

>> All right. Welcome, everybody. We're joined today by picture-book author Carole Lindstrom. Carole is the author of the new book *We Are Water Protectors*. The book tells the story of an Ojibwe girl who fights against the Dakota Access Pipeline. Carole herself is Ojibwe, and we're so excited to learn about her personal connection to this story.

So Carole, welcome.

>> Thanks, Hannah.

And thanks for having me, everybody. Let me go ahead and share my screen. Sorry. Bear with me just one moment. Okay. First of all, *We Are Water Protectors*. I just want to call out, of course, the amazing illustrator, Michaela Goade. As you know -- or maybe you don't know -- that she won the Caldecott Medal for her illustrations for the book, and I'm just so, so proud of her because, ah, she's just amazing. She isn't just an amazing and talented person but a friend, a dear friend, as well. So I just want to make sure to mention that. So first of all, as Hannah mentioned, I am Ojibwe. Actually, I'm Anishinaabe, which is -- I'm Ojibwe-Metis. Anishinaabe means the original people. I'm a citizen of the Turtle Mountain Band of Ojibwe, which is one of 574 federally recognized Tribal Nations here in the United States. And my tribal homelands are in Turtle Mountain, North Dakota. So this slide just shows you my tribal flag, the Turtle Mountain -- well, it's called Chippewa [inaudible] here, but Ojibwe is how we refer to ourselves. And then this is the seal. And just a picture of me here with my tribal chairman, who I was lucky to meet. I don't live in my tribal homeland. I live in Maryland, close to the D.C. area. So there was a march here in D.C. a few years ago, so I was fortunate to meet my tribal chairman, Jamie Azure, and some of the other tribal council people. And then just some pictures of me when I was little and my, of course, typewriter that I was so happy to receive. I have always loved writing. And I always thought I would write one day probably for older people. I did not think it would be for children. So yeah, we didn't have kind of what they have today for, you know, like, the picture books and the different [inaudible], you know. So yeah, anyway. And my boss is my cat, Fox, who keeps me busy and honest and, well, she's very bossy, so. So why is water important, and why should we protect water? In the Ojibwe culture, my culture, women are considered the protectors of the water, and men are considered the fire protectors. That's just always how it's been since time immemorial. I wanted to make sure to include this picture here of Grandma or Grandmother Josephine Mandamin, who many of us know, and she was the original water walker. She walked around Lake Huron, one of the Great Lakes, with her copper pail of water. She would draw attention to water and the importance of it. And so she just passed away a few years ago, and her daughter, Autumn Peltier -- or her granddaughter, I should say, is taking over for her. So she has sort of stepped into her shoes, and she is the actual water commissioner in Canada. Anyway, where do I get my inspiration to write? Well, typically social justice issues are very just really high on my radar. I am very interested in things that have to do with people or relatives, animals, the planet is treated poorly. Those type of things really draw my attention, and I feel this need to tell a story that's accessible to younger people. Of course, environmental issues, as I said. These are all things that make me want to just raise awareness, and that's kind of just where my writing passion came from, I think, especially for writing for young people. And so let me just talk now a bit about my inspiration for *We Are Water Protectors* and where

that came from. A lot of people may be too young to remember the Dakota Access Pipeline -- the young people anyway -- but this was a pipeline that was carrying oil, crude oil, that was built -- well, we'll show -- well, in the United States here in North Dakota. This is my tribal homeland here, Turtle Mountain, which is close to the Canadian border, the 49th parallel. That tiny, teeny little rectangle. And then the Standing Rock Reservation, which was the Lakota people or is the Lakota people, their reservation is south here between, like, North Dakota and then South Dakota it runs into, which of course we didn't recognize borders when -- you know. But anyhow, so the pipeline began here up in North Dakota, and it was to continue down and across the land, tribal land for the Standing Rock, through the underwater of the Missouri River and also through the sacred burial lands of the Lakota people living here. And here's some [inaudible] you can see. This is all on Lakota territory, which you may know it as Sioux, but Lakota is how they refer to themselves. Anyhow, so this is the land -- let me just go back to show you this is how the land looked. You know, it's very pristine, very beautiful, very untouched. A lot of plant medicines. The beautiful water, of course. And this map I just want to include because I think it's important to show just this amount of leaks and damage that pipelines do. And we're talking oil pipelines, natural gas pipelines. Any kind of pipeline that's in the United States right now, they typically leak. We just don't hear about these leaks. But this map just gives you an example of some leaks from 1986 to 2014. Just the incidents, fatalities, damage that they've caused. So just thinking of all these leaks, we know that, you know, the water, the plants, this gets into the ground. But not just where oil belongs. It gets deep down underground. This is water. This gets into, you know, our food, our water, everything. These are chemicals. So this is just important to remember, and this is why I feel it's so important to fight for our planet and for the land and the water. So this -- so Standing Rock, the camp itself began in April of 2016 when just, you know, people that live there that are Lakota that this -- on their land they just put their teepee up, and a couple people came. And they just decided to camp here in the way of the equipment because this is their land. There was never an environmental impact statement done. There was never any sort of study done that should have been done to make sure -- to see what would happen with this pipeline if there were leaks. And that's something that's always supposed to be done, but that was not done. This pipeline was pushed through by the company, and it was just -- you know, there was nothing done to see the ramifications or, you know, the problems that it would cause. So as I said, the camp was set up by the people living here and said, you know, we want to protect our water. The water. Because this isn't just their water, the Lakota people. This is everyone's water. This feeds into the Missouri River, which is something that everyone downstream is affected by. So the camp just began as a small, little, you know, spread word of mouth, social media, Facebook. You know, those type of things. People kind of just -- it grew bigger and bigger. As you can see here, more people came. But then I -- that's when I started learning about it, in June of 2016. So a couple months after it started, that's when I was aware of it. And I was really surprised that there was not more about it in mainstream media, that more people didn't know what was going on about this. I'd just see things through Facebook and Twitter, but I didn't really see much about it elsewhere. So I just felt, you know, this need to do something. Like I needed to be there. But it started to become more militarized in September of 2016. The oil company hired a security company, and they -- police became involved, and it became a much more militarized presence, as you can see here. And it was just very much more violent to be there. And it wasn't any violence by the Native peoples. Because I want to

make sure I mention this. Let me go back here to this slide. The feather that you see at the beginning that you see her holding, that eagle feather is a sign of peace and a sign -- it's a very sacred symbol to Indigenous peoples. Many tribal nations. Certainly to mine, to Lakota. It is a sign that we are here in peace. It's very -- you know, it means very much to us. Just to see that symbol, you know, that was our sign we are not here -- we have no weapons. We have nothing but ourselves, and we are going to protect our water. So I just want to make sure that that's always very important. The most violent thing people -- Native, the Indigenous people did was to chain themselves to the equipment so that the equipment could not be used that day. Again, trying to stall so that they could make sure people were aware of this so we could get some kind of a, you know, study done on this pipeline. So here in D.C., where I live in the D.C. area there were marches. And I was able to take part in them, which I was very fortunate to do. And I brought my son who was eight at the time, Sam, who I was very fortunate and he was very fortunate to be able to come, you know, to be part of that. Because, you know, if he -- it's important, you know, for young people, I think. You know, your voice is important. One -- I wrote this book as one voice. I never in a million years thought that this one voice would make such a big difference. But it does and it can and I promise you. So please don't ever be afraid to speak up and out because your voice is very important. So Standing Rock and the winter came. And, you know, they were still there. The camp's just growing and growing. People from all the tribal nations came. There was representation, as you can see by the flags, from every tribal nation. My tribal nation was there. People from around the world came, Indigenous peoples. The camp actually had to break into three separate camps because it became so large. And as I mentioned, being the women are the protectors of the water, this picture here is a very good example of that. You know, these women are the matriarchs of the water, of the [inaudible] people. And I just want to make sure I point out one person in particular here is this one, LaDonna Braveheart Allard. She just passed away this week. Sorry to be so emotional, but it's really -- she started this camp. It started on her land because her ancestors' sacred burial -- that was the burial grounds of her ancestors. And she is an incredible woman, and I would love to share you some [inaudible] of her at the end because it's important to remember her, I feel. She's so important. And I'm sorry. But she just passed away, like I said, and it's just so hard. It's been very hard for many people because she means so much to us. So please forgive me. But I will go on to say now the Tipi Camp. This was something that was another camp that came. Another -- more people that came to D.C., and this was in March of 2017. And this was many people from Standing Rock who I knew and met through social media and became very good friends with and still am today. I'm very close to so many of them. And they came here and set up camp at the Washington Monument for a couple -- for the weekend. I think it was, like, three or four days. And so I was so fortunate to be able to go, and I met many people that I just love. And we were able to march through the streets of downtown Washington, D.C. with the pipeline here, as you can see the replication of the black snake. And it's just a wonderful opportunity again for me to be able to be a part of just something and to take my son again to be a part of something so important. So what's going on with the pipeline now? Well, it's just been in the news a lot. Right now there was just recently another youth run. Because the youth are very, very important to Standing Rock and this movement. Again, how young people are so important. They ran from Standing Rock to D.C. just this past week to draw attention again to the pipeline so that hopefully the Biden administration will consider canceling this pipeline. Because one

thing that's happened since the Biden administration took over in this past January is they did cancel the Keystone Pipeline, which is a huge win for all of us to have this pipeline canceled. And so we're hopeful that the Dakota Access Pipeline will also be canceled. Right now it just passed a law. It was ruled that the pipeline must be emptied while the statement was being prepared. So that's a really -- was a good sign because typically pipelines are filled with oil even while they're building it. They just keep filling it as they build. So, you know, there's leaks out of the pipeline as it's being built. So this was a really great sign, and it's just keeping hope that the pipeline will be canceled. So now with all that being said, let's read We Are Water Protectors. And I just want to show you the example of the eagle feather or the feather here being so important. This is something that was always seen. And always held by women as well, the matriarchs. So I just wanted to call attention to that. Water is the first medicine, Nokomis told me. We come from water. It nourished us inside our mother's body. As it nourishes us here on Mother Earth. Water is sacred, she said. We stand with our songs and our drums. We are still here. The river's rhythm runs through my veins. Runs through my people's veins. My people talk of a black snake that will destroy the land. Spoil the water. Poison plants and animals. Wreck everything in its path. When my people first spoke of a black snake, they foretold that it wouldn't come for many, many years. Now the black snake is here. Its venom burns the land. Courses through the water, making it unfit to drink. Take courage! I must keep the black snake away from my village's water. I must rally my people together. To stand for the water. To stand for the land. To stand as one against the black snake. We stand with our songs and our drums. We are still here. It will not be easy. We fight for those who cannot fight for themselves. The winged ones. The crawling ones. The four-legged. The two-legged. The plants, trees, rivers, lakes. The Earth. We are all related. Tears like mini waterfalls stream down. Tracks down my face. Tracks down my people's faces. Water has its own spirit, Nokomis told me. Water is alive. Water remembers our ancestors who came before us, she said. We stand with our songs and our drums. We are still here. We are stewards of the Earth. Our spirits have not been broken. We are water protectors. We stand! The black snake is in for the fight of its life. And now I would just love to take the Earth Steward and Water Protector Pledge with you. If you would like to join along, we're going to recite and you can join along. I will do my best to honor Mother Earth and all its living beings, including the water and land.

>> I will always remember to treat the Earth as I would like to be treated.

>> I will treat the winged ones, the crawling ones, the four-legged, the two-legged, the plants, trees, rivers, lakes, the Earth with kindness and respect.

>> I pledge to make this world a better place by being a steward of the Earth and a protector of the water.

>> Thank you so much, Carole, for sharing your story and reading to us today. It was really special. And we're excited to follow up with a couple more questions. So at the very beginning you talked about your illustrator, Michaela. And we know that during the publication process sometimes our authors and illustrators don't get to talk to each other. Sometimes they don't even meet. And we were wondering if you could tell us a little bit about whether you had a

relationship with Michaela before this or how you guys communicated during the process, if you got to.

>> Yes. Thank you. That's a good question. You're right. Exactly. Typically the author and illustrator are not, you know, allowed to talk because they're afraid of the influence that the author may have on the illustrator, which totally makes sense. But in this case, you know, Michaela and I had not met before the book, so I did not know her then. But I knew we needed to talk because, you know, it was that there were a lot of cultural elements from -- like I'm -- Michaela's Tlingit. And since we're completely different, there's just a lot of differences about us, I just knew -- we both knew that we needed to talk. So we sent each other a message via Messenger and said we should probably talk, you know. And so we did. We talked a few times. And it was just mostly me sending her information about my tribal -- you know, just cultural things and whatnot so she could have some more of an idea about the culture, my culture. And then later on we told the publisher, oh, by the way, we were talking way back when. And she was like, Oh, that's so great. I was hoping because I was going to put you guys in touch. And we just said, well, it doesn't make sense for us not to. And, you know, she knew that I wasn't going to influence Michaela, and there was never any of that sort of thing. It was just here is more information about who we are and who I am so that she could make it more richer and just give it all the depth I think that it has, so. But we're good friends now. I just love her.

>> No, that's so cool. When your publisher was looking for an illustrator, was there any consideration of picking an illustrator with an Indigenous background? I know that you talked about you guys communicating about your different cultures and traditions, but was that a consideration?

>> Well, I just knew when the book -- when Roaring Brook wanted to publish it that I wanted an Indigenous illustrator. Had to be a Native person because they -- they just don't -- I think you need to have that connection. I just thought especially for this story being so related to, you know, the movement of Native people. But I also -- for me it's important the more books that I do that I bring up more Native illustrators and help them because I feel there's not a lot of them. And even Michaela says, I can't do all these illustrations. You know, and so, yes, it's important to, I think -- where there's more coming, which I love to see. But yeah, at first it was the illustration was -- the publisher had not thought about watercolor, which I thought was interesting. And I don't know why I didn't either. So the first few people that they brought to my attention I was like, no. I don't know. But watercolor makes so much sense. Like, a no-brainer. Yeah.

>> No, that's such a cool fact. Thank you for bringing that up. That's very cool.

>> Actually, to follow up on that, Geraldine has a question from the chat. What was your favorite thing about working with the illustrator?

>> Oh, boy. Favorite thing. I -- she is so talented. I just think watching and seeing what she does. And I just -- you know, I think there's some fear sometimes, especially with new authors,

that they have to leave all these illustration notes for the illustrator, you know, and to do this. And that's -- you know, illustrators don't like that. They want -- this is their -- this is their baby too. This is my book. This is our book. And so I think that to me one of the most just glorious things of doing picture books is seeing the way the illustrator interprets the words. To me, that's just -- I -- please. Do everything that you can do. And so I love that part of it. Because, you know, I think the worst thing to do is to try to tie their hands and [inaudible] illustrator by agreement and all these constraints of this and that because that is so not fair to them. Again, this is their book, too, so they get a chance, and they should be able to imagine whatever they imagine it to be. So that's so important. And I loved that about what Michaela -- just seeing how her illustrations took -- you know, how my words came to life with, you know, her illustrations. That is so wonderful. Good question. I got a long-winded answer.

>> Thank you for answering that wonderful question.

Thank you, Geraldine, for asking the question.

Now, both you and Michaela have focused your efforts in writing and illustrating children's books about Indigenous tribes protecting Mother Earth and the fight against the oil pipelines. Is this story in the book a reflection of your own tribal homeland?

>> That is an interesting question. I -- wow. I don't even know how to answer this. I think I might cry. You know, again. I -- first of all, I just want to mention that my mother, she grew up in Trenton, North Dakota, which it was near Williston. And where I showed you where Turtle Mountain was, that's more closer to Minot. There was a satellite reservation back when my mother was young, and it was over by Williston. So I was -- I basically [inaudible] my relatives and so forth, but I've never been to the Turtle Mountains before. I think -- and I plan to. I think that it's in me. You know, I just feel like -- you know, I don't know how to say it other than I feel like it's just part of me, and it just comes out. And when I read more and more stories about other Indigenous peoples, it just feels more and more -- I don't know -- like I know who I am now. I'm telling you it's taken me 56 years to really figure out who I am because my mother -- my grandmother was forced into Indian boarding school. And so my mother, there was a lot of shame when my mother was growing up and who we were, you know, and I didn't know who I was. And I'd ask my mom, well, who are we? Like, you say we're Ojibwe, we're Metis, but what does that mean? You know, my mom said I don't know. That's just who we are. I mean, I knew who she was. She was just full on. You couldn't look at her and not know. But I think because of the shame of that it was just better to hide, you know. And so for a long time I did, you know? And I was very ashamed of who I was. And I was married before, and I used to get called all kinds of terrible names by my first husband and other people, too, and so it was a big part of my life and it still is. I think that I'm just now starting to accept and be proud of who I am. But I think it's always been inside of me and part of me; I just didn't know it. And now I'm able to get it out. God, that was probably a lot of stuff to say. I do talk a lot, as you can see [laughter]. But another good question. Thank you.



>> Your story and your book is so inspiring, and I'm sure a lot of the kids can feel that power and empowerment by reading all of the letters in the book. So as you mentioned before, in your community women are water protectors. Are there any similarities and differences in the way other communities see water protectors?

>> I don't think so. I think we all pretty much -- you know, because we're -- our communities, you know, all Indigenous peoples are land-based, so connected to the Earth and the planet. And it's just, you know, since time immemorial, it's been a part of us and that connection has just always been there. So I just think that when you're Indigenous to the planet, to the Earth, it's just a nature -- a natural thing to protect or want to protect the environment. And yeah, so I think it's just a natural thing. It seems to be anyway, from my experiences of Indigenous peoples throughout, you know, other countries as well. Good question.

>> And we have one follow-up question on that from the chat. One of our colleagues is curious to know if you have lived on or grown up on a tribal land and if you would like to share any experience based on that.

>> If I what? I'm sorry. I missed that one phrase.

>> If you have lived on or grew up on a tribal land.

>> Oh. Yeah. No, I have not lived in a tribal [inaudible] reservation or in a tribal community. No. Uh-uh. I'm an urban Indian.

[ Laughter ]

>> First I want to say thank you so much for sharing so much of your heart with us. And I do think that that comes out on the pages of your book. My daughter and I have read your book a ton. It was on heavy rotation for a while and was -- it still is a favorite of hers. The first reading was really magical. It inspired so many questions in her. And one thing that really drew her in was your metaphor of the black snake. She talked for I'm going to say hours about this black snake. And I'm wondering if you can speak a little bit first off about metaphor and how you used it, and then also we're wondering what inspired the snake as the metaphor.

>> Oh. That's a good question. And very -- yes. Oh, well, metaphor. I love to use metaphor, especially for children. Excuse me. I'm sorry. Because I think that you can -- well, let me just really quickly back up and just preface this by saying I spoke to a parent prior to the book coming out. And we were talking about this story, and she was, you know, a doctor. She was an entomologist, so a bug -- she studied bugs. So a doctor, and so she was very highly educated. But when I told her I was writing a picture book about this topic she said how can you do that? How can you tell something so big? And, you know, I don't -- how do you, you know? And I just thought, well, that's easy. You see. You see this big heavy stuff that's out there. But you have to be able to make it accessible to younger people. And that's what all these wonderful, amazingly talented picture-book and young people's authors are able to do by metaphor. I think there's a

lot of it because some of these subjects are so very heavy and very hard to talk about and very difficult to talk about. But I think being able to use metaphor to introduce these type of things, like a black snake. Now, this actually was a prophecy. It is an Ojibwe prophecy. It was prophesized by the Ojibwe people that a black snake would come to destroy the land. And that is absolutely true, that it was prophesized by seven -- it's called the Seven Fires Prophecy. And that was another bit of what you can see and Michaela did so amazingly in the book. Like, and I didn't even know these things until I looked harder. But if I can find the photo. But this Seven Fires Prophecy is the prophecy that a black snake will come to destroy the land, and she showed that. And I can't show you that picture where she shows the fire and the people sitting around, but she shows the seven -- oh, here they are. You know, this is -- she's showing the seven. You know, the ancestors that came to tell about this prophesy. And it was something that we believe. And this prophecy said that there would be -- that one day a choice would have to be made. The people would have to choose one of two paths. There would be a path of a more natural path where the land and the water and the environment and the plants and everything is considered, or this other path, which is more -- I don't want to say technology in a bad way because of course technology is good in many ways, like now, and we need it, but there has to be a balance. And so this prophecy said that more people -- this path here would become more the path that was taken. And that's kind of what's happened and that's where the pipeline -- and then the pipeline, this black snake, would come to destroy the land. And that my people, the Lakota people, and many tribal people also believe in this prophecy. And when the black snake -- when the pipeline's being full of black oil, that was just to us the prophecy fulfilled because that's what it's doing is destroying the land. It's destroying water. It's destroying so many things. Environment. Everything. You know, it's just -- ah! So that is what we -- that was a prophecy that was actually a true prophecy that was told many years ago, and it was based on, you know, what we interpreted to be as the pipeline. I hope that helps and answered the question.

>> That's very interesting to know. Thank you. I think that Hannah has a question that would probably follow up pretty well on this, so I'll pass over to Hannah.

>> Yeah. So we heard you speak about the role of young people's voices in the protest movement, and with the Dakota Pipeline we saw some photos of you and your son at the protest in D.C. And we're wondering if you can offer some advice to our young people looking to get involved in becoming water protectors themselves.

>> Well, I already consider them water protectors if they've taken the pledge, so they're already one step ahead. But yes, well, I will include a link that has an activity tied to it, which will give -- there's a very -- a lot of information there that can be of some ideas for schools. And, you know, even now the virtual world we're in, there's still things that children, kids can do in schools to raise awareness. And again, [inaudible] like a book. Like, even just your voice and what becomes of it and you just -- you know, by bringing your friends on board with this and just talking about it and raising awareness is so important. And I think, too -- and I always tell kids this when I do school visits -- but I think it's so important -- and I do this -- but just to thank the water that comes out of your tap every day. I mean, I do. I'll turn it on, and I'll just say thank you. Thank you for giving me -- being here for me. Thank you for giving me water to drink. You know,



there's so many people that don't even have clean water and clear water to drink. So just being grateful for it. Or just simple little things that I tell you. Those little things they add up, and they just grow into these -- you know, it's a seed. That teeny little seed just starts to fester, and this water on top of it just grows it even more. So yeah, I think just there's a lot of things. Again, even writing little things or just, you know, writing a poem or -- you know, those things matter. They all matter. They do. They matter to you. And if they matter to you, they matter. They matter to me. And I know they matter to more. They do and they will. Promise.

>> No, thank you so much for that. And you knocked out the next question about, like, how do we continue to do this in a virtual world, and that reminder that really there's so many simple things we can do. And your voice is your most powerful tool, and talking is, you know, a big part of it. So thank you so much for that.

Milagros, next question.

>> Yes. We also have a lot of questions from the audience, and one of the questions is from Angela. She would like to know if you see yourself writing more books about issues facing Native American communities to bring them to the wider audience.

>> I already have. Well, there's three more books coming, so shh so far. I was done. I got to stop. I'm working on the picture books [inaudible], and then I'm working on a really great novel as well about it. It's sort of fantasy, but it's of course got issues in there. You know. But yes. Oh, yeah. I won't stop. I can't stop. I've got -- yeah. I've got to have a lot of more time in the day and more hours in my -- and more years of my life. But I'm not going to stop.

>> We're looking forward to reading those amazing books. And also as you said before, there are a lot of symbols in the book, throughout the book, especially the feather in the book, and the water is so sacred to so many communities. Are there any other symbols that you haven't mentioned before that you would like to talk a little more about?

>> Well, surely. Well, one thing that you probably noticed a lot in the book was the floral elements that were in, like, her dress and, you know, throughout the different floral type of designs like she used on, you know, here the vines and all these type of things. That's really important, too, because Michaela comes from a coastal -- Tlingit, she's a coastal sort of tribe. Her, you know, plants and animals are a lot different from what my people's tribe or my tribe would have come from. You know, we would have had buffalo and animals that were, you know, more land-based, and she would have more sea-based animals. And also as I said, the designs would have been different, the floral. And the Ojibwe people, my people, are also known as the floral beadwork people. So that's just something that we've always used to just decorate and to -- you know, on our clothing. And she -- beadwork isn't something -- or floral beadwork like this, you know, they don't have the same kind of flowers, the same kind of, you know, that my people would have had. So she was not familiar with that type of thing. So she made sure to look at a lot of different kind of beadwork and things to familiarize herself with that sort of stuff. So yeah, there's a lot of similarities but differences. It's interesting, I think. And what else? Let me think.

Oh, another one I want to say is the earrings. The medicine wheel is something that's very important to many Indigenous tribes. A lot of things come in fours. Four is a big important number to us. So the way it's split into the fours here. The four seasons. The four cycles of life. The four medicines that we consider, which is tobacco, which is the asema; something we always offer whenever you take something. Like, say you're foraging for plant medicine and you need to take sweetgrass or sage, you always leave tobacco behind. That's a gift to Creator for taking. You have to give to take. And so asema, or tobacco, is one of our medicines. Cedar, sage, and sweetgrass are the four. So four is very important. And this medicine wheel is just another symbol of that circular -- the circle always being very important too. So I'm sure there's probably more. You know, Michaela sometimes surprises me, and she tells me even things, well, did you see what I did? You know, like, you didn't tell me about that. Turtles, too, being something she included a lot of because Turtle Mountain, which I was so -- you know, I thought was so wonderful of her. So if you look at some of the images, you can see faintly, like, a turtle in the background and stuff. So yeah, just things like that that she sneaks that I think it's so cool when illustrators do things like that. They sneak it in. Good question.

>> Any feedback from children on how this book affected them?

>> Wow. Gosh. You know what? I am absolutely blown away by the way kids -- the things I get from letters and from parents telling me how this book has affected them and how they -- you know, I'm a water protector. Even, like, 18-month-olds, you know? And I think, oh, my word. They just get it. I'm -- it still shocks me and amazes me that it touched so many children in that way. I think one of the most I'm going to say special things that I heard from a parent was the one mother --

[ Inaudible ]

-- did not like to read, does not like books, never wants anything to do with them whenever she took them down. But she said We Are Water Protectors he just always goes to all the time and takes down and wants for her to read. Just think that is -- well, that's the reason why I write. So that means everything to me. I love to -- I love that. I love that it's touched young people this way. And older people, you know. It's not just the young people that get it. You know, I've heard a lot of teachers even telling me that they use it in their, you know, high schools for introducing topics like this, which I think is wonderful. Because there's a lot of things in this book that you could talk about to introduce topics. So yes, it's been very wonderful and moving to hear the effect that it's had on young people and older people as well. Thank you.

>> It was really beautiful hearing the anecdotes. And really, it's so much of you that you share in this book and that you've shared today that makes it so special. And I think that having that foundation for Michaela to work from, really it was like the step up she needed for the Caldecott. And I think it's just -- you guys together really created something so beautiful, so thank you for that. And I will say a personal anecdote. My daughter's number two symbol in the book is the turtle. So she asks about the turtle second to the snake. So it's really -- yeah. It's everything. It's wonderful.

>> Oh. Thank you.

>> Thank you so much for -- [inaudible]. Oh. Thank you so much for joining us today. I know we're out of time. We've had such a wonderful time speaking with you and about We Are Water Protectors. I know I'm feeling inspired, and I'm betting everybody else is as well.

We did want to say for everyone watching that we will have a book discussion about We Are Water Protectors on Wednesday, April 28th at 3:30. So if you want to come and join us, feel free to register online at [nypl.org/events](https://nypl.org/events). We would be delighted to see you there. And that's all we have for today.

Thank you so much again, Carole. Bye, everyone.

>> Thank you. Thank you so much for having me. I had such a wonderful time. Be well, everyone. Take care. Thank you.