

Cancel Culture Condemns Dr. Seuss? Distributor Removes 6 Books From Stores

On the celebration of his birthday, Dr. Seuss is trending on Twitter today—but not because of costumed children reading the late author and illustrator's books at school. Instead, Dr. Seuss is trending because of the removal of six Dr. Seuss books from stores' shelves for containing "racist and insensitive imagery."

Today, on Dr. Seuss's Birthday, Dr. Seuss Enterprises celebrates reading and also our mission of supporting all children...

Posted by Dr. Seuss on Tuesday, March 2, 2021

"These books portray people in ways that are hurtful and wrong," Dr. Seuss Enterprises told The Associated Press in a statement.

The condemned books include *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*, *If I Ran the Zoo*, *McElligot's Pool*, *On Beyond Zebra!*, *Scrambled Eggs Super!* and *The Cat's Quizzer*.

"Ceasing sales of these books is only part of our commitment and our broader plan to ensure Dr. Seuss Enterprises' catalog represents and supports all communities and families," the statement read.

Random House Children's Books, Dr. Seuss' publisher, issued a brief statement Tuesday: "We respect the decision of Dr. Seuss Enterprises (DSE) and the work of the panel that reviewed this content last year, and their recommendation."

In response, fans and critics took to social media to share

their thoughts.

Errol Webber, a politician running for California governor, posed a thought-provoking question:

Why wasn't Dr. Seuss racist when Michelle Obama invited him to the White House?

– Errol Webber (@ErrolWebber) March 2, 2021

Political commentator Ben Shapiro credited the “woke book burners” to this development.

To everyone saying it's not happening:

– Joules (@jewleewelp) March 2, 2021

In his #ReadAcrossAmericaDay proclamation Monday evening, Biden omitted any reference to Dr. Seuss or his books, which share the spotlight with the holiday. Both former presidents Donald J. Trump and Barack Obama included such references in their proclamations. In his statement, Obama referred to Dr. Seuss as one of America's most “revered wordsmiths.”

The National Education Association, which founded Read Across America Day in 1998, has limited exposure to certain children's series in the past for alleged racial undertones, AP News reports, including Laura Ingalls Wilder's portrayals of Native Americans in her *Little House On the Prairie* novels and the *Curious George* books.

Not all are concerned with the update to the Dr. Seuss franchise.

Rebekah Fitzsimmons, an assistant teaching professor at Carnegie Mellon University, tweeted:

The books we share with our children matter. Books shape their world view 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 favorites.

– Dr Rebekah Fitzsimmons (@DrFitzPhD) March 2, 2021

Faithwire's Tre Goins Philips proposes an unorthodox reaction to this turn of events, calling for fans and critics alike to know the facts about someone's life before passing judgment.

He highlights Seuss' redemptive testimony: His political cartoons and war bond propaganda during World War II garnered criticism for peddling "xenophobic tropes." As Seuss experienced "profound evolution," his work reflected his change of heart.

But this story, Tre Goins Phillips writes, will be lost to future readers. "By canceling Dr. Seuss we're sending a clear and deeply concerning message: It really doesn't matter if you get it right in the end, because you were wrong in the beginning—and that's all we'll remember of you.

"We should be better. We must extend grace. We have to see nuance and context, because otherwise we are doomed to see people as nothing more than commodities: problems to be erased and hurdles to be shuffled away for the sake of ideological purity." {eoa}

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