

BOOK RESUME: *This Is Why They Hate Us* by Aaron Aceves
Simon & Schuster, 2022

Reviews

- [Booklist](#) (April 1, 2022): “Seventeen-year-old Mexican American Enrique is bi and firmly closeted but, as it happens, is secretly in love with his best friend, Palestinian American Saleem, who is apparently straight. “He is my greatest source of joy,” Enrique thinks ruefully, desperately afraid to share his feelings for fear of rejection. When this situation becomes almost too painful to bear, Enrique launches a summer-long “get over Saleem initiative,” hooking up with three guys in turn, hoping—unsuccessfully—to find someone to replace Saleem. His failures spark suicidal thoughts that recall the breakdown he had at the end of eighth grade that drove him to find psychiatric help. The severity of his new suicidal ideation sends him back into therapy, where he is diagnosed with anxiety, depression, and, possibly, a mood disorder. Nevertheless, life goes on, and, his initiative in shambles, Enrique returns to his frustrating friendship with Saleem, finally determined to tell his friend the truth. Aceves has written a well-plotted, thoughtful coming-of-age novel featuring a complex, fully realized protagonist—not to mention Enrique’s friend Afro–Puerto Rican Cuban Fabiola, a force of life, and, of course, Saleem, whom readers will love as much as Enrique does. LGBTQIA+ literature needs more stories about bisexual boys, especially novels that are as good as this.”
- [Book Page](#) (August 27, 2022): “This Is Why They Hate Us is a tale of self-discovery that’s enjoyable all year-round.”
- [Kirkus](#) (May 9, 2022): “An outstanding portrait of teenage longing, angst, and self-discovery.” Starred review.
- [Publishers Weekly](#) (November 23, 2022): “Jokes land and humorous banter abounds among the quirky, distinctively limned cast, but Aceves avoids a shallow flight from boy to boy, granting the romantic and sexual exploration by queer youth of color the gravitas it deserves. Ages 14–up.” Starred review.

Awards

- [Cyblis Award Finalist](#), 2022

Lists

- [Rainbow Book List](#), 2023. American Library Association.
- [Best Young Adult Books of the Year](#), 2022. Kirkus Reviews.

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Response to challenges

- [Samuels Public Library](#) (Front Royal, VA) - July 2023: Recommended to retain in Young Adult Collection by staff, relocated to New Adult Collection after appeal to Board of Trustees.

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