



Who Will Tell My Brother?

Marlene Carvell

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International Reading Association Children's Book Award Winner

Determined to sway high school officials to remove disparaging Indian mascots, Evan assumes a struggle that spirals him onto a soul-searching journey and exposes him to a barrage of bullying, taunts, and escalating violence. Marlene Carvell's striking first novel is a timely look at a true story of a mixed-race teen caught up in an exploration of his past, his culture, and his identity.

Who Will Tell My Brother? Details

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Author : Marlene Carvell

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From Reader Review Who Will Tell My Brother? for online ebook

Cathleen says

3.5 stars. Picked this as my #diversathon read because a) I need to go back to peppering YA in my book diet more often and b) I'm drawn to contemporary First Nations stories. Very glad this crossed my path.

The premise of a mixed-heritage teen battling to have the offensive school mascot changed is striking. The free verse form is well-utilized, keeping the language spare and evocative, yet widely accessible. The ultra-brief chapters can be gulped quickly, but it is often in the pause between them that the emotion resonates.

The pushback from the school and community is all-too-believable, but most notable was a refrain from the school board appearances: "Racism is a matter of opinion." Wow. That statement would draw blood upon any reading, but in the context of current events, I found myself aghast at the impact.

This is meant to be a quieter, more thoughtful book and for the reader to fill in the blanks. Still, I wish more time had been devoted to the campaign itself. Also, this book needs a more dynamic cover. The graphic design represents the text in tone, but it doesn't do anything to capture the attention of the potential reader.

The title seems misguided until the reveal of the scenes which lead to its appearance in the book. It suddenly transforms from inane to poignant. Ache.

Meghan C says

This book was a book I will never forget. It hit me hard some of the things it talked about. Some of the events that happened I could never imagine happening in my school or hometown. I felt that this book should be way more famous than it is. Definitely recommended for anyone looking for an inspirational book.

Kathy Dobronyi says

An amazing book that made me want to keep turning the pages. That rarely happens in my reading history. Do you support Native American mascots? Read this book and understand why a change was needed.

Lee G. says

This book is very deep when it comes to the idea of racism. It is hard to read in some cases and makes you really think about what people go through. Just the fact that a bunch of racist kids had the nerve to kill the main character's dog just because he has Indian ancestors just makes me sick. You have to really be strong to be able to read this book. I even had to read the chapter where the dog died for my class because the teacher was so mortified by it. I almost cried. Read at your own discretion.

Syndel D. says

It was a pretty good book, it had many valuable lessons

Bryce says

The book was nice it was mostly about her trying to see who she really was. She went through a lot and met her dads side of the family for the first time, because their Native Americans. In her school when people noticed that she was native american they started to be in disbeilfe because she didn't look like one and so they started to make fun of her almost everyday, they gave her threats and someone even killed there dog and so then she made a speech won awards it was nice but the thing that she really strived for is to find out who she truly is.

Evan N. says

We read this book in class. I thought this book was hard to understand at times but sent a good message. This book was based on a true story. I liked this book.

Kathleen says

Nice use of free verse to tell the tale of Evan's quest to have his school stop using a mascot he finds offensive. This book was really interesting, both in its ability to tell a story with a remarkable economy of words and in the story itself. With FSU still having Chief Osceola, the Redskins still having both their name and their mascot, etc., I imagine there are quite a few kids like Evan, struggling to have their voice heard as they protest the use of their heritage in a hurtful way.

Kameron says

This is a book that will never leave my mind. So many topics hit me hard. The way they described some of the characters were jus unreal. Why would an author put those words in a book. Especially towards a person. This was a great book and I would definitely read it again.

Greg L says

My favorite part of was the very beginning.

When I filled out the form
for the test --
the dreaded "you are labeled for life" test
the "who are you? -- what are you? --why are you?" test,

I wrote my name,
I wrote where I lived.
I stopped,
I did not answer
Who was I?
What am I?

The most interesting parts of the book are those where Evan Hill, a mixed race high school senior, questions his heritage and seeks to answer who he is. This becomes the side story, never really answered. Instead the main story is about a year long struggle to try and change a mascot he finds offensive.

I also found myself obsessing with some of the plot holes.

At a pep rally it is easy to view the way the school used their indian mascot and their portrayal of Native Americans as being offensive. One problem, this should not have been Evan's first encounter with this. This was not his first year at the school, and we find out that his older brother had also spoken out against the school mascot. Missing is why did he tolerate the mascot before and why did he now feel the need to act.

We get insight into his struggles with identity and only explanations of actions when it comes to his deeds in fighting to change the school mascot. Interactions between Evan and his family are heartfelt and moving, interaction at school just moves the story along. The disappointment with this book is that it would not have taken much work to elevate this from an average book to a great book.

Wilson Zhao says

Who will tell my brother?

By: Marlene Carvell

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This is about racism and stereotypes. Its about a teenager, in high-school and he wants the school to get ride of Indian mascots. He gets offended from these actions. The main character is Evan. These actions would be bullying, teasing and getting into violence. He's standing up for himself and not giving up his pride.

This book was a BOMB. I'm standing side by side to Evan! I hate racism, stereotypes, bullying, violence, and teasing. I hate it when people think there better than others. This is life, everyone is equal. If I was Evan, I would do the same. I wouldn't be a weakling, being humiliated. I would stand up, object, and find a way to succeed my goal.

Kaylee D says

Who Will Tell My Brother was a book about a young kid about our age who did not know who he really was and was trying to find out if his school's mascot was offensive to him and his family. He tries to make a big impact on his school but the kids at his school are not very supportive even his best friend. Then a few years later the school finally change the mascot. I recommend this to everyone and think everyone should read it.

Krista the Krazy Kataloguer says

A novel in verse, based on the experiences of the author's son. Deals with school mascots being named after Indians, which has been controversial here in New York State.

Kallie.C says

It was a very interesting book to read and had a lot of main points and concepts. It was a little difficult for me to follow along with but after a while, the concept did become more clear. It is not the type of book I would normally pick up but I enjoyed the story and I feel even though the story was based to be older it still represents events we deal with in our time right now.

Alison says

A contemplative, quiet novel in verse about one teen's attempt to convince officials at his high school to remove their offensive Indian mascot. This is a solid (albeit uneven) story about confronting prejudice, enduring bullies, and attempting to make change. I appreciated the warm portrait of Evan's family, who are in the process of reconnecting with their Native relatives, and in particular Evan's brother, who previously attempted to wage this same war against racism but was unsuccessful. Evan's efforts teach all of them that change may be slow to come, but that it can happen -- one determined person at a time.

An author's note at the end of the book explains that the story was inspired by the experiences of the author's son, which adds a great note of authenticity to the story and demonstrates that change of this kind doesn't happen only in fiction. Real people can make change, and do.

Two complaints:

- 1.) The book assumes that the reader fully understands WHY the school's Indian mascot is offensive to Evan and to others. I would have liked it to include more arguments/examples to help readers not yet educated on the subject understand why mascots like these are racist. While I suspect some will argue that it should be obvious, if it were obvious to everyone we would not still have such mascots!
 - 2.) Because the kid in the cover photo looks young, I assumed for many years that this book was for elementary school, but the tone and sophistication of Evan's voice and Evan's own age (he's a senior in high school) make this far better suited to use in middle school. I dearly wish it had a cover that was better reflective of and appealing to its intended audience.
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