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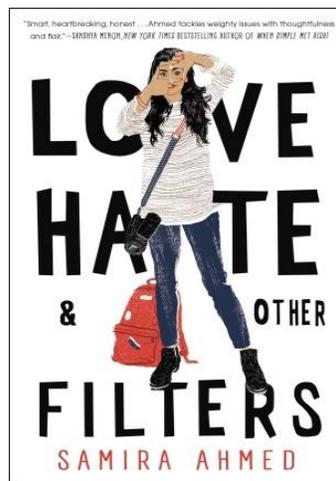
JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE & LITERACY EDUCATION

## Review of *Love, Hate, and Other Filters* Written by Samira Ahmed

Adult/Educator Reviewer: Amanda Brady Deaton

University of Georgia

Student Reviewer: Juliana Stinnett, 11<sup>th</sup> grade



Ahmed, S. (2018). *Love, Hate, and Other Filters*. New York, NY: Soho Teens

ISBN: 978-1-61695-999-9

**Adult Review:** Amanda Brady Deaton

Maya Aziz must escape her Indian Muslim family's expectations for her life in order to be at her happiest. This includes dating a nice, successful Indian boy whom she will one day marry, go to school close to her suburban Chicago home, and study to become a lawyer. Maya, however, wants to study film in New York and is in love with a boy from her school, Phil, who has struggled to live up to the exceptions set upon him as well. The two find a connection and Maya's parents agree to let her go to NYU, until a terrorist attack forces them to consider their place in a modern American society.

This book would appeal to high school readers, ages 13-18. First of all, Maya is a fun and rebellious character. Though she has an intense love for her family, she also wants the freedom to be an American teenager, and finds her parents' beliefs about what she should study and whom she should marry to be antiquated. Because both of her parents are successful and respected members of her small community, it is not easy for her to pursue her own path, and it is through first love that she finds the courage and passion to rebel. Many teens will be able to connect with her and hope she succeeds despite society's and her parents' expectations. Maya has the same worries and fears as any typical teen; being Muslim and Indian adds a complexity to her journey.

Perhaps most chilling, as well as illuminating, in the novel is the fact that Maya and her family are implicated for an attack that happens far away from their Suburban life. Simply by having the same common last name as a suspected terrorist, Maya herself is terrorized. Also, her parents have the urge to restrain her further, all in the name of protection, which undoes much of the work of the first half of the novel. As a reader, one can feel Maya's frustration; what appeared to be a simple coming-of-age story about love becomes a harrowing social commentary.

But there is a concern that an educator should consider before using or recommending this book. When all of Maya's frustrations come to a head, she runs away from home and stays in a cabin alone. Later, Phil joins her. Additionally, Maya is victimized by a racist peer at an amusement park. The violence committed against her is graphic and haunting and would need to be discussed with students with sensitivity.

Overall, I would highly recommend this book for high school readers because Maya is lovable and her journey relatable. She is Muslim and Indian and above all American, and her unique voice teaches readers valuable lessons about dreaming, love, and perseverance.

**Student Review:** Juliana Stinnett

**A Capture of My Life**

This image portrays a quick capture from the view of a camcorder of the main protagonist, Maya Aziz from *Love, Hate, and Other Filters*. It contains pictures of places that she found of some importance.

The main image includes the following: Phil, the high school sweetheart, The University of New York, the dream school, and The Oklahoma City Federal Bombing, the event that changed her life.

All the events that are pictured in some way helped in forming Maya's future, some by the love that she had for it, others for the hate.



Figure 1. *A Capture of My Life* illustrated by the student reviewer Juliana Stinnett