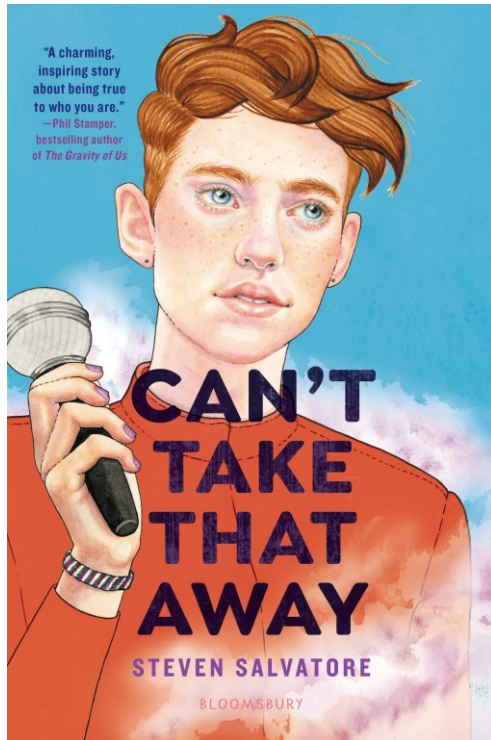


CAN'T TAKE THAT AWAY



Summary of Concerns:

This book contains alternate sexualities; sexual activities; alternate gender ideologies; suicide commentary; controversial political commentary; controversial racial commentary; profanity; and controversial and inflammatory social commentary.

Young Adult

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ISBN: 9781547605316

2 / 5

Teen Guidance
BookLooks Review Rating

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7	"I got you something," Mr. Kelly pulls out his desk drawer. "My husband and I were in West Village last weekend and came across these." He walks over and places a rainbow velvet pouch on my desk. "The shop owner is genderqueer too, and they explained how they made these for other genderqueer people to express their gender identity on any given day."
24	When I've successfully memorized them, I move on to the picture of her and her wife in Barcelona, Spain.
81	His salty lips lightly graze mine as I stare at his perfect, angular face. Should I close my eyes? Isn't that what you're supposed to do? So I do, and my body relaxes enough that I grab his face and kiss him back. He gently nibbles my lower lip and finishes with two soft pecks before letting me go. ...He nuzzles his nose against my cheek and kisses my lower jawline.
112	But then he leans in and kisses me with such intensity it takes the wind out of me. It's a voracious hunger I haven't experienced before. He walks me backward until I'm pressed against the bathroom wall. Cris's lips move to my neck; his fingers tangle with the fabric of my drapery black cardigan until it lifts, exposing bare skin. My body shudders. Though I want him, really want him, my mom and best friend are too close for comfort.
145	"Remember when I missed school for a couple of weeks last year?" My words, like my hands, are shaky. "I wanted to kill myself..."
184	"...What I do know is that she's the progressive misfit. They're all conservative. She used to fight with them all the time. I don't think they liked that she was dating a bisexual Filipino. They're more the 'we think the Confederate flag is an American symbol' type. Hashtag white pride."
190	"To intentionally misgender someone is a direct attack," Pheobe interrupts, her voice growing louder with every syllable.
220	"He was not much older than Pheobe when he enlisted in the army. He was stationed in Iraq for two tours. This was during the Don't Ask, Don't Tell days, and he fell in love with another soldier." ..."I remember him calling me up and telling me about a man who made him smile." ..."Someone caught them together and they were both dishonorably discharged, left with no money or job prospects, their military careers over. Two weeks after he returned home, my brother's boyfriend took his life. The shame they bot felt."
224	"We should demand a no-tolerance policy in the Code of Conduct that mandates all teachers respect the identities of their students," Pheobe says. "This way it's clear this movement goes beyond wanting basic respect from students like Max, and also applies to teachers." "We can call it the No Jackson Law of Common Human Decency," Cris says, his voice still tight from his passive aggressive battle with Monroe.
226	"Parent voices go a long way. And this is about ensuring school grounds are safe, equitable spaces."

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256	"Traditional literary canon equals white and male."
285	<p>"You think we'll have enough for the school board meeting tonight?" I ask.</p> <p>"More than enough. So far, the only people who won't sign are Max and his friends. And the Conservative Values Club." She makes a face like she's vomiting.</p> <p>"I'm shocked," I deadpan.</p>
299	<p>Max's friends slowly back away toward the student lot and hop into an old, blue Toyota with a Confederate flag bumper sticker. I watch out of the corner of my eye as they peel off down the road.</p> <p>"It's illegal to cause a public panic for no reason," the officer says, reaching behind his back for a pair of handcuffs while another radios the station with an update.</p> <p>...I want Max to stop harassing me. I need it to end.</p> <p>...Then he says, "so you know, he most likely will post bail." After seeing Max's father in person last week, it's clear what he means: They have money. Power. Influence.</p>
320	<p>"Change doesn't happen overnight." Pheobe tucks stray hair under her pink wool pussy hat.</p> <p>..."The police here are on your side. Some of us wouldn't be that lucky." Her gaze holds mine and I hear everything she doesn't say. "You only fail if you fail to use this privilege."</p> <p>...I hop up on the wall and shout, "Justice! Equality! Fairness!..."</p>
352	<p>He stares into my eyes. His breath is ragged, and his lips move closer to mine. There's a slow magnetic pull between us, and it's impossible to resist as his lips graze mine, so softly, so gently that I melt into him.</p> <p>Monroe coughs. "Can y'all get a room?"</p>
359	<p>I'd had a complicated relationship with gender my entire life, but a lifetime of pain and suppression of my own queerness prevented me from fully mining my gender identity. I am a proud gay, genderqueer person, and this story has been my way of navigating through my complicated relationship with gender; it was through Carey that I realized how deeply my queerness was connected to my own suicidal ideations as a teen.</p> <p>...While Carey is just one story, their struggles and those of genderqueer, genderfluid, nonbinary, and transgender persons don't exist in a vacuum. According to the Human Right's Campaign's 2018 Youth Report, "73% of LGBTQ youth have experienced verbal threats because of their actual or perceived LGBTQ identity." I wanted desperately to give Carey a drama-free story that had nothing to do with their identity, because as a genderqueer person, I</p>
359	<p>Around the age of fifteen, I started suffering from suicidal ideations because I knew I was different. As a young child, I didn't have the words, yet I always knew on some level that I was queer.</p> <p>...There were many nights when I wished I wouldn't wake up in the morning, and many days when I planned ways I might die.</p>
363	<p>Perhaps Caulfield's reluctance to face the horrible realities around him "works" in a pre-civil rights era context, but that's the privilege afforded to white, (potentially) straight, (presumably) cisgender men, for whom it is easy to overlook, for instance, Jim Crow laws of the time because of the complacency</p>

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	afforded to him by living in New York. In a twenty-first century context, this is truer than ever before.
364	The planet is burning from global climate change; racial, LGBTQ+, and gender injustice and inequity run rampant; and gun deaths and mass shootings seem so obviously preventable yet aren't. Channeling your efforts toward one cause at a time will strengthen your purpose. You can push back against multiple injustices, but for the sake of a singular demonstration, focusing on one cause can provide more clarity and purpose for all those who attend. It also helps to plan with friends who share in like-minded ideals.

Profanity/Derogatory Term	Count
Ass	18
Bitch	7
Dick	1
Fag/Faggot	2
Fuck	99
Piss	1
Pussy	1
Shit	35