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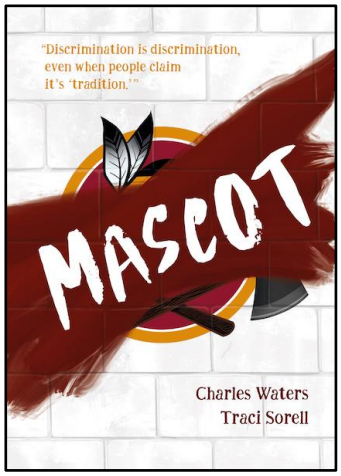

***Mascot* by Charles Waters and Traci Sorell**
Charlesbridge, 2023
ISBN: 9781623543808 (Hardcover)
*Age Range: 10 and up
Grade Range: 3–7 (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

BOOK SYNOPSIS

What if a school's mascot is seen as racist, but not by everyone? In this compelling middle-grade novel in verse, two best-selling BIPOC authors tackle this hot-button issue.

In Rye, Virginia, just outside Washington, DC, people work hard, kids go to school, and football is big on Friday nights. An eighth-grade English teacher creates an assignment for her class to debate whether Rye's mascot should stay or change. Now six middle schoolers–-all with different backgrounds and beliefs–-get involved in the contentious issue that already has the suburb turned upside down with everyone choosing sides and arguments getting ugly.

Told from several perspectives, readers see how each student comes to new understandings about identity, tradition, and what it means to stand up for real change.

"The kids and I are so grateful for this gift you both have given to teachers, kids, and our world."
—Ms. Corgill, 5th Grade Teacher, Alabama

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

"Waters and Sorell's plain spoken verse is always sharp and direct."—*The New York Times Book Review*

★ "A brilliant story not to be missed; deeply engaging from the first page."—*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

★ "The creators eschew judgment to present a well-rounded discussion about classism and racism, as well as effective allyship, with compassion and understanding." —*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

"A valuable classroom pick that demonstrates the importance of debate."—*Booklist*

"Highly recommended as a pick for classrooms to use in debate and conversations; a timely and important novel."—*School Library Journal*

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- *2023 Kirkus Reviews Best Middle Grade Books*
- *2023 Publishers Weekly Best Books of 2023 for Young Adults*
- *2023 Chicago Public Library Best Fiction for Older Readers*
- *2023 NPR's Books We Love*
- *2023 New York Public Library Best Books for Kids*
- *2024 Charlotte Huck Book Award Honor*
- *2023–24 Project LIT Book Club pick*
- *2023 Nerdy Book Club Award for Poetry & Novels in Verse*
- *2023 CSMCL Best Multicultural Children's Books*
- *2023 Cynsational Books of 2023*
- *2023 Top 10 Kids Indie Next List (Sept/Oct 2023)*
- *2023 Junior Library Guild Selection*
- *2023 Texas Lone Star Reading List*
- *2023 Jane Addams Children's Book Awards—Chapter Books Honor Book*
- *2023 Cybils Novel in Verse Finalist*
- *2024 American Indian Youth Literature Award—Middle Grade Honor Book*
- *2024 NCSS-CBC Notable Social Studies Trade Books list*
- *2023 American Indians in Children's Literature Year in Review*
- *2023 Kids' Indie Next*
- *2024 YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults*
- *2024 Notable Children's Books in the Language Arts Award*

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- Mascot Discussion Guide | Charlesbridge
- Kid's Maximum Shelf: Mascot | Shelf Awareness
- Cooking Up Stories: Mascot Plus a Recipe and a Prompt | Highlights Foundation
- Collaboration and Conversations: An Interview with Traci Sorell & Charles Waters | Musing
- Between The Pages: Episode 4: Traci Sorell & Charles Waters | Between the Pages Podcast
- We Need Diverse Books: MASCOT with authors Traci Sorell & Charles Waters | We Need Diverse Books
- Charles Waters and Traci Sorell Discuss MASCOT | Charlesbridge

AUTHOR STATEMENT

Shining a light on a familiar subject that young people may experience but might not understand well is one of many cool things books do. In *Mascot*, young teens discuss, wrestle with, and make choices about the use and effects of Native-themed mascots on everyone's educational experience in their school district. That is what we encourage all young people to do about any issue they face. Understanding that many views and experiences exist-not just “one side or the other”-can help conversations take place with greater awareness. We hope recognizing our collective humanity leads to more connection, respect, and community building.

–Charles Waters & Traci Sorell

***A NOTE ABOUT AGE RANGES**

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.