

March 11, 2021

Dear Ms. Susan Brandt,

I heard the news that broke out concerning six of the published books by Dr. Seuss being banned, including "If I Ran the Zoo" and even Dr. Seuss' first book, "And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street", because of them containing stereotypical imagery.

It goes without saying, but why do you feel compelled to pull these books from circulation just because they contained what is, on the whole, harmless and insignificant to the whole of the story in which it occurred? I believe you know as well as I do, as do all your devoted readers, that Dr. Seuss' stories, no matter which one they started with, opened children up to worlds of endless imagination thanks to their clever rhyming schemes and eye-catching drawings. By taking away some of the books that he wrote, you're denying them a chance at imagination. You're also denying them a chance to acknowledge and learn from those stereotypes when they encounter such ethnic groups on their own in real life.

I know that the time period we live in now is different than it was before, with more equality being recognized with African Americans and Asian Americans and so forth. But do you think that just taking away those stories, just because of them containing such supposedly hurtful and stereotypical imagery, is going to make things better for everyone, including those minorities, instead of just leaving them alone and letting them judge it for themselves? As with parenting, we can nurture our audiences for so long before we need to just trust them and let them take it from there.

Speaking of which, I'm asking you this because I have a nephew who is close to a year and a half, and so far, my parents - his grandparents - are introducing him to Dr. Seuss through some of his books, like "ABC" and "Hop on Pop". So, already, he's getting a taste of Dr. Seuss's artistry and enjoying it.

If he's curious to explore more of what Dr. Seuss accomplished in this lifetime, then he has so many stories by Dr. Seuss to choose from in his arsenal. Isn't it important to let him have access to all of Dr. Seuss's work instead of just a select few? Not only that, but if Dr. Seuss just meant to entertain and please everyone, then what are you meaning to accomplish by taking some of them away?

Think about it. Does this sound like something that Dr. Seuss himself would have wanted if he was alive to see this?

I feel like the cancel culture has become more and more feverish with each passing month. And if you play a part in it, too, you could be doing more harm than good as far as our country and our freedom of speech are concerned.

Please rethink your decision to pull these books from circulation. Don't ban them altogether. There are still lots of readers out there who admire those books. Besides, some of these books, including those you intend to ban, just spiked up in sales, especially in the New York Times bestsellers list. There's obviously an audience out there who really admires these books and worships them, so to deny anyone a chance at reading them is wrong.

So I ask you another question to think about: whose favor are you doing this for? Dr. Seuss or, perhaps, the wrong people?

Unless you rethink your decisions and leave these six books, Dr. Seuss's creativity, and his legacy unsoiled - and until you give Dr. Seuss' stories, warts and all, and your audiences the respect they deserve - then I won't be buying any of your books anytime soon.

Thank you for your time, and good luck.

Sincerely,

Bryce Chismire