will then speak to the overarching themes of authenticity, emotion and community.

Visual Content

The results showed that visual content tends to vary amongst TikTok videos on BookTok. However, the use of text and/or images in certain contexts still revealed some patterns. Images, for example, were often used to communicate key aspects of the books themselves, such as the overall vibe and atmosphere, or to show depictions of characters. For example, *The Song of Achilles* Video #1 uses images to communicate how it feels to read the book, by showing photographs and artwork related to characters, setting and symbols. By doing so, the reader gets a taste of what their reading experience could feel like, and is then more inclined to read the book themselves. *The Song of Achilles* Video #2 uses a single image of fan-created digital art, depicting a highly emotional and romantic scene between the main characters – Achilles and Patroclus. Another video that depicts characters is *The Atlas Six* Video #5, which displays artwork of the characters featured within the book itself. This use of images in this context helps readers visualize the characters and bring them to life, which entices them to read the book themselves.

Text was included in all but one of the TikTok videos, and was primarily used for three different purposes: closed captioning, summarizing content being discussed, or titling. Closed captioning appeared for both primary and secondary audio, and was used for accessibility purposes and to add emphasis to the words being spoken. In *The Atlas Six* Video #2, creator @li.reading discusses the differences between the original and re-published editions of *The Atlas Six* in order to provide prospective readers with information that will enable them to decide which edition(s) they should read. Closed captioning was beneficial in this case, since the focus of the video was the content that was being communicated verbally. By providing closed captioning, communication became more accessible to those with hearing impairments. The second way text was included was to summarize the topics being discussed, instead of providing word-for-word closed captioning. Text was used in this format in *The Atlas Six* Video #3, where creator @astoldbyalahn provided prospective readers with three things they should know about the book prior to reading in order to enjoy it best. For each point, she provided a written sentence that concisely summarized what was being discussed. For example, her second point was that the book itself is not pretentious, but all the main characters are, which makes some readers feel as though the book itself is pretentious regardless, and this makes them not want to continue reading. She used text to summarize this point which wrote, “2. the book isn’t smarter than you but all of the characters are”. Lastly, text was used

as a title on videos, primarily ones which used images. For example, in *The Atlas Six* Video #5 creator @bogwitchbooks used text overlaying an image of the main characters, which read “The Atlas Six characters.” By incorporating text into videos in these ways, creators are able to emphasize the point of their videos and increase accessibility for people with hearing impairments.

Captions were also used as supporting material to the TikTok videos themselves. These captions varied in content, as some quoted the books being featured or the secondary audio being used and some related to the book or reading experience of the creator, while others were completely unrelated to the TikTok video at hand. An example of a caption using a quote can be found in *The Song of Achilles* Video #2 which quotes the audio used, “Only love can hurt like this...” In *The Atlas Six* Video #4, creator @eloisehamp uses the caption “DID YALL LIE TO ME? Maybe im just dumb.” referring to her experience reading the book and struggling with the complex writing style. @saracarstens’ caption for *The Song of Achilles* Video #4 “Finally back with the booktoks”, speaks to her return to making book-related TikTok videos, and is not directly related to the book, audio, or message she is conveying through the video. Generally, captions varied and did not particularly hold significance. At a basic level, they did help to emphasize the message or emotions displayed in the video.

Hashtags were used fairly consistently throughout the videos. Eight out of ten videos included #BookTok, which is used to identify TikTok videos that are related to books and fall under this community. Additionally, hashtags of the book titles were used on every video. Other hashtags are generally related to the genre, author, characters, or other book-related hashtags, including #bookish and #books. The use of hashtags helps situate these videos within BookTok and allows them to reach the intended audiences. In this way, hashtags greatly expand the reach of these videos, increasing their popularity, and consequently, the book’s popularity.

Auditory Content

Generally, auditory content can be divided into two categories: original and secondary. In this context, original audio refers to the sound that is recorded by default when a creator films themselves for a TikTok video, and secondary audio refers to the sound that has been created by a different creator, and has been chosen and applied to the TikTok to add value to the video. Secondary audios vary, as they range from clips of songs, (original or edited by the creator) or spoken sound bites pulled from movies, television and other forms of media. Most often, videos that involved the creator expressing their opinion used original audio in order to communicate their thoughts on the book without interference. However, in *The Atlas Six* Video #4, creator @eloisehamp attached a trending secondary audio but had it muted, meaning the audio was attached but could not be heard. Instead, the original audio, which included her speaking and expressing her opinions on *The*

Atlas Six could be heard. The choice to include a secondary audio but mute it was likely done in order to gain more views on the video. By attaching a trending audio to her video, users who search for videos under that popular audio would be able to come across hers, positioning her to get more views, and thereby more success on TikTok. In this way, she likely managed to gain the benefits of using a trending audio, without having it distract viewers from hearing what she was trying to say about the book. Other videos also used trending audios, including *The Song of Achilles* Video #2, which used an audio titled, “only love can hurt like this.” This secondary audio is a snippet of the song Only Love Can Hurt Like This by Paloma Faith, and has been used in 67.8K videos as of April 4th, 2022. This research shows that audio was generally used to add value to the message being communicated or to reach a larger audience. If the video’s purpose was for the creator to share their thoughts on the book, original audio was often used. Lastly, it was uncovered that certain secondary audios pertain directly to the book being discussed, and by using these audios, creators were able to add another layer of meaning. For example, *The Song of Achilles* Video #1 included a song titled Achilles Come Down by the band Gang of Youths. This audio is often used in TikTok videos related to *The Song of Achilles* because its lyrics relate to the Greek God, Achilles, one of the main characters in the book. In conclusion, audio was generally used to add value to the message being communicated through the video, or to reach a larger audience and gain more views. If the video focused on evoking a certain mood or emotion or relied on images, secondary audios were often used. If a video was focused on communicating the creators’ thoughts and experience of reading the book, original audios were used.

Plot

During the research process, it was revealed that the plot, or, what was happening in the video, was determined by both the visual and auditory content. In videos that focused on communicating the creators’ thoughts and experiences, the visual content took a secondary role to the auditory content. In videos that were meant to display the vibe or atmosphere of a book, or illustrate the main characters, auditory content took a secondary role to the visual content. Overall, three general categories of videos were identified: conversational, visual, and trend. Conversational videos focused on communicating the creators’ thoughts, experiences and critiques of the featured book. These often relied on original audio, and varied in their sentiment towards the book. While some were meant to be informative, like *The Atlas Six* Video #2, others were more critical, like *The Atlas Six* Video #4, in which creator @eloisehamp discusses how she is not enjoying the book as much as she thought she would. This is significant since the success of videos sharing critical or negative opinions displays that there is room for unpopular opinions and discourse within the community. As much as many people enjoy popular books and express these notions, people who disagree have just as much space to express their opinions on BookTok. Unlike conversational videos, visual videos focused on sharing art

and images that help viewers imagine what reading the featured book could feel like. By sharing images that relate to the book, a viewer's interest may be sparked and they could become inclined to read the book themselves. *The Song of Achilles* Video #1 is a perfect example of this, as it uses imagery to mimic what the viewer would feel or imagine in their head if they read the book. Lastly, the trend category includes videos that engage with secondary audios that have sparked content trends. While the audios themselves may not be "trending" in terms of the number of times they have been used, they are often spoken soundbites that creators attribute their own meaning to, and express through the visual content. An example of this type of video is *The Song of Achilles* Video #5, which uses an audio "original sound" created by @destroyedmyself, that includes snippets of a song that sings "Did you get enough love, my little dove? Why do you cry?" In this video, creator @saracarstens stares off into the distance, lipsyncing to the first part of the video while text on the screen reads, "The song of Achilles not making me cry at all." In the second part, during the lyrics "Why do you cry" she is shown with her face teary-eyed close up to the camera, and text reads "The last page." As demonstrated by her video, this trend uses this audio to communicate the way a book's ending evokes a strong emotional response for the reader. The same sound and formula is applied to videos by other creators about other books, spanning even further to TV shows and movies. By participating in this trend and attributing her own meaning to the audio, she conveys the pain felt after reading the ending of *The Song of Achilles*, which other users who have read the book can identify with, and prospective readers may want to feel themselves, encouraging them to read the book.

Viewer Response

In terms of viewer response, the results showed that there were three primary types of comments written: those sharing quotes, opinions, or tagging friends. In the TikTok videos analyzed for *The Song of Achilles*, three out of the five videos included the readers' favourite quotes from the book, or quotes that affected them emotionally. This was often prompted by a display of emotion in the video content or the use of images or fan art. For example, *The Song of Achilles* Video #5, in which creator @saracarstens shows the sadness and emptiness she feels after finishing the book, many of the comments included quotes that made the commenters feel the way @saracarstens feels in that video. These comments were most common amongst videos featuring *The Song of Achilles*, rather than *The Atlas Six*. This may be due to the fact that *The Song of Achilles* has a reputation for being a highly emotionally driven novel, while *The Atlas Six* is more popular for its characters and concept, as shown by the analysis of videos.

Another type of viewer response involves the sharing of opinions regarding the content of the video and book being discussed. These opinions often echo that of the creators; however, this does not necessarily mean that they match the general opinions of the community. As discussed above, videos on BookTok often challenge

popular opinions held by the community as a whole, and this disagreement and expression of counter-opinions is often welcomed and echoed within comment sections.

The last type of comment made does not feature any type of response to the creator or video, but is simply used as a way to share the TikTok video with other viewers. While comments that tag other users do not often constitute the top comments, they do fill the rest of the comment section and will occasionally appear in the top comments as seen in *The Atlas Six Video #5*. Tagging comments demonstrate that viewers have reacted in some sort of way to the video, whether positive or negative, and want to share the content with their friend(s). This type of comment is one of the key ways that videos are spread and seen by others, and consequently, the books featured within the videos are as well.

Overarching Themes

Through the connected use of visual and auditory content, BookTok creators are able to effectively communicate about the books they have read via short TikTok videos. Since there are many ways of combining and using different TikTok features to enhance auditory and visual aspects of the videos, there are a plethora of ways creators can communicate, all of which appeal to a vast audience. Through analyzing the TikTok videos of both books and recognizing patterns within the content, three overarching themes emerged, which inform why the BookTok content on TikTok has influenced book sales in the past couple of years. As a whole, BookTok is a space that values and nurtures authenticity, displays of emotion, and community building, and each of these pillars encourage readers to trust the recommendations they receive through the videos and act upon them.

TikTok's audio and visual features allow for creators to communicate in ways that prioritize authenticity and emotion. This, in turn, allows users to identify with and relate to the content they're viewing and build a sense of trust with creators. The foundation of trust goes on to forge a sense of community and propel users to purchase the books featured in the content that they consume. It is clear that BookTok offers readers a space where they can engage with others and express their honest thoughts and opinions regarding books, whether they agree with popular opinion or not. This is evident in *The Atlas Six Video #4* and discussed above. Also, the welcome displays of emotion allow users to freely express their feelings along with the creators and other users. This bonding over shared emotions and experiences of reading certain books forms a sense of community amongst readers, which is most evident in the comment section. The user response within the comment section demonstrates the way in which community is fostered and built on the platform, and illustrates how users are able to communicate their reading experiences. Overall, it is the combination of authenticity, emotion and community

which moves users to further engage with BookTok and influences them to make purchasing decisions.

Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to understand how BookTok content on TikTok has greatly influenced book sales over the last couple of years. By conducting a textual analysis of five TikTok videos featuring two popular books whose sales have been influenced by BookTok, a better understanding was developed regarding the use of visual, auditory, and other features of the TikTok app and their applications in the BookTok segment. Findings uncovered key themes which contribute to the effectiveness of the platform's influence: authenticity, emotional displays and community building. Ultimately, these themes work together to form a level of trust amongst BookTok users creating the perfect environment for sharing book recommendations and acting upon them. Due to the effectiveness of this influence, BookTok has created a shift in the book publishing market and holds power in dictating which books rise to popularity.

A textual analysis of top TikTok videos examined visual, auditory, plot/storytelling and user response aspects of BookTok content, contributing a well-rounded look at the content found on TikTok and the reason for its influence. While this methodology was effective in understanding the content on BookTok and how it appeals to users, it may be beneficial to utilize interviews and focus groups in further research to get a better understanding of how users engage with BookTok content on TikTok, and how they act upon it.

Further research could explore the role of influencers and community leaders in this space, as well as the organic nature of the content produced, to identify how and if TikTok should be utilized directly by publishers as a marketing tool. Additionally, the relationship between independent publishing and BookTok could be further explored, particularly how independent authors can use the platform to promote their books without traditional marketing and publicity teams. Lastly, research regarding author engagement with BookTok may be helpful to understand whether author presence on the platform reflects positively on the sales of their novels.

Ultimately, this research fills a gap in the literature regarding the BookTok segment of TikTok and gives insight into the BookTok experience and how this may influence consumer buying decisions. This thesis should be used as a starting point to inform further research on the matter which can address topics outside of this narrow scope of research, as discussed above. In researching the content that led to a phenomenon in the book publishing industry, it is important to note that the content on BookTok is created by and engaged with by the target audience. It is through this user-generated content that this great impact has taken place, and it is important to note that this likely could not be replicated by publicity and marketing efforts. The content created

is not directly influenced by stakeholders other than the readers themselves, which lends to the authenticity allowing for the effectiveness of this community's impact.

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APPENDIX A – TikTok Video Links

The Song of Achilles

Video #1: https://www.tiktok.com/@emmyslibrary/video/6948582802443078917?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc&web_id=6983842509022971398

Video #2: https://www.tiktok.com/@throne.of.pages/video/7048259672247176453?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc&web_id=6983842509022971398

Video #3: https://www.tiktok.com/@mana.banana28/video/7057407326717971759?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc&web_id=6983842509022971398

Video #4: https://www.tiktok.com/@saracarstens/video/7073572415770545413?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc&web_id=6983842509022971398

Video #5: https://www.tiktok.com/@saracarstens/video/7076118100118129925?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc&web_id=6983842509022971398

The Atlas Six

Video #1: https://www.tiktok.com/@aymansbooks/video/7070623213209865514?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc&web_id=6983842509022971398

Video #2: https://www.tiktok.com/@li.reading/video/7072817258959015173?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc&web_id=6983842509022971398

Video #3:
https://www.tiktok.com/@astoldbyalahni/video/7055714161917185327?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc&web_id=6983842509022971398

Video #4: https://www.tiktok.com/@eloisehamp/video/7047178639376403758?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc&web_id=6983842509022971398

Video #5:
https://www.tiktok.com/@bogwitchbooks/video/7073355233648217390?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc&web_id=6983842509022971398
APPENDIX B – TikTok Video Comments

The Song of Achilles

Video #1:
““Go” She says “he waits for you”” – @lmos_world1
“Achilles’ son became what Achilles would’ve been without Patroclus” – @kurtcobainspubes0
“I would’ve loved to read it in achilles pov” – @cooluser2222
“MAYBE SPOILERS: “The last thing I thought was: Achilles.”” – @gogols_stripped_pants
““what has hector ever done to me”” – @ghoullover
““ I could recognize him by touch alone, by smell ; I would know him blind, by the way his breaths came and his feet struck the earth”” – @sat4nsguts
“he is half my soul, as the poets say” – @edie.lee
““Name one hero who was happy”” – @nyx.lsh
“two shadows, reaching through the hopeless, heavy dusk. Their hands meet and light spills in a flood like a hundred golden urns pouring out the sun” – @jesok7
““Philtatos”, Achilles says, sharply. My Beloved.” – @agslvv_

Video #2:
“I’M SO SORRY” – @throne.of.pages
“eating knives, chewing glass, using my toaster as a bath bomb, screaming, crying, sliding dramatic the door down, banging my head against the concrete” – @judeduartesgf_01
“omg i miss them both so much” – @just_me_on_tiktok

“oh come on, i haven’t finished this book” – @elizabeth272626
“i wished i just stopped reading the book when they were both happy and inlove”
– @ashthekreatcher
“This book broke my heart” – @204leni123
“This is so sad” – @soul_j.c
“ENOUGH” – @vivigarn
“who’s the artist?” – @strtyma
“my heart:” – @evelyn.reads2

Video #3:

“And the fact that she wrote it AFTER SoA SHE KNEW WHAT SHE WAS DOING” – @akiosmunre
“But later they are seen walking hand in hand in the underworld and that almost makes up for that devastating sentence” – @emilie.wout
“Tsoa was the first book that ever made me cry almost hysterically so when I read them on circe I started sobbing” – @r0cket_g1rl
“I LOVE THIS BUT PAIN” – @johannaftmn
“THATS HOW YOU SAY PATROCLUS” – @annemkelley
“I loved Circe so much!” – @lareads
“did I cry? yes, yes I did” – @rebecadelagarza1
“I just SCREAMED” – @shakespearesophelia
“AGONY” – @gnazche
“soa put me in such a bad reading slump because of how much I LOVED IT. broke my heart completely” – @julia.haig

Video #4:

““he is half of my soul, as the poets say”” – @storoberi8
“I CANNOT WAIT TO READ THAT” – @livvlovesethancutkosky
“girl you’ll cry rivers but it’s gonna become your fav book ever” – @tamara_adamek
“That, my dear, is EMOTIONAL DAMAGE.” – @angrygreenhairedenby
“Man I just Love Patroclus :(“ – @pie.1695
“U mean there are ppl out there who dont know what Iliad or Homer is?!?!?! I tought everyone knows what the plot is before even starting the book” – @senshisana
“My book has tears stains on the pages” – @ariel...._
“Let’s not lie though the best books are the ones that give you the most emotional damage” – @manjyotdhuphar
“Oh you should be scared. I was a complete mess by the end of this book” – @jasminschmidt7634
“WHY WOULD YOU TREAT YOUR BOOK LIKE THAT OMG” – @tojiswh0re__

Video #5:

“Spoilers in the comments (Y’all should read it btw!)” – @camille.n.teee
““Go,” she says, “he waits for you.”” – @cardanscrustytail

““have you no more memories?” ‘i am made of memories.’” – @halfsplit
““Their hands meet and lights spills in a flood like a hundred golden urns pouring out of the sun.” – @stella.1007
“I cried 1 hour straight when Patroclus died” – @paulinadreger
““What has hector ever done to me?”” – @.horcrux
“AND AND ACHILLES SLEEPING NEXT TO HIS CORPSE??? HIS SPIRIT BEING LOCKED OUTSIDE???? NAWWWWW” – @missaya_0
“Cried through the last 30 pages” – @ddianee222
“The part where Hector father wants to get his sons dead body and he calls him his soulmate made me sob” – @._i.am.anna._
“No becuz there’s literal tear stains on that page” – @dj__malikk

The Atlas Six

Video #1:

“this is the regular hardback right? not a special edition? i need it sooooo bad” – @_ashleyreads
“Not the hard cover edition popping their illustrussy!!!” – @chelseareads
“Is the last one Ezra cuz goddamn” – @booksby.d
“Wait wait so do I read it? I was told it was confusing but is it good?” – @gothamvogue
“i’m so gutted i bought the waterstones special edition and there was nothing under that dust jacket” – @sw777_
“did anyone pick up on what scenes were changed/edited from the og version? i reread both versions but i couldn’t pinpoint it?” – @hamnaabro
“52 seconds” – @briannareadss
“Pansy, Blaise, Draco, hermione is that you” – @zala.ikram
“who is the last one? literally forgot EVERYTHING” – @suesings_
“YOURE KIDDING ITS GORGEIOUS” – @sadies.reads

Video #2:

“part 2” – @li.reading
“They also have different artwork! Not plot significant, but nice to know” – @li.reading
“This is stressing me out so much for some reason” – @calebmagician
“Oh my god?????? I thought it was just the same thing????? I’m shocked.” – @bookadoodledoo
“MORE GIDEON??? Ok I’m finally sold” – @e.l.i.m2
“ugh i know it makes sense for me to get the new version but the og cover is absolutely elite” – @notjustalyssa
“Having people pay for a changed edition before a sequel comes out so they *need* it to fully understand the 2nd book doesn’t sit right with me lol” – @mikaskindalame
“if i haven’t read the original copy would you recommend i read the new one and then read the og if i love it, or still start with the og?” – @definitelynotnelly

“i’m just curious, why was it republished with slight changes in the first place?” – @izzyso22

“Bless you for doing a spoiler video bc I cannot reread this book but I want to read the 2nd book.” – @lifewithmks

Video #3:

“I COULDN'T RESONATE WITH ANY OF THE CHARACTERS I FELT LIKE THE OUTCAST THAT WAS JUST WATCHING THEIR DRAMA” – @kaven_books

“libby is not insufferable this is slander but all ur other points are absolutely true <3” – @regansaldo

“oh. my. god. i loved this book + could not even explain what i just read plot wise. thank you for wording the words my thoughts could not word.” – @justplainlazyco

“I loooved this book! I loved their drama lmao” – @thelibbyruth

“I would agree with all of these statements. Haha And I loved this book.” – @booksaremythirdplace

“!!!The second thing!!! See she didn't just make it pretentious to just for pretentiousness sake, it's just that all the characters are Like That.” – @masquerade.music

“this has the exact same vibes as the secret history” – @daaaaaaaa4n

“Thanks!!” – @catb0yism_

“this is so accurate” – @charchar39446

“Okaaaay. Audio just came out so we shall see!” – @blkkpnter

Video #4:

“that writing sounds exactly like me adding words to make my essays reach word count” – @chlochloride

“I don't even know what half those words mean” – @lexijoseph

“those definitely are words” – @kennmerrr

“personally i did like it! but i also made up definitions for all the words i didn't know so i was basically reading my own story LMFAO” – @inmvsieep

“That's once sentence?” – @katelynnslibrary

“Update: I dnf and now I'm on our violent ends” – @eloisehamp

“Don't buy the atlas six” – @yocilinsolis

“no literally this is EXACTLY what i went through reading this book but i stayed for libby and nico LOL” – @avaisreading

“That sentence could've been condensed into half of that word count” – @emmaliarikos

“If your that far into it and still don't like it I say dnf it” – @emssem

Video #5:

“I need Libby's villian era in the next book” – @wh0re4.kazi_jase

“libby and callum ones” – @nicolibbyy

“This matches perfectly!” – @madana_s

“WAITTTTT THIS IS SO ACCURATE” – @mjreadstoomuch
“All art by littlechmura on insta” – @bogwitchbooks
“okay bur what do you think the order is bc me and my sister keep fighting abt
which art is for which character” – @brbmakingabookplaylist
“MACTHES TOO WELL” – @happyhungrybunch
“@helnikandkanejsupremacy” – @__.sd__
“I heard this book has a slight romance (between which characters)?” – @
iwanttobetitanfood
“@sofa_hm” – @u_probably.dont.know.me