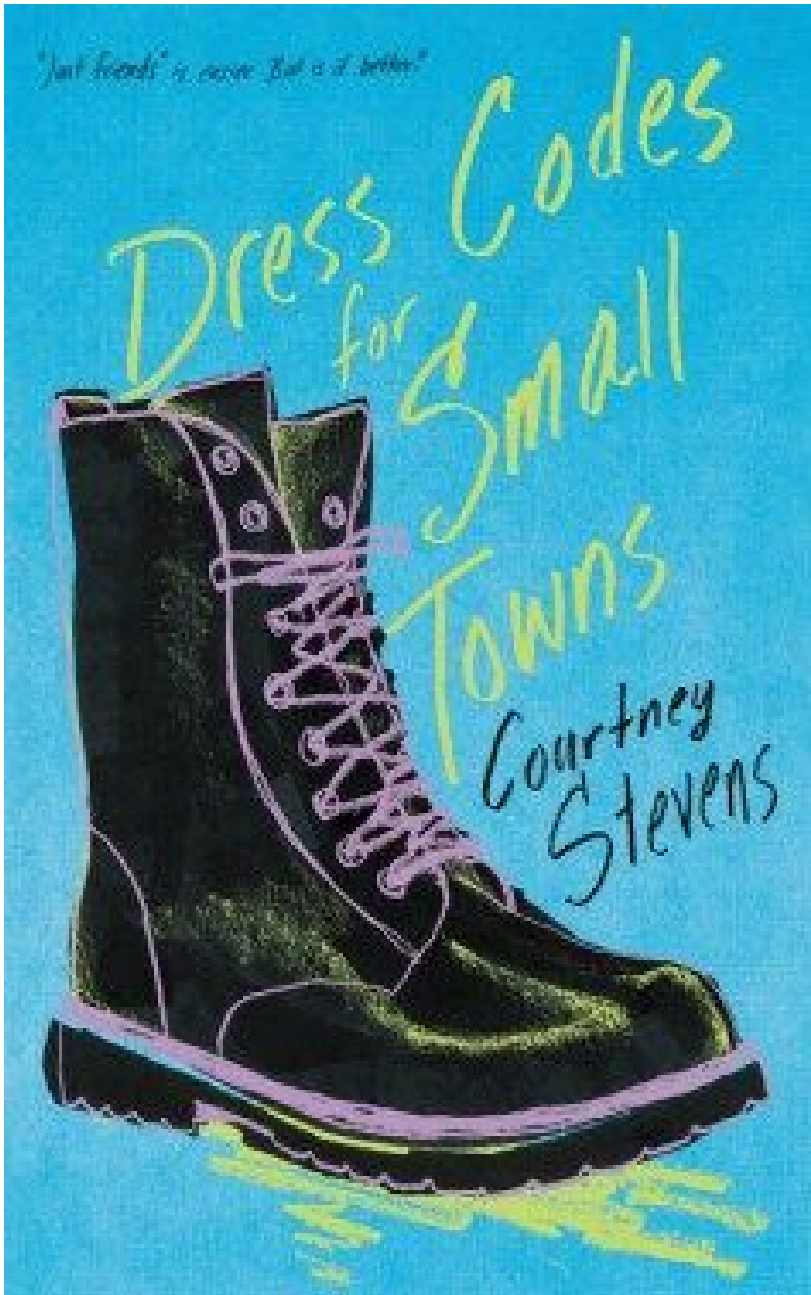


ABE LINCOLN BOOK AWARD

2021 NOMINEE

DRESS CODES FOR SMALL TOWNS

By Courtney C. Stevens



As the tomboy daughter of the town's preacher, Billie McCaffrey has always struggled with fitting the mold of what everyone says she should be. She'd rather wear sweats, build furniture, and get into trouble with her solid group of friends: Woods, Mash, Davey, Fifty, and Janie Lee.

But when Janie Lee confesses to Billie that she's in love with Woods, Billie's filled with a nagging sadness as she realizes that she is also in love with Woods...and maybe with Janie Lee, too.

Always considered "one of the guys," Billie doesn't want anyone slapping a label on her sexuality before she can understand it herself. So she keeps her conflicting feelings to herself, for fear of ruining the group dynamic.

Except it's not just about keeping the peace, it's about understanding love on her

terms—this thing that has always been defined as a boy and a girl falling in love and living happily ever after. For Billie—a box-defying dynamo—it's not that simple.