

Shortlisted Book for the 2021-22 Book in Common

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Valarie Kaur

See No Stranger: A Memoir and Manifesto of Revolutionary Love

Date: 2020

List price: \$28 hardcover

Author website: <https://valariekaur.com/see-no-stranger/>

Book website: <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/563879/see-no-stranger-by-valarie-kaur/>

Publisher description:

How do we love in a time of rage? How do we fix a broken world while not breaking ourselves? Valarie Kaur—renowned Sikh activist, filmmaker, and civil rights lawyer—describes revolutionary love as the call of our time, a radical, joyful practice that extends in three directions: to others, to our opponents, and to ourselves. It enjoins us to see no stranger but instead look at others and say: *You are part of me I do not yet know*. Starting from that place of wonder, the world begins to change: It is a practice that can transform a relationship, a community, a culture, even a nation. Kaur takes readers through her own riveting journey—as a brown girl growing up in California farmland finding her place in the world; as a young adult galvanized by the murders of Sikhs after 9/11; as a law student fighting injustices in American prisons and on Guantánamo Bay; as an activist working with communities recovering from xenophobic attacks; and as a woman trying to heal from her own experiences with police violence and sexual assault. Drawing from the wisdom of sages, scientists, and activists, Kaur reclaims love as an active, public, and revolutionary force that creates new possibilities for ourselves, our communities, and our world. *See No Stranger* helps us imagine new ways of being with each other—and with ourselves—so that together we can begin to build the world we want to see.

This book is shortlisted for the 2021-22 Book in Common because

- *It is engaging to students and to a broad audience.* The author, a Sikh Californian, explains how she found her voice and purpose in college and her life soon after. Readers will be inspired by her activism. This book has a positive and uplifting tone that would appeal to a broad audience during a time of national tumult, but it does not minimize the challenges of finding common ground.
- *It has broad appeal across disciplines.* This memoir appeals to the humanities, social sciences and communication and education disciplines, but could be used in any programs/courses that focus upon justice or equity. The book's inclusion of neuroscience, trauma, and psychology make it of interest to additional disciplines.
- *It is relevant and timely.* Love, tolerance and empathy are timeless issues, but their absence in recent months/years has made the themes of the book very timely.
- *It relates to the university mission.* This book relates to the campus strategic priorities of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, as well as Civic and Global Engagement and links to rural California (the author is from the San Joaquin valley).
- *It is conducive to year-long programming.* Programming could complement the 2020-21 Book in Common *How to Be An Antiracist* by designing events around an action-oriented book about social justice that focuses on US History since 9/11.