



## Love, Hate and Other Filters

*Samira Ahmed*

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

# Love, Hate and Other Filters

*Samira Ahmed*

**Love, Hate and Other Filters** Samira Ahmed

**In this unforgettable debut, a Muslim teen copes with Islamophobia, cultural divides among peers and parents, and a reality she can neither explain nor escape.**

American-born seventeen-year-old Maya Aziz is torn between worlds. There's the proper one her parents expect for their good Indian daughter: attending a college close to their suburban Chicago home, and being paired off with an older Muslim boy who's "suitable" to her mother. And then there is the world of her dreams: going to film school and living in New York City—and maybe, just maybe, pursuing a boy she's known from afar her entire life who's suddenly falling into her orbit at school.

But unbeknownst to Maya, there is a danger looming beyond her control. When a terrorist attack occurs in another Midwestern city, the prime suspect happens to share her last name. In an instant, Maya's community, consumed by fear and hatred, becomes unrecognizable, and her life changes forever.

## Love, Hate and Other Filters Details

Date : Published January 16th 2018 by Soho Teen

ISBN :

Author : Samira Ahmed

Format : Kindle Edition 288 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Contemporary, Romance, Fiction, Realistic Fiction

 [Download Love, Hate and Other Filters ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Love, Hate and Other Filters ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Love, Hate and Other Filters Samira Ahmed**

---

## From Reader Review Love, Hate and Other Filters for online ebook

### **jv poore says**

First and foremost, this book is exquisitely authored. Beautiful, not in a flowery, colorful sort of way; but rather in a raw, natural, simple-yet-stunning kind of way. And so, a snap-shot of Maya's senior year: dating, spring break, planning for college...as an Indian Muslim American...would be wholly satisfying, entirely engaging and enlightening. But it would only scratch the surface. With a wide lens, Ms. Ahmed provides perspective; contrived categories soften into truer compilations.

To most of Maya's peers, her parents are almost unreasonably strict. Maya may secretly agree, but at least they "aren't exactly the fire-and-brimstone types". Aware of her family's (limited) leniencies, Maya is surprised when Kareem, a desi Muslim, has a glass of wine. But, as he points out, "...it's not like I eat pork." More importantly, he is not a white American boy. Like Philip.

And so, the scene is set.

But, a somber tone seeps through. Snippets of seething anger and frustration simmer to a frenzied, desperate desire for revenge. Building tension becomes tangible. An explosion is imminent.

The inundation of information immediately following a blow-up is, unfortunately, often inaccurate and incomplete. Even more egregious, these initial errors are what people tend to remember. By the time facts have been collected and the whole, true story can be told; no one is there to listen. Life goes on, public perception remains unchanged.

Except for the person presumed guilty. And his family. Or everyone with his last name.

Love, Hate and Other Filters is the rest of the story and it is relatable and relevant.

---

### **Larry H says**

"I guess I don't know how to live the life I want and still be a good daughter."

Maya Aziz is a 17-year-old high school senior, the American-born daughter of Muslim Indians. Her mother expects her to be the perfectly obedient daughter, intelligent and demure, ready to head to college not far from her Illinois home and study medicine. Of course, that will do until her parents find the man she'll marry.

Maya, however, has utterly different plans for her future. Ever since her father gave her a video camera when she was younger, she feels most comfortable observing life through a lens. She dreams of a filmmaking career, and secretly applied to NYU so she can study her craft. But how will her parents take the news that she's ready to move far away from home and live her own life?

On the romantic front, Maya can't help but be intrigued by Kareem, a handsome college student and fellow film buff with whom her parents hope she'll make a match. He's everything her parents want for her, yet beyond being a suitable boy, he has a bit of an independent streak as well, and he clearly is attracted to Maya. So why is it that all she can really think about is Phil, a friend since childhood and the star quarterback of her high school football team, and one-half of the school's most popular couple?

As Maya tries to navigate her life the best way she can, she learns that there is far more to Phil than meets the eye, but she can't let herself think about him romantically when he's dating someone else. Besides, his not being a Muslim would pretty much rule him out in her parents' eyes—if she ever had a chance with him anyway.

When a terrorist attack happens in the state capitol, all of Maya's dreams are dashed. She once again realizes the prejudice she and her family and other Muslims face when something tragic happens. As violence and threats hit even closer to home, Maya wants to push past her fears and let her parents know that life—and her future—can't stop moving forward, but they are determined to protect her by clipping her wings. To what extent should she pursue her own path, and what will that mean for her relationship with her parents? And what about Phil?

"I'm scared. I'm not just scared that somehow I'll be next; it's a quieter fear and more insidious. I'm scared of the next Muslim ban. I'm scared of my dad getting pulled into Secondary Security Screening at the airport for 'random' questioning. I'm scared some of the hijabi girls I know will get their scarves pulled off while they're walking down the sidewalk—or worse. I'm scared of being the object of fear and loathing and suspicion again. Always."

*Love, Hate and Other Filters* is, in a lot of ways, two books in one. It's the story of an independent, creative girl determined to live life her own way, despite expectations and customs to the contrary, and it's a look at how all of her brashness is powerless in the face of love she doesn't feel entitled to. In that way, it feels like a typical YA book, and Samira Ahmed really lets you into Maya's heart and mind.

At the same time, this is a book about the prejudice Muslims face in our country, especially since 9/11. It tells of the fears Muslims have when they hear of an incident, how they hope against hope the perpetrator wasn't a Muslim so it won't cause people to look differently or angrily at them, even though they have nothing to do with what happened. It's also a story about how hard it is to decide whether to give in to your fears, to let them control you, or to fight them head on.

I really enjoyed this book, although at times it felt a little disjointed between the two storylines. But Ahmed created really engaging characters, many of whom transcended stereotypes, and she did throw a very unexpected twist in as well. I loved Maya and found Phil, Violet, Kareem, and Hina to be pretty fascinating. I wouldn't have minded if the book was longer, because I wanted more of their stories.

*Love, Hate and Other Filters* definitely gives you something to think about, but it's not heavy-handed in its messaging. It's a worthwhile, enjoyable read, although it may skew a little younger than many recent YA books I've read.

See all of my reviews at [itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blogspot.com](http://itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blogspot.com), or check out my list of the best books I read in 2017 at <https://itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blogspot.com/2018/01/the-best-books-i-read-in-2017.html>.

---

## Tan Markovic says

Reviews can be found at: [www.booknerdtan.wordpress.com](http://www.booknerdtan.wordpress.com)

**This story broke and warmed my heart in equal parts.**

*Maya Aziz is an Indian-American Muslim whose ultimate dream is to go to study at NYU and eventually*

*become a filmmaker. Her parents' ultimate dream for her is very different, however. The story shows Maya's struggle between wanting to follow her dreams and not letting down her parents and the type of prejudiced behaviour that is directed at her because of her religion*

This novel dealt with some serious topics and also managed to be hella sappy as well. I actually enjoyed the romance Maya had even though it was OTT at times and I really liked Phil's character; he always remembered things about her culture which I thought was sweet. It was so sad to see that Maya had had to deal with racism from such a young age and the abuse she receives after the attack broke my heart and her future progression is almost destroyed because of someone else's bigoted actions. You can sense her isolation throughout the novel as she struggles with where she fits in and how her views and her parent's views can be in harmony. I like the fact that this novel mirrors the way in which the media/news decides to describe white terrorists compared to Islamic terrorists. The white terrorists always seem to come with a sob story and a typical 'loner' 'was always so quiet' description.

Highly recommend this read to all!

**I received an ARC copy of this book from Netgalley in exchange for an honest review. I would like to thank them, the publisher Hot Key Books and the author Samira Ahmed for this opportunity.**

---

### **Abbie (boneseasonofglass) says**

This book was brilliant. It gave me so many feelings, it made me happy, hopeful, sad, angry. There was so much cuteness, but it was also so heartbreaking at the same time, and it makes me really sad because things that happen in this book, some people actually go through everyday. And it enrages me how people can be so cruel

This book is just really important, and I'm so glad I read it.

P.s I love Maya, she was so strong, and wonderful and inspiring

---

### **ilsa ↗ says**

**So in case you didn't know, I am Muslim Teen. This book features a Muslim Teen main character.**

IM PRETTY SURE YOU CAN HEAR MY SQUEALING ALL THE WAY OUT ON JUPITER for those who live there. Let's make this clear, **I've never read a YA book with a Muslim main character.** And that's partly because there is actually *so little of them* and that's a problem!

So when this sweet little book arrived from the publishers in the mail a few weeks ago I couldn't contain my excitement because 1) MY FIRST PHYSICAL ARC and 2) A MUSLIM MAIN CHARACTER. I REPEAT. A MUSLIM MAIN CHARACTER. **AGAHAAH, it was so impossible and surreal for me to finally, hopefully see myself in a book.**

And then from there, when I opened up this book, a lot of feelings came through. Some happy, and some gutted and some angry.

### +Maya gives me mixed feelings

On the one hand, Maya is honestly really sweet; she absolutely loves making movies and has this major crush on Phil, a guy in her class. And she's so rootable and likeable. I could connect with her over the course of the book, understanding her motives and sympathising with her a lot. She was real and very well developed!

On the other hand, **I feel like Maya a lot of the time was a lovesick puppy.** I mean the beginning, the insta love was making me sick. And the cute fluff. It's not the book, it's mostly me because I honestly can't stand cute texts and blushing. Not to mention, Maya is the queen of blushing. She's just crushing on Phil all the time and obsessing over him and it was *boring* Sorry. It was.

### +The Food

Maya has an Indian background and while I am not Indian, a lot of the food mentioned like samosas and Tandoori Chicken were mouth-watering in a familiar way. YAS. **It was so great to see the lovely food part of culture being shown in this book and just added an extra level of depth to the book BECUASE REALISTIC.** I eat this food too. I want to eat this food right now. But I mean there's also a lot of cake sharing between Phil and Maya which warms my heart.

### +So, let's talk about the romance.

And here comes the part WHERE I AM SO TORN. So we have Kareem and to me, that was total insta love. I did not ship it and I am glad Maya cut ties with him before anything really developed. And then we have Phil, who is Maya's all-time crush, and that is not insta love. It's developed and I admit, very fluffy. **I shipped it and sometimes I thought this book focused to much on the romance.**

**But my problem with this is not about the way the romance was developed.** It was about the whole controversy of "Muslims girls dating". And In a contemporary with a Muslim MC, I was hoping this was going to be tackled in some way. But No. Maya just says "I know how to sneak out". But really? **She doesn't struggle with wanting a relationship with Phil but also wanting to please her parents.** I mean sure she jokes about her parents are not okay with it. But she never feels one ounce of guilt or regret about Phil, concerning her parents and her religion.

Also I was kinda uninvested in the romance. IT WAS SO FLUFFY. Me? Do I like fluff? HAHAAHA I HATE FLUFF. And while there were so many important serious issues discussed so much of it was ROMANCE and SQUISH at which I couldn't take it. Plus in the epilogue, SHE MENTIONS ANOTHER DUDE?!?!?! LIKE DUDE WHAT THE HECK. You develop a WHOLE romance with Phil and...ditch it? WTF?

### + And MY OWN PERSONAL thoughts on the Muslim Rep.

There was a lot of "culture" in this book but for me, religion is a struggle. There are ups and downs. But for Maya, there was none of that. She never mentions her beliefs in God like things like whether believes in Him or not. **She never even talks about her religion, well at least not much.** And this is an #ownvoices book so I'm not undermining anyone's experiences. But for me, religion plays a huge part in my life. I think about it. **But Maya NEVER thinks of God in her life. At. All. It's like her religion is simply just a label.**

Look, everyone has their own relationships with their religion, and I'm not questioning that. **But if I hadn't been told Maya was Muslim, apart from the terrorist attack and the mention of the Qu'ran from her parents, I wouldn't have known.** That's because I never see Maya pray, or think of God, or think of the

Qu'ran and struggle with her beliefs or do anything, to show she is a Muslim. And this is a hefty topic because belief is in the heart. But this was 1st person, i wanted to something to relate to. Anything. BUt really Maya only struggles with her Indian culture and not her religion. **It's like, WHERE IS ANY SINGLE PART OF HER MUSLIM IDENTITY?!?!?** Where are those part fo her, those Muslim parts of her? I DONT SEE IT ANYWHERE.

And i'm not expecting a perfect Muslim who prays 5 times a day but there was LITERALLY NOTHING to show she was Muslim. And for a Muslim reader, that's difficult. **Beuase I was looking for Muslim rep. Instead, I got Indian rep** which is great but a massive seller of this to me was the Muslim representation.

**Another example is when at one point, Kaleem drinks wine** and Maya is dumbstruck. And he's just like "Yeah my parents know. NO BIGGIE" AND see what I mean? Religion is totally discarded here. And then **he jokes "No need to be shocked, Maya. it's not like I'm eating pork."** WHAT NO?? You are not allowed to eat pork, same with drinking Wine. One is not worse than the other. AND the problem here is that if someone wanted to know whether Muslims were allowed to drink and read this book, they'd probably think the whole Wine being forbidden was a joke. **And Islam is not a joke.**

**+I definitely could relate to the Islamaphobia though.**

She got a lot of hate from Brian which was horribly relatable. And people called her terrorist and things like that and again, shockingly familiar to me. It showed the horrors of hate crime and how "terrorism has no religion" as Maya's dad amazingly said.

*I'm scared. I'm not just scared that somehow I'll be next; it's a quieter fear and more insidious. I'm scared of the next Muslim ban. I'm scared of dad getting pulled into Secondary Security Screening at the airport for "random" questioning. I'm scared for the hijabi girls I know getting their scarves pulled off while they're walking down the sidewalk—or worse. I'm scared of being the object of fear and loathing and suspicion again. Always*

**+AND CAN WE PLEASE HAVE BETTER PORTRAYAL OF MUSLIM PARENTS?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?**

I want to freak tear something or punch something right now. Most of the book, we had an amazing portrayal of the parents but realistic as well. But there were parts that irked me. **Like the mum fell into every stereotype EVER.** "You need to get married", "You need to find a sensible man". And I don't want people to see Muslim parents potrayed like that. **And now it's just showing that's all Indian/Muslim parents think about. Marriage.**

And frick, that may be true in some cases. **But I really want to see supportive mothers and fathers who don't even care if their daughters get married.** Like my mum cares ABOUT OTHER THINGS ABOUT ME. Like all Maya's mum cares about is if 1)Maya gets married and 2) if Maya seats properly. Now, the second one is relatable but the first?!?!? Your mum should care about your hobbies, your interests not just if you are going to freaking get married. It annoyed me.

I mean it sure was relatable when Maya's mum kept reminding Maya to "eat food" and when Maya says that you are "either too skinny or too chubby" BECAUSE YES I AM HERE WITH YOU MAYA. But (view spoiler)

**+ The Supporting Cast is perfect**

**VIOLET.** I wanted Violet to have more of a part of the story but she was always there for Maya and she literally stood up for herself and Maya so many times. I love amazing female friendships like this

**Phil** is a pure sweet cinnamon roll and I love him. He had his own struggles and he suffered and he's literally the best romantic bean ever. And Kaleem? He backed off after a while and was such a great friend of Maya despite everything. THANK YOU.

**The honest, pure, kind, HINA had me cheering.** Hina is not married and she's a graphic designer and literally my favourite. OMG, WHY CAN WE NOT FOCUS ON HER MORE?! Please give me a whole book on Hina, thanks. She is marvellously great and breaks all stereotypes which are honestly so refreshing to see! AGH Hina supports Maya through *everything* and it honestly made me smile.

+What I actually thought of the story? **It was crap.** NOT COMPLETELY AND UTTERLY. It was an important story but in my ARC copy? It really wasn't something to marvel at. I had no idea what the terrorist POVs were talking about and they were so unnecessary and what the story itself is just filled with so much romance...I can't even anymore. I don't like romance books and that's literally what it was. I don't know I'm changing this because there's nothing memorable about this book, the characters aren't developed enough and while it's sweet and impacting it just didn't pack *anything* I just don't see why this is five stars for people? It really wasn't that good.

I finished this in a matter of hours because the writing was quick so...that's something?

*My father picks up where my mother leaves off. "These terrorists are the antithesis of Islam. They're not Muslim. Violence has no place in religion, and the terrorists are responsible for their own crimes, not the religion and not us."*

See look, the Muslim struggles concerning society ARE THERE. But the actual belief and religions and teachings? ZILCH.

Anyways, the Muslim rep is just me! Other Muslims may think it was great. I did not...really. Still a roller coaster of a book I guess

---

**? jamieson ? says**

"You might have heard this before, but guys aren't always the best communicators"

"You're pretty good at it"

"Yes" Kareem says, then leans back with both hands behind his head. "I am rather great, aren't I?"

Yet again I'm here to praise an ownvoices contemporary novel 2017 is the year for it, so many authors are killing this. LOVE, HATE & OTHER FILTERS was one of my most highly anticipated releases of this year **and yet it still managed to impress me and go above and beyond my expectations**

Love, Hate & Other Filters follows Maya Aziz, an Indian/American muslim teen who dreams of going to film school and has a big ass crush on a boy at her school. It's mostly a coming of age novel, with cute romcom elements, but it's also a serious exploration of being a brown muslim girl in modern America and

how people react to that. What I loved this book is it found such a perfect balance between fun and serious.

For the **Fun stuff**. This book kind of reads like a romantic comedy. There's a love triangle (briefly, but it's killed off so don't worry if you hate them), there's funny banter and cute fluffy moments and lots of descriptions of incredible eyes and dimples and the usual .. **but what was good was that this was all so CUTE, not cringey and awkward**. I really liked that, the romance made me happy, not uncomfortable which was NICE.

And I think why the romance was so good was because the male characters were my favourite kind of male character. Aka, soft, sweet boys who care about feelings and are NICE. NICE BOYS. They are my favourite kind and I was so here for Phil, the love interest, and Kareem, a love interest/brother kinda figure to Maya.

One more light aspect of this book I LOVED was that Maya had a hobby she was passionate about and wanted to take further. For some reason hobbies in YA are rare and I loved that Maya was pursuing her film passions so heavily. One downside of this was that the heavy use of film references was hard for me because I didn't understand most of them.

I'm scared. I'm not just scared that somehow I'll be next; it's a quieter fear and more insidious. I'm scared of the next Muslim ban. I'm scared of dad getting pulled into Secondary Security Screening at the airport for "random" questioning. I'm scared for the hijabi girls I know getting their scarves pulled off while they're walking down the sidewalk—or worse. I'm scared of being the object of fear and loathing and suspicion again. Always

**but on the more serious side, this book tackles a variety of important and relevant issues.** Islamophobia, racism, and current events such as terrorism and "the muslim ban" in America were all addressed, in a way that was eloquent and important and relevant.

Maya, the main character, was an incredible character through whom most these discussions were facilitated. I think the author perfectly captured Maya as a character caught in a complex situation, and allowed her to express *a variety of reactions and emotions to the issues which made her feel authentic and realistic rather than a "spokesperson caricature"*

Love, Hate & Other Filters also explores the dynamic first generation Indian teens have with their parents and cultural challenges they face. I'm not a first generation teen or an immigrant so I can't comment on if this was well done, but I did find the exploration interesting to read and I definitely enjoyed reading that perspective. I recommend Kav's review on this aspect though, because she talks from a more informed standpoint about how she felt on the representation of Maya's parents.

## REPRESENTATION

Want to slot in I think you should read Maha and Fadwa's review of this book as they are ownvoices reviewers. This book is OwnVoices for the Indian/American & Muslim rep btw!

My father picks up where my mother leaves off. "These terrorists are the antithesis of Islam. They're not Muslim. Violence has no place in religion, and the terrorists are responsible for their own crimes, not the religion and not us."

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Honestly, I highly recommend this book. I think a lot of people could really love it. It's doing what YA is great at right now - producing fun, relatable, cute content that also taps into the social political climate and makes a meaningful commentary. In this day and age I don't think you can afford to be tone deaf and this book perfectly finds a balance between serious and "non serious" issues. Ultimately, this book just looks at what it is like being someone like Maya in America - both the regular tv stuff we always see - crushes, school and friends, as well as the more serious, racist rhetoric that some teens have to endure everyday.

I really loved this, and I would of given it five stars if it weren't for the ending that I just .. didn't love. (view spoiler)

I haven't read When Dimple Met Rishi but I'm hearing from quite a few people if you think liked the representation in WDMR, but thought that Dimple was annoying and wanted something a little more serious, this is your perfect book!

Overall I really hope this one gets more hype and that everyone reads it on Jan 16 when it comes out. It was incredibly cute and fun, whilst also being relevant and informed. Also, it's so short and packed such a massive punch. Love love love

**thankyou to Hot Key Books for providing me with my arc, this review is my honest opinion on the book!**

---

### Laura says

I so wanted to love Love, Hate & Other Filters and I do see the importance in the story. I only wish it wasn't filled with all the extra fluff and insta-love that only distracts from the actual topics at hand. And I was excited to see an Indian-American Muslim teen as the star of the story, but was confused when if I wasn't told she was Muslim, I wouldn't have had a clue besides her parents. There's nothing that seemingly ties Maya to her religious beliefs. Maybe if that had been explored more, I wouldn't feel this way. It just feels like it was a plot device to connect the story to the terrorist attack and have displays of islamophobia - which I did appreciate. This is a real, very scary thing. I wish that had been more central to the story, though.

Instead, this feels more like a coming-of-age, rom-com type of novel with a serious topic thrown in and, at times, brushed over. Yes, there is a terrorist attack. In fact, the chapters alternate with an anonymous voice who appears to be on a bad path. We know what it is leading up to, but that doesn't make these pages feel any less haunting. The majority of the story is with Maya, an Indian-American Muslim teen. Her parents have expectations involving going to school close to home, becoming a lawyer or doctor and marrying a suitable Muslim boy. Maya has different things in mind. She wants to go to films school in New York and maybe date the football player she's been crushing on since elementary school or someone else.

A love triangle of sorts ensues for the first half of the book. There's the aforementioned football player and there's also the type of boy her parents would be pleased to see her end up with. This really all felt too fluffy for me and just wasn't my kind of book. I'm not into too much romance. Not the book's fault, but I was here for other things.

After the terrorist attack occurs, the islamophobia comes to a head. Hate crimes occur and the effects these have on Maya's family are displayed. It is an excellent portrayal of how something can occur and cause ripple effects into the lives of people not even remotely involved.

Certain aspects of the representation of Indian Muslim felt stereotypical and rubbed me the wrong way. I am not Indian or Muslim, so I don't feel comfortable speaking on these things. I did really appreciate Fuzaila's review.

Overall, the book is diverse and an important read. I would've enjoyed it more if there hadn't been as much romance involved in the plot.

---

## **Heather 'Bookables' says**

3.75

We follow Maya who is an aspiring filmmaker who dreams of attending NYU fall short because her parents are afraid of her being away from home.

Maya is a Indian American Muslim teen and loves her country. Then one day an attack happens in another state and the person responsible shares the last name as Maya, only it wasn't her family.

This book touches on so many important subjects. On what it's like to be a Indian American Muslim teen living in a country that is full of people that hate her and her religion. It touches on family life and the importance of family & so many more things.

Overall I really enjoyed this book. Maya was a strong character and had strong beliefs and stood up for what was right. I loved reading about her dreams to become a filmmaker. There is also a super sweet romance in this book as well.

Maya often feels like she doesn't belong in this book and it was amazing watching her progress throughout the book until the end when she felt like she finally was somewhere she was meant to be.

---

## **Nenia ? Queen of Literary Trash, Protector of Out-of-Print Gems, Khaleesi of Bodice Rippers, Mother of Smut, the Unrepentant, Breaker of Convention ? Campbell says**

[Instagram](#) || [Twitter](#) || [Facebook](#) || [Amazon](#) || [Pinterest](#)

LOVE, HATE & OTHER FILTERS seems to be being billed as the Muslim version of Angie Thomas's THE HATE U GIVE. Superficially, they have similar plots: both feature young women of color who, while firmly entrenched within their respective culture, struggle with balancing the "American" part of their heritage when faced with so many contradictions. Also in both books, the girls must reconcile their identities with a racially-gearred tragedy, and deal with the ensuing onslaught of hate and bigotry that ensues.

The problem with this comparison is that THE HATE U GIVE is a much better book. It's raw, angry, passionate, and politically charged - daring in a way that LOVE, HATE & OTHER FILTERS is not. That isn't to say that LOVE, HATE & OTHER FILTERS is a bad book - it isn't - but it isn't as moving or as powerful as THE HATE U GIVE. To say it bluntly: I can easily see THE HATE U GIVE being taught in

schools as a modern classic, like Laurie Halse Anderson's *SPEAK*, or Sandra Cisneros's *THE HOUSE ON MANGO STREET*. I can't say the same for *LOVE, HATE & OTHER FILTERS*.

Setting such unfair comparisons aside, though, this is a very good book - and it's an #OwnVoices book to boot. The story is about seventeen-year-old Maya Aziz, a Muslim Indian born to immigrant parents who resides in Batavia, Illinois. She has dreams of dating and kissing boys, and wants to pursue her interest in photography and movies by studying film in New York. Her parents are very strict, however, and want her to stay closer to home, in a more traditional profession, like being a lawyer.

Maya has friends, and has crushes on two very different boys over the course of the novel. She loves her parents, but also chafes at their more traditional outlook. It seems like it's going to be a typical coming-of-age story, as viewed through an Indian and a Muslim lens, but then tragedy strikes, and Maya and her family find themselves thrown into the spotlight when a building in Chicago is bombed by a terrorist, and one of the 'suspects' has the same last name as Maya and her family.

There are many wonderful aspects to this book. I really enjoyed how central Maya's culture is to the book, and how much of a focus her burgeoning identity as not just a young woman but also an artist and a Muslim American-Indian plays in the story. There are the expected references to Bollywood and *daal*, but the book also covers tradition, dating, arranged marriage, education, family, love, and disappointment. The book also deals with bigotry and Islamophobia, and interwoven with Maya's narrative is that of the bomber himself.

I honestly thought this latter portion was the most interesting, because of what wasn't said. It's very subtle, but if you watch the news, you'll pick up on it quickly. All too often, crimes committed by people of color, particularly those of Middle Eastern descent, are labeled as acts of terrorism - and yet, when the perpetrator is white, some news outlets are far more likely to drop the "terrorist" label and instead lament about what must have happened to turn the person down the path of destruction, replete with sad interviews and childhood portraits. It was painful to read these parts, because they are a sad reflection of what happens in every day life, and this was the part that, to me, felt most similar to *THE HATE U GIVE* because it forces the reader to confront uncomfortable truths.

I really enjoyed *LOVE, HATE & OTHER FILTERS*. It's so wonderful to see more #OwnVoices YA coming out - and so many of them are very good. This one is very good and I look forward to seeing what my friends make of it when it comes out next month.

*Thanks to Netgalley/the publisher for the review copy!*

3.5 to 4 stars

## Korrina (OwlCrate) says

Gosh, I don't know where to begin. I already know this book will be on my top books of 2018. I feel like this is one of those books that has changed how I see the world a little bit. That taught me things.

I fell in love with Maya's character immediately. I wanted to be her best friend. I wanted to stand by her side through everything she went through. The writing was perfect and in every sentence I could feel that this was the story of Samira Ahmed's heart. I'm so grateful that she shared this story with the world. I will buy any work this author publishes in the future - she's fantastic!

This is such an important book, and I hope it gets the love it deserves. Similar in importance to *The Hate U Give*, I hope this book stays on the NYT list for as long as it can, and that people continue to pick it up. I can't recommend it enough.

---

## C.G. Drews says

**This was basically a 50/50 split between fluffy romance feels and a very personal look at racism and hate crimes.** I think it was a great balance because it full on tackles some heavy topics, plus it's an #ownvoices author and I think it's amazing and needed! My *only* problem was honestly the romance...it just didn't work for me on any level lmao but remember I am basically an unfeeling bucket.

I know this book is super important to a lot of people!! I'm really happy it exists!!

### + I have mixed feelings about Maya.

On one hand she's really into filming and being independent and following her dreams (GO WOMAN) and references a ton of movies that I recognise about 0%. A lot of them were old?? I mean, I recognised *Casablanca* but only the title. I READ, OK??? ALL I DO IS READ. But Maya was also very rude to her parents. I get it. They were smothering her with old ideals and wanting her to be a traditional Good Indian Daughter and Get Married To a Sensible Man and Become A Doctor Or Lawyer ASAP. I get Maya's struggle, but I guess that it's just when they *were* being super loving/caring of her, she was still always angry at them.

### + So much Indian culture!

I loved reading this and the writing really utilised the five senses and all the foodie scenes? NICE. I *was* surprised that this book is pitched heavily as being about a *Muslim* Indian teen, but honestly Maya doesn't talk/act on her religion much.

### + Romance?

Ah hahhaa. I mean, it's just VERY romance focused so if you love that!! Then this!! is for you!! But I struggled with how much Maya's happiness depended on her boy(s) and I literally have no idea what she and Phil even had in common. But they had a cRUSH. And that is all that matters when you are 17. There's also a bit of a love-triangle for a while. (view spoiler)

### + Anyway, it was short and sweet and really delved into the ripple-effect of how racism affects individual lives.

Maya's life is massively threaten after a terrorist attack, with just the hate of white supremists. So even if the

attack didn't *physically* touch her, it had a huge affect on her life and how she was treated, and that's definitely something that should be written about.

**An important dialogue, but just the romances felt shallow and splashed everywhere and that's not really my thing.**

---

## Warda says

When I initially heard about this book and the attention it was getting, I was excited. I mean, finally, we have books where a Muslim is our main character.

I really did enjoy this book. I loved that Maya was adamant on pursuing her passion. I understood the suffocation she felt when it came to her parents, though they never mean her harm. As a 17 year old, you will not understand the irrational fear immigrant parents constantly feel. At that age, your concern aren't your parents, it is yourself.

Now, I have to address the relationship since it played a major role. (Honestly, I rather have read more about Maya and her film documentaries.)

The reality is that as a Muslim, dating/marrying a non-Muslim is just not happening. (We all know how our parents have raised us. Boys are just a no-no! ?) Especially when you consider how much of our lives is influenced by our faith, though that didn't necessarily play a role in Maya's life. Another reality is that even though our faith teaches this, Muslims still do it.

And there's a lesson in this; in that being a Muslim and what Islam teaches are two different things. What people choose to do and what our faith commands, can be on two opposite sides of the spectrum, and regardless of whether this is right or wrong, it so happens to be a reality of our world.

More books with Muslim characters should be released and I'm glad this is happening as our stories are vast and diverse in itself. Islamaphobia is real and rampant and as a Muslim, especially as a woman who wears a hijab, you automatically have a constant target on your back.

So I appreciate books with Muslim main characters that shed light on different cultures and upbringing and showcase that our faith does play a significant role in our lives, irrespective of whether it is practised or not.

Humans are humans at the end of the day.

Overall, the story was quite weak to me, though enjoyable. There could've been so much more exploration with Maya and her dreams as well as her relationship with her family and friends that were touched upon but not expanded. For that reason, the story felt flimsy and not satisfying.

---

In need of a light read, because my brain feels fried.

And I'm excited about the Muslim rep! Let's see how Muzlamic this book is going to get! ?

---

## Fuzaila ~ is on hiatus says

**UPDATE 18/2/18** - I see many of you chanced upon this book looking for a good Muslim rep. I did too. But this book was far from it. I have added some recommendations at the end of the review for those who are looking for good Muslim reps. [BELIEVE ME, this is not the book you're looking for.](#)

●?●?●?●?●?●?●?●?●?●?●?●?●?●

Hear that faint shriek in the distance? Yeah, that's probably me screaming over this book.

### H O R R I B B L E

When I saw this book on my feed –

- **The MC is an Indian Teen.** Indian. Teen. In. America. I NEED I NEED I NEED IT

- **Muslim Rep.** OMG. (Yeah, there's seriously too less of them. WE NEED DIVERSE YA)

See, **I am an Indian Muslim Teen.** I might not have seen America, but still, I knew I had to get this book and read it asap. Plus the reviews were all 5-starred! BONUS!

Only, when you're expecting to see yourself represented in a book, the book has a way of unduly disappointing you. **I am so so frustrated by the rep in this book.**

If you don't know the plot yet, Maya Aziz is a 17 year old living in Illinois with her immigrant, conservative parents. She loves making movies and intends to make a career out of it. She has a crush on a long-time classmate Phil. Her parents try to set her up with Kareem, a boy they deem suitable. Maya's dreams of going to NYU for studies are crushed by the aftermath of a terrorist attack she has no role in.

Seems stuffy, doesn't it?

Well, be disappointed because –

✦ **THE ONLY FOCUS HERE IS ROMANCE.** You'd think that with a Muslim MC, romance might be the last thing to expect. But no, **Maya has a crush on Phil, a Christian boy.** They go on dates, swimming lessons IN A BIKINI, kiss, hold hands and spend a night together. This is a forbidden relationship in Islam, and the only thing Maya is worried about is her parents grounding her?! She couldn't even acknowledge the fact that what she is doing is *wrong* in her morals?

- And btw, in the end, she's romancing another guy, a Hindu nonetheless. After all the fussing and falling over Phil, she moves on to another guy. Way to go, binch!

- The supposedly cute romance was way too fluffy. Like made-to-feel-this-way fluff. Like, they-are-too-cute-together-omigod fluff.

- I couldn't think of anything those two had in common. Except, maybe a crush on each other.

- I know, I shouldn't be disappointed to see a Muslim girl romancing a Christian boy. Everyone has a right to date whoever they want.

- But **she never acknowledges her religion**, doesn't give it a second thought. It's like she was saving face, trying to play cool by not saying out loud that NO, MUSLIMS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO DATE. BUT I WANT TO SO I DO. **Someone's ashamed of her beliefs.**

☒• **MAYA IS A TERRIBLE EXCUSE FOR A MUSLIM MC.** Does she pray ever? NO. Does she even say 'I'm a Muslim'? NO. Does she ever say or do anything on her own that remotely signifies a Muslim? NO.

I have no idea, why this book was branded as Muslim rep. **Maya Aziz, is a Muslim only by her last name.** I wonder if that's the reason why everybody thinks this book is diverse. **Maya's religion is used as a plot device, to be the butt of terrorist jokes and nothing else.**

- So there's one time, when **Kareem drinks wine in front of Maya and she seems shocked.**
- What do they do, then? **Laugh over it as if it's a joke.** Say **"it's not like I'm eating pork"!!**
- Who ever said, **drinking wine is allowed and pork is not?? BOTH ARE FORBIDDEN FOR MUSLIMS AND ONE IS NOT WORSE THAN THE OTHER.** And if you don't act over it, you at least state the fact Maya, not joke over it because it doesn't matter to you.
- Yeah, not all Muslim girls are hijabis, pray 5 times a day and not drink wine. But **doesn't being a Muslim rep come with its responsibilities?** Like say, explain her Islamic ways?
- If Maya never had a Muslim last name, or if it was not specifically mentioned in the blurb, I wouldn't have thought Maya was Muslim, or pick up the book in the first place.
- **It is just clever marketing strategy.** SAY YOUR MC IS MUSLIM, THAT YOU REPRESENT DIVERSE CULTURE, AND YOUR BOOK SELLS. HOW CONVENIENT FOR YOU SAMIRA AHMED.

☒• **THE ACT OF TERRORISM SEEMED JUSTIFIED.** See, at the end of each chapter, there's a small narrative in third person, about the terrorist guy Ethan. It is basically about how his Dad was abusive, how he was deeply affected by an unhappy childhood, **just how shitty his life is.** I could not see a reason why that had to be included? **It was totally unnecessary.** At first I was lost on these narratives. Then I realized that Samira Ahmed is trying to give us the terrorists' view of why he did what he did. **It was like she was covering up for his acts.**

- I mean, I get he was mentally unstable and all that, but **his morbid past is no excuse for his morbid sins.**
- It was as if the author wanted to say 'This poor guy had an abusive childhood, Let's all sympathize him'
- What frustrates me though, is that, if a muslim guy attacks, then it would have been like **"That guy has a beard, he's muslim. He must be a terrorist!"** How convenient is having a beard and a muslim name, to say he is a terrorist.??
- **It's like she was saying this guy who is a terrorist and not muslim, has his own reasons.** wtf?
- BUT I'M GLAD SAMIRA AHMED TRIED TO SHOW THAT **TERRORISM HAS NO RELIGION.** I'm just not convinced it was what she actually meant.
- Also, the subplot started at like 50% into the story, and was over in a few pages. After that back to the romance.
- Why did she even bother? **Seems to me it was just to spice up the story.**

☒• **THE INDIAN REP.**

Basically, all you'll get to know about India from this book is that Indian parents are oppressive and we eat samosas all the time.

Which is utterly FALSE. **Indians are diverse, we eat a variety of food, and not all Indian parents try to contain their kids.** And why I was disappointed with the rep was because **Maya seemed to hate her**

**culture, her background, her house that smelled of onions.** I can see why someone who was born and bought up in America might not be fond of Indian culture which is far off to her. But that doesn't mean you can't embrace your difference. That doesn't make you any more American than it makes you any less Indian.

- It was very relatable though.
- Parents bugging you to settle down.
- Those tasty yummy home food.
- The colorful Indian wedding.
- Sorry, but it all gets drowned in the fluff of the romance.

✧• **DESI COMPULSIVE PARENTS.**

I was so glad to see this bought up in this book. **Someone finally acknowledges how hard it is to live with conservative parents, who dreams your share of dreams too.**

Maya wants to go to Film School in New York City, and her parents allow only after a lot of prodding. But after the terrorist attack, they prohibit her from going, and DISOWN her for deciding to go on her own. Yeah, that stuff still happens, yeah that sucks. **But usually they do come around in the end.**

- I hope it wasn't written to feel like, it was just Indian parents.
- Because seriously, that happens all around the world.

✧• **MAYA IS JUST SO RUDE .** She has no love for her parents; she was just rude to them. Yeah, I know, her parents weren't all that supportive, but they loved her.

My parents are conservative and oppressive, but still I don't raise my voice at them. Not just because of respect, because they're my PARENTS.

- And Maya doesn't give a heck about anything. As soon as she is out of her parents' sight, she is goes on a kissing spree.
- **She says she wants to be independent.**
- But **why does being independent have to mean dating and kissing as many boys as I can?**
- Like, why can't it just be – I am on my own, I am free to do what I please, and I don't care what anyone thinks?
- NO. For Maya, independence means she can go to prom and makeout.
- That's the same girl who couldn't even find her voice when Brian cornered her in a food court.
- **She was such a scaredy-cat then.** Where was all that bravado with her parents?
- I mean, it was a food court for god's sake. Couldn't she like, scream?
- Another thing, she talks about so many movies and some books I don't have any idea about, and well, spoils them all. **No I don't like spoilers even if I probably am not going to watch those movies or read those books.** Thanks.

On a forward note, **please don't pick this book expecting a realistic, accurate Muslim Rep.** Go for the fluff, the romance. I know this is an #OwnVoices book, and Samira Ahmed shares her story, but when you put a label on yourself, at least try to do it some justice. That's all I've got to say.

I loved this review by Ilsa, she catches on some points I didn't. Read it here

**For those who are looking for alternatives, here are some suggestions-** In no particular order

?~Love in a Headscarf - Dwelves somewhat onto the philosophical side, but does a good job of doing what it was meant to.

?~Does My Head Look Big in This? - A lovely representation of Muslim teen in YA. Light contemporary, but does ponder over grave issues.

?~She Wore Red Trainers - My favorite for some personal reasons. It is a cute contemporary romance, might feel clichèd for some people but I loved it nonetheless.

?~Saints and Misfits - This book is actually a lot like LH&OF, but S.K. Ali did a much better job on the representation and religious front.

?~Boy vs. Girl - Centered around two twin teens striving to make the most of the holy month of Ramadhan. Gives you a lot better perspective than this book.

If you want to read a brief fictitious account of Islamic history, I'd say Mother of the Believers is the right book.

---

## Lola says

I was anticipating this release. Islamophobia is so present in our society today that I find it important to have teen books with Muslim main characters that can give us their opinion on the issue and make us understand how they feel living in a world in which they are often seen as “other”, “illegal” and even “terrorist”.

This is then a story that matters. Maya, the seventeen-year-old Muslim-American heroine of this book, matters. Her voice is strong and her feelings are true. She sheds light where is needed and welcomes us, the reader, into her life with open arms. She is kind and patient, even when the world seems to be against her. She is important.

Now I can praise the author for discussing Islamophobia in a non-aggressive and effective manner all day, but unfortunately, we must also discuss the romance since it takes a lot of space in the story. This is understandable, seeing that Maya is seventeen—and most of us were thinking about love at that age as well. However, her juggling two boys—going after a boy that already has a girlfriend, while leading another one on—turned me off.

I can't exactly blame Maya for letting herself fall in love with someone in a relationship, as she is young and the heart wants what it wants, but I was not charmed by the romance. Maya was, obviously, and I say good for her, but seeing her with the other boys really didn't make me feel any particular way, except a tiny bit annoyed by the fact that she didn't feel more remorseful about spending a considerate amount of time with a boy already in a relationship. The girl, who is in the dark about her boyfriend's dates with Maya, deserves some respect, even if she's not The One.

Mixed thoughts, mixed emotions. Honest and relevant, but not without flaws.

[Blog](#) | [Youtube](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Google+](#) | [Bloglovin'](#)

---

## Nina (Every Word A Doorway) says

*Love, Hate & Other Filters* reads like a more serious *When Dimple Met Rishi*. It is because of its comparison with the latter that I've decided to bump up the rating from 3.5 to 4 stars. The two books, both written by authors of Indian origin (one Hindu, one Muslim), cannot but be compared due to the way they

are written and the themes they touch upon. **However, if you didn't like Dimple or simply crave more serious topics in contemporary, then you'll probably like *Love, Hate & Other Filters* more.**

*I'm scared. I'm not just scared that somehow I'll be next; it's a quieter fear and more insidious. I'm scared of the next Muslim ban. I'm scared of dad getting pulled into Secondary Security Screening at the airport for "random" questioning. I'm scared for the hijabi girls I know getting their scarves pulled off while they're walking down the sidewalk—or worse. I'm scared of being the object of fear and loathing and suspicion again. Always*

**As with most YA contemporaries, *Love, Hate & Other Filters* didn't dig as deep as I would have liked and entailed a strong focus on romance. Nonetheless, Sara Ahmed has achieved a compelling depiction of an Indian Muslim girl's battle with parental expectations, prejudice in a country she was born and calls home, and the joy and pain of a first crush.**

I am not a Muslim and thus cannot judge this book from a point of authenticity. I review diverse books to my best knowledge and as a human being who *cares*. However, I suggest you also check for reviews by minority readers.

Before discovering this debut on NetGalley, I had never even heard of this title. I cannot fathom why this title hasn't been talked about, considering how much Ahmed had her finger on the pulse of time with her debut. Though I had few expectations, I did hope that the author would make a strong statement. **The author's foreword had already moved me before I had even met her characters.** Let me be frank: I am *tired* of people generalizing the behaviour of individuals. I am tired of narrow-minded people projecting the actions of a handful onto billions. In my native tongue, we call this mindset "putting people in the same drawer", which means we categorise humans like objects – based on what they have in common. When radicalised individuals run vehicles into human crowds, people seem to instantly forget that killing innocents is a sin in Islamic doctrine, that a majority of Muslims lead peaceful lives, and that just as many condemn these actions as harshly as non-Muslims do. **The mindset of categorising is poisonous.** Last year, I was out with a Muslim friend of mine when a mosque was attacked nearby, and I realized that hate crimes weren't just "on the news", but right around the corner. We cannot tolerate this poison's spreading.

Which is why I'm glad Samira Ahmed decided to write *Love, Hate & Other Filters*.

Samira Ahmed uses a different term for prejudice, and that is "filter". She cleverly combines the main character's passion – film-making – with how vision works. Our vision, our judgement, can be clouded with strong emotions, be it love or hate or something else entirely. Maya Aziz lives a quiet life in the US, one of her biggest issues being badgered by her parents about law school, when she really wants to pursue film-making – and an unrequited crush. Until a terrorist attack renders her and her family a target of hatred. **The title of *Love, Hate & Other Filters* mirrors this book's content to a fault: Foremost, we get a love story, but it is interwoven with a storyline of prejudice in the aftermath of a terrorist attack.** To be frank, I had expected the terrorist attack to occur sooner in the book, because I had read half the book before the turning point came. This allowed for more elaborate introduction of the characters and a development of the romance, which is positive in the sense that the hate Maya encounters is not what defines her, it is not how we get to know her. However, it also let the romance steer this car. **I would have liked Ahmed to dedicate more of the plot to the subject of Islamophobia, as she makes some excellent points, but I bet she had even more in stock.** Not only does Ahmed highlight racist reactions to the attack, but also Maya's immediate response of fear, which is one of the most eye-opening things you might ever read. Ahmed's words exquisitely capture the thoughts Maya, as a Muslim, develops because a handful of terrorists claim to believe in the same god she does.

*A terrorist attack. Another tragedy. Is there no end? Is this how life will always be? I want to know more, but there is one piece of information I absolutely hope I don't hear. I whisper a prayer to the universe. "Please, please let everyone be okay. Please don't let it be a Muslim."*

*My father picks up where my mother leaves off. "These terrorists are the antithesis of Islam. They're not Muslim. Violence has no place in religion, and the terrorists are responsible for their own crimes, not the religion and not us."*

*[...]*

*I interrupt my mother. "Too bad none of that matters. We all get painted like we're un-American and terrorist sympathizers, no matter how loudly we condemn terrorism and say it's un-Islamic. It's guilt by association."*

The rest of the story reads like your average YA romantic contemporary. To my own fascination, the book managed to take a romance I would've normally hated and turn it into something I liked. I also have to admit that, in spite of my complaints, the premise is very open and non-deceptive about its focus on romance. It begins with a love triangle, but quickly dissolves into a clear choice, with Maya making a healthy and respectful decision – role-model love triangle here, folks. **Ahmed chose an interracial romance to demonstrate mutual respect of culture, such as the love interest remembering not to bring pork to a picnic.** But most importantly, I thought that *Love, Hate & Other Filters* was going to feature another sappy romance with a unicorns & rainbows ending, and I was surprised. **Ahmed handled the romance maturely and realistically, and was, as such, very down-to-earth.** She has, in a way, somewhat restored my faith in YA contemporary.

The "Indian parents" theme encountered in *When Dimple Met Rishi* is dominant in Ahmed's debut as well. As with everything, this daughter-parent relationship took on a more serious note than in the aforementioned book. Ahmed questions the line between a good daughter and an obedient one, between protective parents and overbearing ones. **The clash of generations, values, and beliefs is strong in this book.** I also liked the important role of Maya's aunt Hina, and how this side character is instrumentalized to call attention to the courage it must take for an Indian woman to defy traditions and stereotypes.

**Overall, I'd consider *Love, Hate & Other Filters* an enjoyable, diverse read of utmost importance in the time of current political movements. The book was short and could've packed more of a punch, but the likable female lead, the down-to-earth take on young romance, and the compelling points made about Islamophobia were a pleasant surprise. I appreciate this book's existence, and it was a good start to addressing contemporary issues, such as prejudice, racism, xenophobia, and Islamophobia. I hope more will follow.**

*\*\* I received an eARC from the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. My thoughts are my own. Quotations may be subject to change in the final copy. \*\**

---

This book hasn't stirred a lot of a fuss yet, and I'm not sure why? The book's topic – prejudice, hatred, Islamophobia – is of utmost relevance right now. We use Insta filters voluntarily, but there are other filters, subtle and barely noticeable ones, clouding our judgement every day. I sincerely hope Samira Ahmed can deliver a powerful blow to prejudice with her debut novel.

*\*\*I have received an ARC from the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. \*\**

