



**[Simon vs. The Homo Sapiens Agenda](#) by Becky Albertalli**

Balzer + Bray, HarperCollins, 2015

ISBN: 9780062348685 (Paperback)

\*Age Range: 14 up (Suggested by Publisher)

Grade Range: 8 up (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

## BOOK SYNOPSIS

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Sixteen-year-old and not-so-openly gay Simon Spier prefers to save his drama for the school musical. But when an email falls into the wrong hands, his secret is at risk of being thrust into the spotlight. Now change-averse Simon has to find a way to step out of his comfort zone before he's pushed out—without alienating his friends, compromising himself, or fumbling a shot at happiness with the most confusing, adorable guy he's never met. Incredibly funny and poignant, this twenty-first-century coming-of-age, coming out story—wrapped in a geek romance—is a knockout of a debut novel by Becky Albertalli.

## REVIEWS AND PRAISE

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“Albertalli paints a stunningly three-dimensional, cliché-free world for Simon that bursts with unforgettable characters. Savor it, because you’ll read it for the first time only once. Worthy of *Fault in Our Stars*-level obsession.”

— [Entertainment Weekly](#)

“Love child of John Green and Rainbow Rowell.”

— *Teen Vogue*

“Delightfully funny and at times heart-wrenching. Readers will ache for Simon’s awkwardness, cheer his small triumphs, but, most of all, fall in love with this kid and with this remarkable gift of a novel.”

— Andrew Smith, author of *Grasshopper Jungle*

“Funny, moving and emotionally wise.”

— [Kirkus Reviews](#) (starred review)

“I am so in love with this book.”

— Nina LaCour, author of *Hold Still*

“Debut novelist Albertalli writes believably in the voice of a confused, openhearted 16-year-old. Readers will fall madly in love with Simon.”

— [Publishers Weekly](#) (starred review)

“Are we absolutely certain that Becky Albertalli didn’t just steal the diary of a hilariously observant teenage boy? *Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda* is a pitch-perfect triumph of wit and wordplay that feels timelessly, effortlessly now.”

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— Tim Federle, author of *Better Nate than Ever*

“Though there are realistic moments of tension, the dominant sentiment here is the delicious excitement of finding your best self in the eyes of someone else; not since Levithan’s *Boy Meets Boy* have readers been treated to such a happy sigh of a book about two boys falling in love.”

— *Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books* (**starred review**)

“I love you, SIMON. I LOVE YOU! And I love this fresh, funny, live-out-loud book.”

— Jennifer Niven, bestselling author of *All the Bright Places*

“Rife with realistic, high school relationships and drama, with a laugh or two at every turn, this is a coming-of-age, coming-out, and defying-the-odds story with which many teens will identify.”

— [SLJ](#)

“Becky Albertalli has written the best kind of love story: the kind in which you fall in love with the characters as they fall in love with each other; the kind of story that, even after it ends, you carry the characters with you, too in love to let them go.”

— Alex Sanchez, Lambda Award-winning author of *Rainbow Boys* and *Boyfriends with Girlfriends*

“And that’s Simon’s wise, melancholy, lesson: We are all in a constant state of reintroduction to the universe, to our fellow Homo sapiens, and ultimately to ourselves. And over the course of this radically tender debut, we’re reminded that while high school mercifully ends, the stumble toward growth continues, one freaking awkward step at a time.”

— [O magazine](#)

## AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

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- William C. Morris YA Debut Award
- YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults
- Lambda Literary Award Finalist
- National Book Award Long List
- Rainbow Book List
- North Carolina Young Adult Book Award
- Eliot Rosewater Indiana High School Book Award
- Connecticut Nutmeg Award
- Pennsylvania Young Reader's Choice Award
- Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award
- Tennessee Volunteer State Book Award
- D. C. Capitol Choices
- New Hampshire Flume Young Readers' Choice Award
- New Jersey Garden State Teen Book Award
- Virginia Readers' Choice Award
- Washington Evergreen Teen Book Award
- Wyoming Soaring Eagle Teen Book Award
- Texas Tayshas Reading List
- Georgia Peach Teen Readers' Choice Award
- Florida Teen Reads Book Award
- Vermont Green Mountain Book Award

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## MEDIA AND RESOURCES

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- [Discussion Guide](#)

## RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

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*Add responses to challenges whenever possible, including links if available. Relevant information includes official responses from a board of education, library statements of support, or other statements of support from relevant organizations like PEN America or the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund.*

## AUTHOR STATEMENT (OPTIONAL)

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These book bans are dangerous, undemocratic, and openly discriminatory. They're enacted in wildly bad faith and bolstered by obvious lies.

Please don't fall for the framing that these books were banned for "inappropriate content." We know why they're banned, and we know who it's designed to hurt.

It's so insidious because you know it's affecting kids on so many different levels. It's a multi-pronged attack, and the people on the front lines are queer kid—especially trans kids. This is true even for kids who aren't at a school that's technically being affected right now. The national conversation about this is bombarding them with the message that, "You are inappropriate. You are less appropriate than your peers." It's not true—but the purpose of this initiative coming from the right is to hammer that home.

Alongside that, you have other people absorbing the message that these kids and their very real experiences are less appropriate, that there's something x-rated about these common developmental experiences.

It's ridiculous, because it's holding up this banner of "parents' rights"—but that only applies to the parents who agree with them.

I find it helpful sometimes to take a step back and look at YA in general. What are some of the other books in this space that aren't queer, and what kind of content do we see in these books?

We have to keep in mind that this is a targeted effort from an organized group of right-wing people.

## \*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES

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A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

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