



2018

# Hearts Unbroken

Meagan Andrus

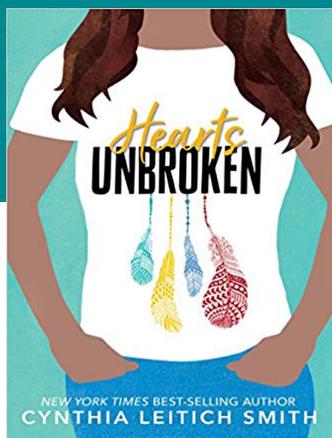
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## Book Review

### Hearts Unbroken

#### Author

Cynthia Leitich Smith

#### Illustrator

#### Reviewer

Meagan Andrus

#### Rating

Dependable

#### Level

Young Adult

#### Pages

286

#### Year

2018

#### Publisher

Candlewick Press

#### ISBN

9780763681142

High school senior Louise has just broken up with her super popular boyfriend Cam. With him, she was a somebody. But Louise couldn't stand being with somebody who was prejudiced against Native Americans, especially since she is a proud member of the Muscogee tribe. When her little brother lands a lead role in *The Wizard of Oz*, things start to heat up for Lou and her family. A bigoted group called Parents Against Revisionist Theater is protesting Lou's Native American brother in the role of the Tin Man, as well as the casting of a black girl as Dorothy and a Latino boy as the Scarecrow. Lou wants to be able to speak up against her classmates who are similarly upset at the racially-diverse cast, but finds it difficult to win against the complex intricacies of high school and small-town politics. Lou has to learn how to effectively speak her mind, give people a chance, and understand her own prejudices and shortcomings.

This book wants to spread a lot of good messages about inclusivity and the continued prejudice surrounding indigenous and native peoples in America. Some of the messages are able to come across, but unfortunately a lot of the good that this book wants to do is bogged down by the clunkiest of writing and the most purple prose one could imagine reading. Lou is relatively likable, but she has several flaws that are not resolved or addressed properly. Plot events are melodramatic at best and eyeroll-inducing at worst. The awareness this book is trying to spread about being mindful of other people's heritage and race, as well as not condoning artists' racist or bigoted attitudes, is very much needed and appreciated. However, it is very unfortunate that the writing, chapter breaks, characterization, and more are so choppy and inconsistent. This book would be much more effective if it were not written so poorly.

Contains severe language and moderate sexual content.