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**Six Dr. Seuss books won't be published anymore because of racist images**

By Associated Press, adapted by Newsela staff

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Six Dr. Seuss books will no longer be published, according to Doctor Seuss Enterprises. It is the business that preserves and protects the author's legacy. The titles being discontinued include "And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street" and "If I Ran the Zoo."

The company announced on March 2 that the books are being withdrawn from publication. It said this was due to racist and insensitive images in the books.

"These books portray people in ways that are hurtful and wrong," the company told The Associated Press.

The decision was made last year after months of discussion, the company said. Its broader plan is to ensure "Dr. Seuss Enterprises' catalog represents and supports all communities and families."

The other books affected are "McElligot's Pool," "On Beyond Zebra!," "Scrambled Eggs Super!" and "The Cat's Quizzer."

"Dr. Seuss Enterprises listened and took feedback from our audiences," the company said. This included "teachers, academics and specialists in the field." They said they "worked with a panel of experts, including educators, to review our catalog of titles."

**Stereotypical Images Are Offensive**

Any character in a book can be funny, silly, foolish or comical, experts argue. However, when what's laughable about the character is their race, that's wrong. Stereotypes that are harmful and hurtful should not be used.

Even a partial description of the offending images can be hurtful. This includes one example from "And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street." An Asian male is portrayed running around wearing a conical hat, holding chopsticks and eating from a bowl. This image uses stereotypes of people of Asian heritage and is offensive.

Dr. Seuss was born Theodor Seuss Geisel in Springfield, Massachusetts, on March 2, 1904. He died in 1991. His books have been translated into dozens of languages and are sold in more than 100 countries.

He remains popular. Dr. Seuss is adored by millions around the world for the positive values in many of his works. These include environmentalism and acceptance of difference. Criticism has grown in recent years, however, over the way people of color, especially Black and Asian people, are drawn in some of his works. These include his most beloved children's books, as well as in his earlier advertising and political illustrations.

The National Education Association has for several years deemphasized Seuss. School districts across the country have also moved away from Dr. Seuss. This includes Loudon County, Virginia, just outside Washington, D.C. The school district said in a statement, "Research in recent years has revealed strong racial undertones in many books written/illustrated by Dr. Seuss."

**Libraries Rarely Pull Books From Shelves**

The question for the country's libraries is what to do with the Seuss books they have on their shelves that are being withdrawn from publication. This continues a longstanding conflict between the values of free expression and acknowledging that some content may be hurtful. Libraries rarely pull a book even when some find it racist or otherwise offensive, says Deborah Caldwell Stone. She heads the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom.

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“The Cat in the Hat," one of Seuss's most popular books, has received criticism, too, but will continue to be published for now.

Dr. Seuss Enterprises, however, said it is "committed to listening and learning and will continue to review our entire portfolio."

The move to stop the publication of the books drew immediate reaction on social media from some conservatives. They called it another example of "cancel culture." This refers to a practice in which people choose not to support a public figure because they do not approve of their behaviors or actions.

**Other Children's Books Have Been Criticized**

Others approved of the decision.

"The books we share with our children matter. Books shape their worldview and tell them how to relate to the people, places and ideas around them. As grown-ups, we have to examine the worldview we are creating for our children, including carefully re-examining our favorite [books]," said Rebekah Fitzsimmons. She is an assistant teaching professor at Carnegie Mellon University.

Numerous other popular children's series have been criticized in recent years because of concerns about racism.

In the 2007 book, "Should We Burn Babar?," the author and educator Herbert R. Kohl argued that the "Babar the Elephant" books were celebrations of colonialism. Colonialism is when one country takes control over another place, often taking advantage of its people and resources. Historically, colonizers view themselves as the "civilized" people spreading their culture and practices to people in other parts of the world. In "Babar," the title character leaves the jungle and later returns to "civilize" his fellow animals.

And Laura Ingalls Wilder's books, the "Little House" series, have often been faulted. Many have said she depicts racial minorities such as the Osage people, an Indigenous American group, and Black Americans as less than human. The American Library Association removed her name in 2018 from a lifetime achievement award it gives out each year.

* **Using evidence from this text, explain what is wrong with a picture of an Asian male being portrayed running around wearing a conical hat, holding chopsticks and eating from a bowl.**
* **Using evidence from this text, explain how pictures in a kid’s book can be racist.**
* **How did Doctor Seuss Enterprises make their decision to stop publishing these six titles?**
* **What is “cancel culture”?**
* **Does Doctor Seuss Enterprises have the right to decide what to publish?**
* **Why do you think so many people are upset about Doctor Seuss Enterprises discontinuing a few books**?