

The Hate U Give
Angie Thomas
HarperCollins/ Blazer + Bray, 2017

Reviews

- [The Atlantic](#) (28 March 2017): “Now in its third consecutive week at number one on *The New York Times* bestseller list for young-adult novels, Thomas’s debut novel offers an incisive and engrossing perspective of the life of a black teenage girl as Starr’s two worlds converge over questions of police brutality, justice, and activism.”
- [Booklist](#) (15 December 2016): “Sixteen-year-old Starr lives in two very different worlds: one is her home in a poor black urban neighborhood; the other is the tony suburban prep school she attends and the white boy she dates there. Her bifurcated life changes dramatically when she is the only witness to the unprovoked police shooting of her unarmed friend Khalil and is challenged to speak out—though with trepidation—about the injustices being done in the event’s wake. As the case becomes national news, violence erupts in her neighborhood, and Starr finds herself and her family caught in the middle. Difficulties are exacerbated by their encounters with the local drug lord for whom Khalil was dealing to earn money for his impoverished family. If there is to be hope for change, Starr comes to realize, it must be through the exercise of her voice, even if it puts her and her family in harm’s way. Thomas’ debut, both a searing indictment of injustice and a clear-eyed, dramatic examination of the complexities of race in America, invites deep thoughts about our social fabric, ethics, morality, and justice. Beautifully written in Starr’s authentic first-person voice, this is a marvel of verisimilitude as it insightfully examines two worlds in collision. An inarguably important book that demands the widest possible readership.”
- [Kirkus Reviews](#) (28 February 2017): “Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter is a black girl and an expert at navigating the two worlds she exists in: one at Garden Heights, her black neighborhood, and the other at Williamson Prep, her suburban, mostly white high school. Walking the line between the two becomes immensely harder when Starr is present at the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend, Khalil, by a white police officer. Khalil was unarmed. Khalil’s death becomes national news, where he’s called a thug and possible drug dealer and gangbanger. His death becomes justified in the eyes of many, including one of Starr’s best friends at school. The police’s lackadaisical attitude sparks anger and then protests in the community, turning it into a war zone. Questions remain about what happened in the moments leading to Khalil’s death, and the only witness is Starr, who must now decide what to say or do, if anything. Thomas cuts to the heart of the matter for Starr and for so many like her, laying bare the systemic racism that undergirds her world, and she does so honestly and inescapably, balancing heartbreak and humor. With smooth but powerful prose delivered in Starr’s natural, emphatic voice, finely nuanced characters, and intricate and realistic relationship dynamics, this novel will have readers rooting for Starr and opening their hearts to her friends and family. This story is necessary. This story is important.”
- [Publishers Weekly](#) (28 November 2016): “At home in a neighborhood riven with gang strife, Starr Carter, 16, is both the grocer’s daughter and an outsider, because she attends private school many miles away. But at Williamson Prep, where she’s among a handful of black students, she can’t be herself either: no slang, no anger, no attitude. That version of herself—“Williamson Starr”—“doesn’t give anyone a reason to call her ghetto.” She’s already wrestling with what Du Bois called “double consciousness” when

she accepts a ride home from Khalil, a childhood friend, who is then pulled over and shot dead by a white cop. Starr's voice commands attention from page one, a conflicted but clear-eyed lens through which debut author Thomas examines Khalil's killing, casual racism at Williamson, and Starr's strained relationship with her white boyfriend. Though Thomas's story is heartbreakingly topical, its greatest strength is in its authentic depiction of a teenage girl, her loving family, and her attempts to reconcile what she knows to be true about their lives with the way those lives are depicted—and completely undervalued—by society at large. Ages 14–up.”

- [School Library Journal](#) (26 January 2017) “After Starr and her childhood friend Khalil, both black, leave a party together, they are pulled over by a white police officer, who kills Khalil. The sole witness to the homicide, Starr must testify before a grand jury that will decide whether to indict the cop, and she's terrified, especially as emotions run high. By turns frightened, discouraged, enraged, and impassioned, Starr is authentically adolescent in her reactions. Inhabiting two vastly different spheres—her poor, predominantly black neighborhood, Garden Heights, where gangs are a fact of life, and her rich, mostly white private school—causes strain, and Thomas perceptively illustrates how the personal is political: Starr is disturbed by the racism of her white friend Hailey, who writes Khalil off as a drug dealer, and Starr's father is torn between his desire to support Garden Heights and his need to move his family to a safer environment. The first-person, present-tense narrative is immediate and intense, and the pacing is strong, with Thomas balancing dramatic scenes of violence and protest with moments of reflection. The characterization is slightly uneven; at times, Starr's friends at school feel thinly fleshed out. However, Starr, her family, and the individuals in their neighborhood are achingly real and lovingly crafted. VERDICT Pair this powerful debut with Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely's *All American Boys* to start a conversation on racism, police brutality, and the Black Lives Matter movement.”
- [Vox](#) (19 October 2018): “It was probably inevitable that someone would write a YA novel about police shootings, but it was not inevitable that it would be a good book.”

Awards

- [Books Are My Bag Readers Awards](#), 2017
- [Boston Globe Horn Book Award](#), 2017
- [Coretta Scott King Book Award](#), 2018
- [Edgar Allan Poe Award](#) (Mystery Writers of America), Best Young Adult Nominee, 2018
- [Goodreads Choice Award](#), 2017
- [Kirkus Prize](#), 2017 Finalist
- [Los Angeles Times Book Prize](#), 2018 Finalist
- [Michael L. Printz Award](#), 2018
- [National Book Award](#), 2017 Longlist
- [New York Times](#), #1 Best Seller, 2020
- [William C. Morris Award](#), 2018

Lists

- [ALA](#), YALSA 2018 Top Ten Best Fiction
- [Chicago Public Library's](#) Best of the Best Books, 2017
- [CNN](#) 10 of the decade's most influential books, 2019
- [New York Public Library's](#) Best Books of 2017 for Teens

Response to challenges

- [ROWVA District Board of Education](#) (19 January 2022): “ROWVA Senior Abigail Lee said if the language in the book was indeed the problem, then other books such as *To Kill A Mockingbird* or *The Scarlet Letter* should be suspended as well. “We go to a school that has near zero diversity,” Lee said. “Through watching all this happen, I have lost my pride in being a ROWVA fighter.”
- [Katy Independent School District](#) (6 November 2017): “According to LaRue, those concerns are shared by librarians in the Katy school district, 19 of whom signed a letter protesting Hindt’s decision to pull the book. But despite both internal pushback and an ongoing outcry on Twitter, where Thomas began tweeting about the ban last Thursday evening, no explanation from the superintendent’s office has been forthcoming. Hindt did not respond to multiple requests for comment, which sources within the district say has been par for the course internally as well. One employee who spoke to Vulture under the condition of anonymity said most teachers are “saddened” by both the censorship and the superintendent’s silent treatment.

“We feel that it’s just a missed opportunity for our students to be able to have an open discussion about something that is a reality — about something that many of our students and even our faculty face,” she said. “I bought the book on my own, and we’re trying to reach out to the superintendent just to start an open dialogue. We’re not trying to demean his decision, but start a conversation.”

References

Cart, M. (2016, December 15). *The Hate U Give*. Booklist.

<https://www.booklistonline.com/The-Hate-U-Give-Angie-Thomas/pid=8567474>

Clayton, D. (2017, February 28). *The Hate U Give*. Kirkus Reviews.

<https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/angie-thomas/hate-u-give/>

Dar, M. (2017, January 26). *The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas*. School Library Journal.

<https://www.slj.com/story/the-hate-u-give-by-angie-thomas-slj-review>

Diamond, A. (2017, March 28). *The Hate U Give Enters the Ranks of Great YA Novels*. The Atlantic.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2017/03/the-hate-u-give-angie-thomas-review/521079/>

Grady, C. (2018, October 19). *Social Issues YA Novels Can Be Terrible. The Hate U Give is a Stunning Exception*. Vox.

<https://www.vox.com/culture/2017/3/30/15074998/the-hate-u-give-angie-thomas-review>

The Hate U Give. (2016, November 28). Publisher's Weekly.

<https://www.publishersweekly.com/9780062498533>