

Université Paris 13 – Sorbonne Paris Cité / Université Paris-Sorbonne  
École Doctorale Érasme – ED493, Equipe d’Accueil Pléiade



Doctorat de recherches  
en Littératures Comparées

## Theodor Geisel Became Self-Actualized by Dr. Seuss

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Thèse présentée et soutenue  
publiquement le 2 mars 2019

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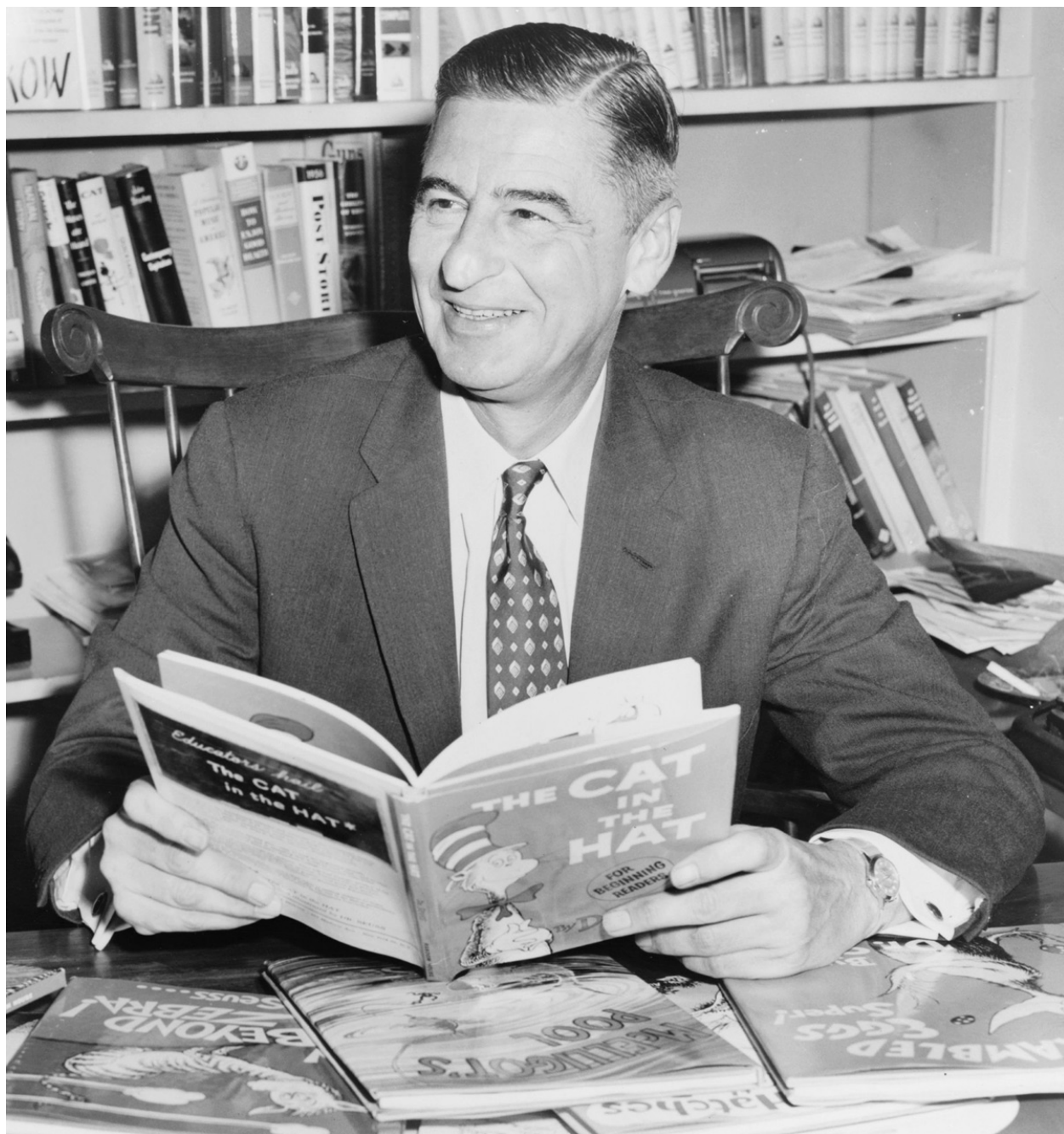


Fig. 1 “Ted Geisel (Dr. Seuss) half-length portrait, seated at desk covered with his books.” *Library of Congress*, 1957, [loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3c16956/](https://loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3c16956/).

## ABSTRACT

Coralee FRIESEN-PRUTZMAN: Theodor Geisel Became Self-Actualized by Dr. Seuss

(Under the direction of Juliette VION-DURY)

The hypothesis of this research is to see if Theodor Seuss Geisel was self-actualized by Dr. Seuss according to Abraham Maslow's theory of hierarchy of needs. This paper looks at the life of Theodor Seuss Geisel, the books he created through his illustrations and writings – his work and impact in the world of children's literature, and the reception of his books by the audience, mainly the Press. Theodor came onto the scene of children's literature when it was not so fashionable to do so. He was a subversive, imaginative, creative, smasher of conventional boundaries individual who kept and cherished the mind of a child, always revering and respecting the little of the littlest; he was a man who spoke on behalf of children to celebrate the intellect of a free child. Through his books, Theodor changed the way children learned to read, changed the way educators and parents thought about their children and most importantly, gave children equality, respect and a place to escape. Theodor was a visionary with avant-garde techniques, reaching the consciousness of mankind as well as touching on social, environmental and political issues of the day and of the future.

A code was created as an instrument from Maslow's work and applied after the writing of the three chapters: biography, books and reception, to see if Theodor was indeed self-actualized as defined by humanist psychology. The code is observable throughout the paper in the form of footnotes which can be described as a weaving of self-actualization through Theodor Seuss Geisel's life, books, and reception. The domain of research for this paper is applicable in three specific areas: (1.) children's literature, (2.) childhood studies, (3.) and educational studies.

**Key Words:** Theodor Seuss Geisel, Dr. Seuss, Abraham Maslow, Random House, Beginner Books, children's literature, childhood studies, educational studies, environmental issues, society, politics, imagination, humor, fantasy, self, subversive, father of children's literature, illustrations, writing, self-actualization, transcendence, Springfield, La Jolla, UCSD.

Cette thèse pose la question de savoir si Theodor Seuss Geisel est parvenu à l'« accomplissement de soi » tel que Abraham Maslow le définit dans sa théorie de la hiérarchisation des besoins humains. Elle étudie pour ce faire la vie de Theodor Geisel, ses textes et ses illustrations, son impact dans le monde de la littérature de jeunesse, et enfin la réception de ses livres, en particulier dans la presse.

Theodor Geisel s'est consacré à la littérature de jeunesse à une époque où il n'était pas si bien porté de le faire. Il était subversif, imaginatif, créatif, outrepassant parfois les bornes établies. Il avait conservé son âme d'enfant, respectant, et même révérent les plus petits. Il parlait au nom des libres enfants pour que soit reconnu et apprécié leur esprit libre.

Au travers de ses livres, Theodor Geisel a changé la manière dont les enfants apprenaient à lire, a changé le regard des parents et des éducateurs sur les enfants, et, surtout, a donné aux enfants l'égalité, le respect et un lieu où se réfugier.

Theodor Geisel était un visionnaire, usant de techniques d'avant-garde pour atteindre la conscience humaine et pour l'alerter sur les questions sociales, politiques et environnementales.

A partir de l'œuvre de Geisel, et après qu'on été rédigés les trois chapitres qui constituent cette thèse (Biographie/Œuvre/Réception), un code a été créé pour démontrer le processus d'accomplissement de soi de l'auteur. Ce code prend la forme de notes infrapaginales.

**Mots-clés :** Theodor Seuss Geisel, Abraham Maslow, Dr. Seuss, Random House, Beginner Books, Littérature de jeunesse, Sciences de l'enfance, Sciences de l'éducation, questions environnementales, société, politique, imagination, humour, fantaisie, soi, subversion, illustrations, écriture, accomplissement de soi, transcendence, Springfield, La Jolla, UCSD.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS & SYMBOLS

### Behaviors Leading to Self-Actualization

- 1-B. Experiencing fully, vividly, selflessly, with full concentration and total absorption.
- 2-B. A process of choices, one after another.
- 3-B. There is a self to be actualized.
- 4-B. When in doubt, be honest rather than not.
- 5-B. Making better choices; to be courageous rather than afraid, take responsibility for listening to inner voice and being honest.
- 6-B. The process of actualizing one's potential; becoming smarter, using one's intelligence.
- 7-B. Transient moments that break off illusions; getting rid of false notions, learning what one is not good at, learning what one's potentialities are *not* – this is discovering also what one is.
- 8-B. Finding out who one is, what one is, what one likes, what one doesn't like, what is good for one and what is bad, where one is going and what is the mission.

### Being "B" Values

- 1-V. Truth: honesty, reality, nakedness, simplicity, richness, essentiality, oughtness, beauty, pure, clean and unadulterated completeness.
- 2-V. Goodness: rightness, desirability, oughtness, justice, benevolence, honesty, we love it, are attracted to it, approve of it.
- 3-V. Beauty: rightness, form, aliveness, simplicity, richness, wholeness, perfection, completion, uniqueness, honesty.
- 4-V. Wholeness: unity, integration, tendency to oneness, interconnectedness, simplicity, organization, structure, order, not dissociated, synergy, homonomous and integrated tendencies.
- 4a-V. Dichotomy-transcendence: acceptance, resolution, integration, or transcendence of dichotomies, polarities, opposites, contradictions, synergy, i.e., transformation of oppositions into unities, of antagonists into collaborating or mutually enhancing partners.

- 5-V. Aliveness: process, not-deadness, spontaneity, self-regulation, full-functioning, changing and yet remaining the same, expressing itself.
- 6-V. Uniqueness: idiosyncrasy, individuality, noncomparability, novelty, quale, suchness, nothing else like it.
- 7-V. Perfection: nothing superfluous, nothing lacking, everything in its right place, unimprovable, just-rightness, just-so-ness, suitability, justice, completeness; nothing beyond; oughtness.
- 7a-V. Necessity: inevitability, it must be *just* that way, not changed in any slightest way, and it is good that it *is* that way.
- 8-V. Completion: ending, finality, justice, it's finished, no more changing of the Gestalt, fulfillment, *finis* and *telos*, nothing missing or lacking; totality, fulfillment of destiny, cessation, climax, consummation closure, death before rebirth, cessation and completion of growth and development.
- 9-V. Justice: fairness, oughtness, suitability, architectonic quality, necessity, inevitability, disinterestedness, nonpartiality.
- 9a-V. Order: lawfulness, rightness, nothing superfluous, perfectly arranged.
- 10-V. Simplicity: honesty, nakedness, essentiality, abstract unmistakably, essential skeletal structure, the heart of the matter, bluntness, only that which is necessary, without ornament, nothing extra or superfluous.
- 11-V. Richness: differentiation, complexity, intricacy, totality, nothing missing or hidden, all there, "nonimportance," i.e., everything is equally important, nothing is unimportant, everything left the way it is, without moving, simplifying, abstracting, rearranging.
- 12-V. Effortlessness: ease; lack of strain, striving, or difficulty; grace: perfect and beautiful functioning.
- 13-V. Playfulness: fun, joy, amusement, gaiety, humor, exuberance, effortlessness.
- 14-V. Self-sufficiency: autonomy, independence, not-needing-any-thing-other-than-itself-in-order-to-be-itself, self-determining, environment-transcendence, separateness, living by its own laws; identity.

## Characteristics of Self-Actualization

### A. Honesty

A-1 Sense of Humor

A-2 Social Interest

A-3 Interpersonal Relations

### B. Awareness

B-1 Efficient Perception of Reality

B-2 Freshness of Appreciation

B-3 Peak Experience

B-4 Ethical Awareness

### C. Freedom

C-1 Detachment

C-2 Creativeness

C-3 Spontaneity

### D. Trust

D-1 Life Mission

D-2 Autonomy

D-3 Acceptance

SA Self-actualization

## RÉSUMÉ DE LA THÈSE

Aux États-Unis, Theodor Geisel n'est pas aussi connu que le Dr. Seuss ; pourtant, il s'agit bien d'une seule et même personne. Demandez à n'importe quelle personne dans la rue si elle connaît le Dr. Seuss, et on vous répondra à tous les coups : « Bien sûr, The Cat in the Hat! ». Le champ de recherche de ce travail s'applique à trois domaines spécifiques : la littérature de jeunesse, les études de l'enfance et les sciences de l'éducation. En ce qui concerne la littérature de jeunesse, Theodor a créé deux genres de livres, bien distincts : d'un côté, de grands livres, pour enfants de tous âges, dont les histoires contiennent une morale racontée de manière humoristique ; et de l'autre, des livres pour lecteurs débutants, ciblant les enfants âgés de 3 à 7 ans, qui apprennent à lire et à aimer la langue anglaise. Apprendre à lire en s'amusant est essentiel dans les livres pour débutants. Theodor les a lui-même appelés "Brats Books" - les livres pour les gosses.

Par rapport au champ de recherche des études de l'enfance, les livres du Dr. Seuss se servent de créatures bizarres et farfelues pour raconter des histoires et transmettre des morales d'une façon particulière, de manière « oblique » ou « side-ways », comme Theodor disait souvent. Dans ces livres, Theodor aborde des thèmes tels que l'individualité, le respect, l'amour-propre, la curiosité, l'imagination, l'acceptation de soi, l'environnement, la cupidité, le capitalisme, le mercantilisme, la dictature, le harcèlement, le contrôle des armements, la race humaine, la collectivité et l'importance des convictions. Il encourage également les enfants à apprendre à penser par soi-même, à s'amuser et à travailler, à voir ce qui est grand et beau chez les autres et à s'encourager les uns les autres, à accepter les autres tels qu'ils sont, ainsi qu'à demander pardon. Ces livres leur montrent les défis de la vie, et leur enseignent que la vie est beaucoup plus facile avec de l'humour, surtout lorsqu'on la partage avec les autres.

Enfin, dans le domaine des sciences de l'éducation, bien que les deux noms de Maslow et du Dr. Seuss fassent souvent l'objet de discussions, ils ne sont cependant que rarement, voire jamais, discutés ensemble. En utilisant la théorie d'Abraham Maslow de la hiérarchie des besoins, et plus spécifiquement l'accomplissement de soi, ou réalisation de soi, et en la combinant avec l'œuvre de Theodor Geisel, sa vie, ses livres et leur réception, apparaissent à la fois des similarités et des thématiques parallèles dans les vies des deux auteurs. Cette recherche

place ainsi deux génies sur une seule et même voie : celle de la découverte de soi.

La question que pose cette recherche est la suivante : Theodor Geisel s'est-il accompli par le Dr. Seuss ? J'avance ainsi l'hypothèse selon laquelle ce serait le cas.

Vivant en France depuis huit ans, et travaillant dans le domaine de l'éducation, j'y ai trouvé dès le début une mentalité différente de celle de la population américaine ; quand je souriais aux personnes dans la rue, presque personne ne me souriait en retour. Je me suis alors demandé, comment cela se fait-il ? Qu'est-ce qui peut affecter une population à ce point ? Où cela commence-t-il ? Éducatrice de formation, et à l'époque directrice d'une école bilingue, j'en tirais la conclusion que la réponse à ces questions était dans le système éducatif, lequel commence tôt en France, dès trois ans.

La philosophie de l'éducation en France (du moins de ce que j'ai pu en observer, en parlant avec d'autres enseignants et directeurs, ainsi qu'en lisant des articles pédagogiques), est que les enfants qui arrivent en classe sont comme vides, et qu'il revient à l'enseignant de les remplir de connaissances. Au Canada et aux États-Unis, la philosophie est exactement l'inverse ; les enfants arrivent avec leurs propres dons et talents, et le rôle de l'enseignant est d'enseigner aux élèves de manière individuelle, en prenant ces compétences en compte, puis, grâce au programme, de guider les élèves dans le parcours éducatif. Si l'on généralise, pour les besoins de la comparaison, cela reviendrait à dire que le système français donne le même programme à chaque élève, et ne laisse que très peu de place à l'individualité.

Quel rapport y a-t-il avec Theodor Geisel et le Dr. Seuss ? Un jour, en rentrant du travail, alors que j'ouvrais le portail de mon jardin, j'ai pensé à un livre écrit par le Dr. Seuss : *The Sneetches*. Ce livre parle d'individualité, du fait d'accepter chaque personne telle qu'elle est, avec ou sans "a star upon thars" (Dr. Seuss, *The Sneetches*), et d'être capable de reconnaître que chaque personne est différente et spéciale. J'ai gardé ce livre dans mon bureau à l'école, avec d'autres livres du Dr. Seuss ; j'ai souvent lu ses livres lors d'assemblées, afin d'encourager les étudiants et l'équipe enseignante à réfléchir sur ses idées.

Lors de chaque réunion pédagogique hebdomadaire, j'essayais toujours d'amener quelque chose de réfléchi et d'instructif pour stimuler les enseignants, afin qu'ils examinent les besoins individuels de leurs élèves, ainsi que les leurs. Un des sujets de discussion était la hiérarchie des besoins d'Abraham Maslow. En haut de la liste des besoins, se trouve l'accomplissement de soi : « le désir d'être de plus en plus ce que l'on est, de devenir tout ce que l'on est capable d'être »

(Maslow, *A Theory* 7). Ceci étant, bien sûr, le désir de tout directeur, de tout enseignant, de tout parent, et l'on peut espérer que c'est également le désir de chaque personne, de devenir tout ce que chacun est censé être : le meilleur de soi-même.

À force d'y penser et d'en parler avec les enseignants et les élèves, je fis soudainement le rapprochement entre le Dr. Seuss et Abraham Maslow. Ce dernier déclarait que seulement 2% des gens deviennent des êtres accomplis (McLeod). J'étais donc curieuse de savoir si Theodor Geisel en faisait partie. J'ai tout de suite su sur quoi ma thèse allait porter : est-ce que Theodor Geisel s'est accompli par le Dr. Seuss ?

Dr. Seuss est un nom familier pour la plupart des Américains ; Theodor Geisel reste relativement inconnu, alors qu'ils ne font qu'un. Malgré cela, ils sont une véritable dichotomie. Les livres publiés sur lui sont principalement de nature biographique : *Dr. Seuss*, 1988, de Ruth K. Macdonald ; *The Birth of Dr. Seuss*, 1994, d'Adam Lipsius ; *The Man Who Was Dr. Seuss*, 2000, de Thomas Fensch ; *The Seuss The Whole Seuss And Nothing But the Seuss, A Visual Biography of Theodor Seuss Geisel*, 2002, de Charles D. Cohen ; *Theodor Seuss Geisel*, 2010, de Donald E. Pease ; *Dr. Seuss & Mr. Geisel*, 1995, la biographie la plus détaillée, écrite par Judith et Neil Morgan, amis proches de Theodor ; et un livre pour enfants, *Dr. Seuss*, 2015, de Deborah Grahame-Smith.

En 1999, Richard H. Minear a écrit un livre portant sur les caricatures éditoriales de Theodor durant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale : *Dr. Seuss Goes to War*. Ce livre offre un regard différent sur l'auteur de livres pour enfants ; celui d'un homme qui a mis de côté l'écriture des « livres pour les gosses » pour un temps, afin de se concentrer sur la politique américaine. Ce livre révèle les convictions profondes de Theodor Geisel. Des années plus tard, un grand nombre des personnages des caricatures éditoriales reviennent dans ses livres pour enfants. Philip Nel, qui a écrit *Dr. Seuss : American Icon*, 2005, décrit la façon dont Theodor est devenu un nom de famille, et comment sa carrière toute entière – à partir de ses illustrations, caricatures, de sa poésie, de ses publicités, vues sur la politique et la société, jusqu'à ses livres pour enfants – a établi le Dr. Seuss comme une figure emblématique dans la culture et l'histoire américaine.

Dans le *Life Magazine* du 24 mai 1954, dont la couverture titrait « Pourquoi mon enfant n'arrive pas à lire », John Hersey écrivit un article intitulé « Pourquoi les étudiants bloquent sur le premier R ? », citant le Dr. Seuss et d'autres auteurs, et les défiant d'agir contre l'illettrisme. L'année suivante, Rudolf Flesch écrivit un livre, *Why Johnny Can't Read*, expliquant en détails

pourquoi les enfants n'arrivent pas à lire. L'inquiétude exprimée par Hersey et son défi lancé aux auteurs, ainsi que l'explication de Flesch dans son livre sur la manière dont les enfants peuvent mieux apprendre à lire, donnèrent à Theodor une idée plus claire de la façon de créer et construire ses livres.

En 1972, Selma G. Lanes, dans son livre *Down the Rabbit Hole*, écrivait à propos du Dr. Seuss : "Seuss for the Goose Is Seuss for the Gander", expliquant ainsi son style d'écriture et son impact dans la littérature de jeunesse. Un peu plus d'une décennie plus tard, en 1983, Jonathan Cott écrivait *Pipers at the Gates of Dawn*, un livre examinant six auteurs influents pour enfants, l'un d'entre eux étant le Dr. Seuss. Dans le premier chapitre, intitulé "The Good Dr. Seuss", Cott explore brièvement l'histoire de la littérature de jeunesse, et en particulier un petit livre écrit en 1744, *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book*, de John Newberry, livre qui se distingue des autres de l'époque par son caractère fantastique. Cott compare ensuite Newbery au Dr. Seuss, les deux auteurs offrant aux enfants quelque chose de différent à lire, écrivant sur l'imagination, l'alphabet et les différentes manières d'apprendre à lire. S'appuyant sur des livres spécifiques du Dr. Seuss, Cott étudie de manière approfondie le style de ses illustrations et de son écriture. Un an plus tard, en 1984, l'auteur, éditeur, intellectuel et personnalité télévisuelle Clifton Fadiman écrivait *The World Treasury of Children's Literature*, énumérant des auteurs de littérature de jeunesse connus puis retranscrivant, pour chacun, une de ses histoires qui a contribué à la littérature de jeunesse. Dans le deuxième tome, le Dr. Seuss est décrit comme n'étant pas vraiment un « docteur », mais plutôt un homme qui écrit « des histoires drôles et rêve d'étranges animaux du haut d'une grande tour de guet réaménagée, sur la plus haute colline de La Jolla en Californie », suivi de l'histoire *And To Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street*.

De nombreux articles de journaux et de magazines furent écrits sur Theodor de son vivant : sur sa vie qu'il gardait très privée, sur sa maison dans *Architectural Digest*, mais surtout à propos de ses livres et de son style d'écriture. Dès 1957, puis en 1965 et enfin en 1977, le *Saturday Evening Post* consacra des interviews à Theodor; il y eût d'autres articles sur lui dans le *Saturday Evening Post*, mais ces trois interviews étaient planifiées, tous les dix ans, afin d'observer le progrès de ce célèbre auteur. Chaque interview examinait en profondeur une période de sa vie ; la première fût consacrée à ses débuts, "the Wonderful World of Dr. Seuss", la deuxième, à comment il en était arrivé là, "What Am I Doing Here?", et la dernière, "Dr. Seuss's at 72 - Going Like 60", à sa destination. Thomas Fensch, dans son livre *Of Sneetches and Whos*



*and the Good Dr. Seuss, Essays on the Writings and Life of Theodor Geisel*, compila, ainsi que le suggère le titre, une collection d'articles écrits sur Theodor Geisel et le Dr. Seuss, entre 1959 et 1991. Aujourd'hui encore, Theodor Geisel continue d'être dans l'actualité, notamment en tant que référence dans le domaine politique, et incontestablement comme référence dans la sphère de la littérature de jeunesse et de l'éducation.

Cette recherche rassemble deux hommes célèbres sur le chemin de la découverte, l'auteur, Theodor Geisel, et le psychologue Abraham Maslow. Le Dr. Seuss est connu pour être le père de la littérature de jeunesse aux Etats-Unis, et ses livres continuent d'être des *best-sellers*. Maslow est toujours d'actualité dans les domaines de l'éducation et de la psychologie ; sa théorie de la hiérarchie des besoins et de l'accomplissement de soi a résisté à l'épreuve du temps, et fait partie intégrante des recherches et des conversations sur le sujet à ce jour. L'attention sera portée principalement sur Theodor Geisel, sa vie, ses œuvres de littérature de jeunesse et leur réception. La définition de Maslow de l'accomplissement de soi, ainsi que les outils conceptuels qu'il utilise pour mesurer cette croissance personnelle, sont décrits dans son livre *Motivation and Personality* (1954). À partir de ses recherches, j'ai proposé un outil qui permettra d'estimer si les concepts de Maslow sont applicables à Theodor Geisel dans les trois domaines suivants : sa vie, son œuvre et sa réception ; et ceci dans le but de vérifier l'hypothèse selon laquelle Theodor Geisel est devenu un être accompli par la création littéraire et artistique.

Étant déjà familière avec quelques-uns des livres du Dr. Seuss, il me fallait alors connaître l'homme qui se cachait derrière le Dr. Seuss, Theodor Geisel. Les recherches sur internet ont été le point de départ de cette étude. J'ai ensuite fait une liste des livres écrits et illustrés par le Dr. Seuss, vérifié ceux que j'avais déjà dans ma bibliothèque personnelle, et commandé dans le monde entier les livres qui me manquaient, les faisant livrer chez moi en France afin de compléter ma collection.

L'étape suivante fut un voyage à La Jolla en Californie, la résidence de Theodor. De là, je suis allée à USCD, University of California San Diego, pour y commencer mes recherches. La bibliothèque Geisel contient la plupart des œuvres de Theodor Geisel, dans le rayon Section Speciale. J'y ai passé une semaine, munie de gants blancs, examinant des fichiers, des articles de journaux, et autres archives méticuleusement identifiées, classées et stockées de manière sécurisée. Les photocopies étaient interdites, seul un ordinateur permettait de taper les résultats des recherches.

Cinq mois plus tard, j'effectuais un second voyage aux États-Unis. Je me rendis d'abord dans sa ville natale, Springfield, dans le Massachusetts, où j'ai pu visiter le Musée de Springfield, qui présente une exposition sur la vie du Dr. Seuss ainsi qu'une bibliothèque d'archives ; puis je suis partie en direction de sa maison, à Fairfield Street. Ensuite, il m'a fallu faire trois heures de route plus au nord, jusqu'à Dartmouth College, pour pouvoir examiner des archives spécifiques : les dessins originaux de son premier livre, des éditions originales du magazine *Jack-O-Lantern*, et d'autres matériaux connexes ; cette fois-ci, les photos étaient autorisées. Enfin, je suis retournée à La Jolla en Californie, afin d'approfondir mes recherches à UCSD. Le fait marquant de ce voyage et de cette recherche fut ma rencontre avec Audrey Geisel, la seconde épouse de Theodor Geisel, dans leur maison, la Tour. J'ai pu voir d'où Theodor écrivait et illustrait ses livres ; les capes, robes et toques de ses doctorats honorifiques ; ses peintures originales ; la vue de l'Océan Pacifique depuis son bureau, dont on dit qu'elle l'a inspiré ; le « Cat in the Hat » gravé sur la porte d'entrée ; tout en prenant un verre de vin avec sa charmante épouse.

Le travail d'écriture commença avec beaucoup de recherches à reprendre, et des milliers d'idées qui me passaient par la tête. J'ai décidé de rédiger en trois parties :

1. La vie de Theodor Geisel – Biographie : connaître sa vie, ses influences, les événements personnels de sa vie, les personnes proches de lui, et d'autres faits intéressants et pertinents qui donneront une meilleure idée de la personne qu'il était. En travaillant sur la biographie, il m'a fallu commander des livres afin de pouvoir m'en servir comme références ; j'ai également référencé des articles de journaux en ligne, des communiqués de presse, des sites internet spécialisés ainsi que les résultats de mes séjours de recherches. Le livre biographique le plus complet est celui écrit par les Morgan, amis de Theodor : J. & Morgan, N. (1995), *Dr. Seuss & Mr. Geisel*.

2. Les livres du Dr. Seuss : 47 livres, qu'il a écrits et illustrés. J'ai rédigé un synopsis pour chaque histoire, puis décrit sa signification, et enfin donné mon interprétation sur la façon dont chaque livre relève du processus d'accomplissement de soi. En lisant les livres du Dr. Seuss, je pris un réel plaisir à percevoir ce qui était important pour Theodor Geisel, ce qu'il appréciait et estimait, et la manière dont il l'a présenté à son public.

3. La réception de son œuvre - surtout par la presse : en cherchant dans des articles de journaux datant de 1929 à nos jours, j'ai sélectionné des extraits d'articles afin de déterminer d'une part, ce que ses lecteurs et le public en général pensaient de cet homme ; d'autre part, à

partir de leurs commentaires et observations, s'ils le percevaient comme un être accompli. Il s'agissait également de répondre à la question de Maslow : « À quel point pouvons-nous croître, qu'est-ce qu'un être humain peut devenir ? » (Maslow *The Farther Reaches* 42).

Pour vérifier mon hypothèse, « Theodor Geisel s'est-il accompli par le Dr. Seuss ? », il me fallait d'abord acquérir une solide compréhension de la définition de l'accomplissement de soi d'Abraham Maslow. Sa définition comporte trois parties distinctes : en premier lieu, les caractéristiques d'un individu accompli, puis les « valeurs de l'Être » que cet individu recherche, et enfin les comportements qui mènent un individu vers l'accomplissement de soi. À partir de ces éléments, j'ai mis au point un outil de mesure, sous forme d'un code qui sera utilisé tout au long de cette recherche; ce code est disponible dans l'annexe. Une fois les trois chapitres terminés, Biographie, Livres et Réception, j'ai ensuite appliqué cet outil à chaque section, en cherchant à voir si et comment Theodor Geisel s'est accompli par le Dr. Seuss. Les références du codage en rapport à l'accomplissement de soi se trouvent dans les notes de bas de page, avec les remarques qui les relient à la définition de Maslow.

Abraham Maslow est né le 1er avril 1908 à Brooklyn, New York ; il est décédé le 8 juin 1970 à Menlo Park en Californie. Il a fait ses études au City College de New York, puis à l'Université de Wisconsin-Madison, où il a obtenu en 1931 son diplôme de Master de Psychologie. Se concentrant sur le développement psychologique, il a choisi d'étudier des personnes saines plutôt que des patients à l'hôpital, établissant ainsi dans ses recherches une approche psychologique positive. Il a notamment travaillé sur Jane Addams, Frederick Douglas, Albert Einstein, et Eleanor Roosevelt.

Il est surtout connu pour ses recherches sur les différentes étapes du développement de la motivation chez l'être humain, et pour avoir créé la hiérarchie des besoins de Maslow : une théorie présentant la structure de la motivation, et qui hiérarchise les besoins des individus. Cette hiérarchisation commence par les besoins fondamentaux : les besoins physiologiques, le besoin de sécurité, le besoin d'amour et d'appartenance, le besoin d'estime, et culmine avec, au plus haut degré, le besoin de s'accomplir.

Voici une définition plus détaillée de chacun de ces besoins :

1. Les besoins physiologiques - respirer, se nourrir, boire, se loger, se réchauffer, le sexe, le sommeil.

2. Le besoin de sécurité - se protéger des éléments, se sentir en sécurité, l'ordre, la loi, la stabilité, ne pas avoir peur.
3. Le besoin d'amour et d'appartenance - l'amitié, l'intimité, la confiance et le sentiment d'acceptation, recevoir et donner de l'affection et de l'amour. L'appartenance, avoir une place parmi les autres (famille, amis, travail).
4. Le besoin d'estime - l'achèvement, la maîtrise, l'indépendance, le statut, le pouvoir, le prestige, le respect de soi, le respect des autres.
5. Le besoin d'accomplissement - réalisation de son potentiel personnel, épanouissement personnel, quête d'une croissance personnelle et d'expériences paroxystiques (McLeod).

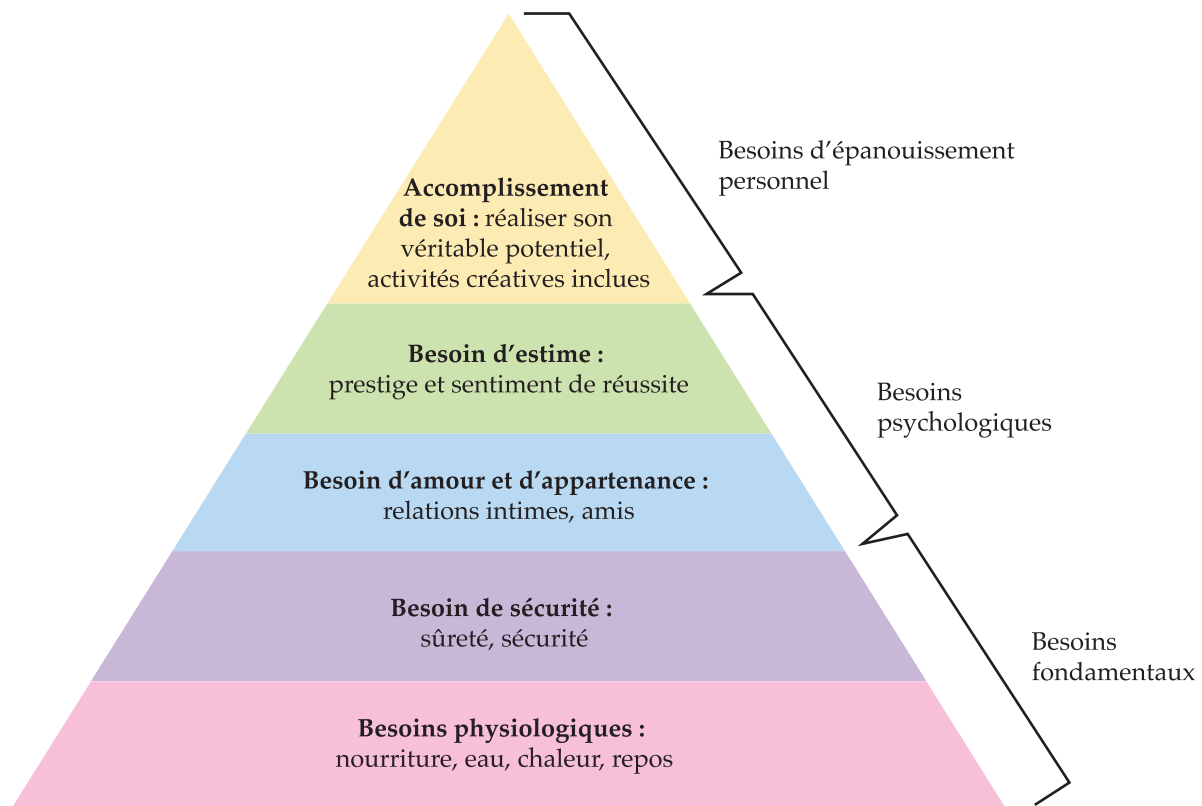


Diagramme 1 : La pyramide des besoins d'après Abraham Maslow

McLeod, Saul. "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs." *Simply Psychology*, 2007; [www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html](http://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html).

Une fois les quatre besoins fondamentaux satisfaits, Maslow était curieux de savoir ce qui motivait les individus à satisfaire le besoin de réalisation de soi, ou « accomplissement de soi » : « Il est vrai que l'homme ne survit qu'avec du pain - quand il n'y a pas de pain. Mais qu'arrive-t-il aux désirs de l'homme quand il y a du pain à foison et que son ventre est constamment rempli ? » (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 38). Il décrit sa théorie de la hiérarchie des besoins dans son livre, *Motivation and Personality*, publié en 1954.

En réalité, il s'avère que le terme d'« accomplissement de soi » a été inventé par Kurt Goldstein ; un juif allemand, neurologue et psychiatre, qui a fui à Amsterdam en 1933 pour échapper aux Nazis. Il a écrit *The Organism*, une approche holistique de la biologie, résultant de données pathologiques chez l'Homme. Ses sujets étaient des patients avec des troubles psychologiques, en particulier des cas de schizophrénie et de traumatismes de guerre. Le terme d'« accomplissement de soi » fut défini pour la première fois dans *The Organism* : « L'organisme possède des potentialités définies, et parce qu'il les a, il a le besoin de les accomplir ou de les réaliser. La réalisation de ces besoins représente l'accomplissement de soi de l'organisme » (Goldstein 168). Goldstein a émigré aux États-Unis en 1935, et est devenu un citoyen américain en 1940 ; il est décédé le 19 septembre 1965 (« Kurt Goldstein (A Biographical Note) »).

Dans le volume 50 de la *Psychological Review*, publié en 1943 (no.4, p.370-396), Maslow publia un article intitulé : « A Theory of Human Motivation », dans lequel il définit l'accomplissement de soi. Bien que ce terme ait été inventé par Kurt Goldstein, comme mentionné précédemment, c'est dans une perspective positive que Maslow le définit, étant donné que ses sujets étaient considérés « sains ». Dans cet article, il précise l'aspect positif de son étude, ainsi que les recherches de ses prédécesseurs sur lesquelles se base son étude :

Cet article constitue une tentative de formulation d'une théorie positive de la motivation... Cette théorie se situe, il me semble, dans la tradition fonctionnaliste de James et Dewey, et se mêle au holisme de Wertheimer, Goldstein, et de la psychologie de la forme, ainsi qu'aux dynamiques de Freud et d'Adler. (Maslow *A Theory* 1)

Selon Abraham Maslow, l'accomplissement de soi se définirait comme :

[...] un désir de réalisation personnelle, c'est-à-dire, la tendance à s'accomplir dans ce qu'[un individu] est potentiellement. Cette propension pourrait être formulée comme le

désir de devenir de plus en plus ce que quelqu'un est, de devenir tout ce dont chacun est capable d'être.

La forme spécifique que prendront ces besoins varie bien sûr d'une personne à l'autre. Chez un individu, ces besoins peuvent apparaître sous la forme du désir d'être une mère idéale, pour un autre ils pourraient s'exprimer de manière athlétique, et chez un autre encore, en peignant des tableaux ou en inventant des choses. Ce n'est pas nécessairement un besoin créatif, bien que pour les personnes dotées de capacités créatives, c'est sous cette forme que le besoin s'exprimera.

La clarté et l'urgence de ces besoins dépendent de la satisfaction préalable des besoins psychologiques, de sécurité, d'amour et d'estime de soi. Nous appellerons les individus qui ont satisfait ces besoins, des individus fondamentalement satisfaits, et c'est à partir d'eux que nous pouvons attendre la créativité la plus complète (et la plus saine). (Maslow *A Theory* 7-8)

Aujourd'hui encore, la théorie de Maslow est un cadre théorique fréquemment utilisé dans de nombreux domaines, notamment l'éducation, la psychologie, le management, et la sociologie. En 1970, Maslow y a ajouté la transcendance, un niveau supérieur à l'accomplissement de soi, qui « se réfère au niveau le plus haut et le plus inclusif ou holistique de la conscience humaine, agir et se comporter en tendant vers la fin plutôt que les moyens, envers soi-même, envers ses proches, envers les êtres humains en général, envers les autres espèces, la nature, et le cosmos » (Maslow *The Farther Reaches* 269).

Le psychologue humaniste Carl Rogers (1902-1987) adhérait à la théorie de Maslow, mais précisait que la réalisation de soi d'un individu nécessite un environnement adéquat ; tout comme une plante a besoin d'eau et de soleil, une personne a besoin d'être entourée par : « la sincérité (la franchise et l'ouverture aux autres), l'acceptation (être vu avec un regard positif inconditionnel), et l'empathie (être écouté et compris) » (McLeod). À ce jour, bien que la théorie de Maslow suscite quelques controverses, personne ne s'y est opposé dans sa totalité ; Maslow reste connu comme le père de l'accomplissement de soi, et c'est la raison pour laquelle sa définition ainsi que ses recherches seront appliquées dans cette étude.

Ci-dessous, se trouve ma présentation synthétique des concepts clés de Maslow, à partir de son œuvre *Motivation and Personality*. Un exemple de résumé des points clés de son œuvre

se trouve également dans une interview d'Abraham Maslow, accordée au Dr. E. L. Shostrum en 1968, en accès libre sur *YouTube* (Psychological Films, produite et éditée par Rob Yould).

Les caractéristiques de l'accomplissement ou réalisation de soi, à savoir l'honnêteté, la conscientisation, la liberté et la confiance sont ici énumérées et explicitées. Chaque catégorie possède des sous-caractéristiques, définissant les points principaux. Un tableau du code ci-dessous se trouve dans l'Annexe.

Caractéristiques de l'accomplissement de soi

#### A. L'HONNETÉTÉ

L'honnêteté consiste à ressentir ses sentiments ; il s'agit d'avoir l'honnêteté de faire confiance à ses sentiments, surtout dans les relations interpersonnelles, que ce soit la colère ou l'amour. La catégorie de l'honnêteté comporte trois sous-caractéristiques : le sens de l'humour, l'intérêt social, et les relations interpersonnelles (Shostrum 2:23-2:49/54:22).

##### A-1 Le sens de l'humour

Il s'agit d'un sens de l'humour inventif et créatif, qui est spontané et ne peut être répété, qui convient à la situation : être capable de rire de la condition humaine, de faire preuve de bonté face à la bêtise, ou face aux situations absurdes de la condition humaine. C'est un sens de l'humour qui ne blesse pas les autres mais leur enseigne quelque chose; en cela, il renvoie à un humour Lincolnien (Shostrum 2:50-3:15/54:22).

Maslow explique que ce sens de l'humour correspondrait à l'humour de l'écrivain Mark Twain, à l'opposé de l'humour d'un humoriste tel que Bob Hope, qui se moque de ce que les gens écrivent ou pensent. Il est donc primordial d'apprendre à faire la différence entre faire de l'humour en blessant les gens, et rire gentiment de la condition humaine. Pour illustrer le fait de se moquer de quelqu'un, Maslow donne l'exemple d'un garçon qui se fait battre avec tout le monde autour de lui en train de rire. À l'inverse, l'humour bon enfant serait, par exemple, de rire lorsque quelqu'un glisse sur une peau de banane, ce qui est quelque chose de spontané, juste amusant et drôle (Shostrum 3:15-5:58/54:22).

## A-2 L'intérêt social

L'intérêt social naît d'un sentiment profond d'identification, de sympathie, et d'affection ; en dépit de la colère, de l'impatience ou du dégoût occasionnels (Shostrum 6:01-6:15/54:22).

Maslow explique que les émotions négatives sont celles qui proviennent surtout de l'hypocrisie, de la fourberie, de la cruauté. En revanche, les individus qui ont une colère réactive, c'est-à-dire qui sont en colère par rapport à une situation, souvent contre la cruauté et la fatuité, ne peuvent s'en défaire ou faire semblant ; c'est ce qu'on appelle l'indignation vertueuse. Un intérêt social est donc un sentiment d'identification à la race humaine, à un grand nombre de personnes, un partage du sentiment d'humanité ; ce sentiment franchit aisément les barrières et frontières sociales, artificielles et triviales, les classes et les systèmes de caste. C'est également une volonté d'aider, le sentiment de devoir faire quelque chose ; tenter de faire quelque chose par compassion, de s'investir. Maslow affirme que tous les individus accomplis avaient une sorte d'engagement altruiste, qui n'était pas purement intéressé. Il s'agit alors de l'identification amoureuse, ou l'amour d'identification, ce qui ne signifie pas un amour romantique mais simplement l'amour pour son prochain. Ces individus sont capables de se mettre en colère et pourtant, d'un autre côté, d'être aimants et d'aider l'humanité ; l'intérêt social représente ce sentiment de communion avec le genre humain. Maslow cite l'exemple de Walt Whitman, qui a eu cette expérience de communion et d'entraide, ainsi que celui d'un homme qui a contribué à l'organisation d'un syndicat, puis en est parti lorsque cela a mal tourné, et est devenu instituteur : voici l'exemple de quelqu'un qui a passé sa vie à essayer d'aider les gens, et qui était prêt à se battre lorsqu'il le fallait (Shostrum 6:15-10:27/54:22).

## A-3 Relations interpersonnelles

Par « relations interpersonnelles », Maslow entend des relations qui sont capables de faire preuve de plus de fusion, d'un plus grand amour, d'une identification plus parfaite, et d'un effacement des limites de l'ego (Shostrum 10:30:50-10:43/54:22).

Maslow indique qu'il existe plusieurs niveaux d'amour : un amour supérieur et un amour inférieur. L'amour supérieur est un amour plus pur, c'est l'admiration de la qualité d'une autre personne, qui elle-même suscite de l'admiration et de l'amour. Il prend comme exemple le fait



d'aimer Abraham Lincoln alors qu'il est mort : c'est un individu qui ne lui a rien donné, n'a rien fait pour lui, pourtant, il suscite de l'admiration ; Maslow en déduit que ce sentiment doit provenir de l'admiration des qualités louables de Lincoln. Au contraire, l'amour inférieur, comme celui de l'adolescence, est un amour dans lequel on cherche la satisfaction des besoins fondamentaux. Cet amour inférieur conduit à un cercle vicieux : plus il y a de recherche de satisfaction, plus il y a de fournisseurs, ce qui mène à plus de clients satisfaits, et donc plus de fournisseurs de narcissisme. Maslow les appelle les consommateurs satisfaits, qui démontrent un niveau d'amour déficient (Shostrum 10:45-13:17/54:22).

## B. LA CONSCIENTISATION

La conscientisation est la capacité à savoir ce qu'il se passe à l'intérieur de soi, et à l'exprimer; pouvoir être conscient du monde dans lequel on vit, pouvoir voir et entendre ; pouvoir être conscient des instants magiques, des expériences paroxystiques qui possèdent une signification particulière (Shostrum 13:18-13:45/54:22).

### B-1 Perception efficace de la réalité

La perception efficace de la réalité signifie vivre dans le monde réel de la nature, et non dans la masse de concepts, d'abstractions, de croyances et de stéréotypes fabriqués par l'homme, que la plupart des gens prennent pour le monde réel (Shostrum 13:45-14:05/54:22).

Maslow indique qu'un individu avec une perception-née peut voir directement, de manière lucide. Cela lui permet de poser un regard plus clairvoyant, de percer à jour les hypocrites, et de ne pas être dupe ni leurré. Cette capacité permet aux individus de formuler un bon jugement, et ce, même sans posséder des preuves formelles ; de pouvoir tirer de bonnes conclusions et de réaliser des prédictions dans la vie. En outre, il s'agit d'être capable de percevoir les différences de couleur, d'avoir un odorat plus précis, une vision plus claire, mais aussi de posséder la faculté de discerner le vrai du faux, de résister à la confusion et de ne pas se laisser tromper par l'absurdité des publicités mensongères. En ce sens, Maslow considère cette perception comme une réelle perception de la réalité, efficace à tous les niveaux de la perception (Shostrum 14:05-17:54/54:22).

## B-2 La découverte perpétuelle

La découverte perpétuelle est le fait d'apprécier continuellement les éléments essentiels de la vie avec admiration, émerveillement et même extase (Shostrum 17:55-18:09/54:22).

Pour Maslow, ces éléments basiques sont tous des miracles, qui se répètent à l'infini. Ce sont des choses importantes, comme une fleur, un coucher de soleil, ou pouvoir apprécier à quel point un bébé est mignon ou une fille est jolie. Pour la plupart des gens, la familiarisation avec ces éléments entraîne un manque d'attention et une perte de réaction, alors que la découverte perpétuelle permet au contraire d'apprécier ces éléments. En effet, selon Maslow, un miracle reste un miracle même s'il se produit chaque matin ; ces personnes sont capables de voir ces événements comme des miracles et d'y réagir, malgré le fait qu'ils se produisent souvent. Ils en profitent encore et encore, tandis que la personne moyenne est constamment en train de chercher quelque chose de nouveau (Shostrum 18:10-20:06/54:22).

## B-3 L'expérience paroxystique

L'expérience paroxystique est celle d'un sentiment océanique, d'une expérience mystique, d'un horizon infini qui ouvre la vision. C'est un sentiment de grande jouissance, d'émerveillement et d'admiration, dans lequel on perd le sentiment du temps et de l'espace. Il s'agit d'une conviction selon laquelle quelque chose d'extrêmement important et précieux vient de se produire, un instant magique (Shostrum 20:07-20:36/54:22).

Maslow explique que les instants magiques, les expériences mystiques proviennent de nombreux éléments déclencheurs: être au sommet d'une montagne, écouter de la musique et / ou se trouver en bord de mer. Pour lui, tout ce qui touche à la perfection produit une expérience paroxystique ; il cite ainsi l'accouchement naturel comme exemple général. Il affirme ensuite que les expériences paroxystiques sont fréquentes dans la population ; en effet, plus le degré de santé mentale est élevé, plus les expériences paroxystiques se produisent et plus elles sont nombreuses, et plus elles sont élevées, plus elles sont intenses ; plus elles sont cognitives, plus on peut apprendre d'elles; plus elles sont pures, plus on peut s'en souvenir. Maslow soutient que ceux qui s'en souviennent ont tendance à être changés, comme les mystiques le déclaraient (Shostrum 20:36-24:12/54:22).

#### B-4 La conscience éthique

La conscience éthique désigne le fait d'être capable de distinguer la fin des moyens, d'avoir des standards moraux précis, profondément éthiques. Pour les personnes dotées d'une conscience éthique, leurs notions du bien et du mal ne sont généralement pas les notions conventionnelles ; elles sont fixées sur la fin plutôt que les moyens (Shostrum 24:15-24:32/54:22).

Pour Maslow, c'est comme si ces personnes savaient ce qui est bien et ce qui est mal; ils l'ont déterminé par eux-mêmes, de manière éthique. Cela pose la question du bien et du mal absolus ; pour eux, ils savent ce qui est bien ou mal, ils ne sont pas empêtrés dans un dilemme et ne peuvent pas s'en faire dissuader puisqu'ils savent qu'ils ont raison. C'est comme s'ils avaient une cour suprême interne à laquelle se référer, plutôt que d'avoir besoin de chercher dans un livre ou dans ce que leurs parents ont dit, ou de se référer aux coutumes locales. Ils regardent en eux-mêmes pour trouver les réponses aux questions éthiques (Shostrum 24:33-26:33/54:22).

### C. LA LIBERTÉ

La notion de liberté de Maslow est la capacité d'être spontané, de se mettre en retrait si c'est ce que l'on veut, de créer. Il s'agit de pouvoir être tel que l'on est à un moment précis, peu importe ce que c'est, mais de faire confiance à ce soi, et d'être soi-même librement (Shostrum 27:22-28:41/54:22).

#### C-1 Détachement

Le détachement est le besoin de solitude, le besoin d'intimité, et bien souvent, celui de rester au-dessus de la mêlée, en étant calme et serein (Shostrum 28:42-28:58/54:22).

Maslow affirme qu'il existe deux sortes de détachements, deux sortes d'objectivité; ces personnes sont capables de laisser tranquille ceux qu'ils aiment. Par exemple, si ces personnes ont un enfant accompli, ils en sont tellement ravis qu'ils n'interfèrent pas ; ils restent détachés et objectifs, et laissent l'enfant être ce qu'il est et en profiter. Il s'agit ici de ne rien exiger de l'enfant par principe, de ne pas le déformer, et de le laisser être lui-même : c'est, dans le sens le

plus vieux du terme, la capacité de voir la vérité telle qu'elle est, et non pas telle qu'on aimerait qu'elle soit ou telle qu'elle devrait être. Au niveau de l'intimité, ce sont des personnes qui aiment être seules, et ne souhaitent pas être tout le temps dans la foule. Pour eux, il existe des moments sacrés, pour lesquels ils aiment et veulent être seuls. Ces personnes ne partagent pas tout ; elles veulent garder certaines choses pour elles-mêmes (Shostrum 28:59-33:36/54:22).

## C-2 Créativité

La créativité selon Maslow est l'originalité, l'inventivité ; en ce sens, elle serait plutôt proche de la naïveté, comme celle d'un enfant non gâté, intact (Shostrum 33:40-33:52/54:22).

Pour lui, il s'agit d'une personne inventive, qui est capable d'inventer au quotidien. Un de ses exemples est celui d'une femme qui possède une belle maison, mais n'a pas d'argent ; pourtant, elle va ramasser des graminées sauvages au parc tous les jours, pour égayer sa maison. Maslow considère ceci comme la véritable inventivité : la création spontanée, le coup de tête, le fait de savoir s'adapter à la situation de manière créative. Ainsi, Maslow modifie la conception de la créativité, elle devient une réelle inventivité (Shostrum 33:53-37:27/54:22).

## C-3 Spontanéité

La spontanéité est l'attitude marquée par la simplicité, le naturel, le manque d'artifice, et le fait de ne pas toujours chercher à produire un effet sur autrui (Shostrum 37:28-37:38/54:22).

Maslow la décrit comme une aise dans la posture, un naturel, un manque de prétention. En guise d'exemple, il cite Mrs. Roosevelt, qui n'a jamais eu honte de sa voix, ou encore Lincoln, qui a donné l'exemple en public, en étant simplement formidable plutôt qu'en se mettant en valeur ou en étant exigeant ; il cite également l'exemple d'Adela Stevenson. Selon Maslow, ces personnes n'étaient pas des acteurs face à un public. Ils étaient sincères avec leur public, jamais paralysés, sans trac et n'étaient pas là pour amuser la galerie. Quelque chose en eux voulait s'exprimer, il ne s'agissait pas de recevoir ou non des applaudissements. Pour Maslow, cela révèle un sentiment d'honnêteté et une absence d'ambition, d'efforts ; pour ces individus, tout se fait de manière aisée, gracieuse (Shostrum 37:39-40:20/54:22).

## D. LA CONFIANCE

La confiance est le fait de se faire entièrement confiance, d'avoir confiance en sa mission de vie, ainsi que de faire confiance aux autres et à la nature (Shostrum 40:24-40:38/54:22).

### D-1 Mission de vie

Maslow décrit la mission de vie comme une tâche à accomplir, un problème en-dehors de soi-même qui requiert une grande partie de son énergie, et qu'il est nécessaire d'avoir (Shostrum 40:44-40:52/54:22).

Selon lui, la mission de vie correspond à la quête de l'identité, dans le sens où la quête de soi est une quête de l'œuvre de sa vie, de ce qui conviendrait le mieux à notre soi. L'individu est alors dans la découverte ; la découverte de sa vocation, de son appel, de son devoir constitutionnel. Si on se connaît assez bien, alors on va découvrir ce qui nous convient le mieux, et que c'est précisément ce qui nous rend le plus heureux, le plus performant. Maslow la définit comme : « la réalisation de son être intérieur, entendu comme constitutionnel, temperamentale : et cela comprend ce que l'on aime, ce qui nous intéresse, ce qui nous excite, ce qui nous fascine, et paradoxalement, c'est cette cause en dehors de nous-mêmes qui devient notre propre caractéristique définitoire » (54). C'est ainsi la caractéristique qui définit notre être, une fois qu'on l'a trouvée, on devient objectif, fasciné par quelque chose qui nous permet d'oublier la fierté, l'ego, la frime, l'acclamation. Ce qui nous fascine à l'extérieur devient quelque chose qui, en soi, en vaut la peine (Shostrum 40:53-43:35/54:22).

### D-2 Autonomie

L'autonomie est le fait de se recentrer sur son propre intérieur ; d'être indépendant de la culture et de l'environnement. Le développement de ces individus, leur croissance, leurs propres potentialités ainsi que l'allègement de leurs fardeaux dépendent d'eux-mêmes (Shostrum 43:38-43:52/54:22).

Pour Maslow, il s'agit d'une qualité intangible ; il affirme qu'on sent que ces personnes sont leur propre maître, qu'ils font ce qu'ils ont eux-mêmes décidé de faire. Ils sont responsables

d'eux-mêmes, ne sont pas des girouettes et ne se laissent pas influencer facilement. Dans une situation de conformisme, ils résistent mieux aux suggestions que les autres, comme s'ils choisissaient ce qu'ils voulaient faire ; on peut les exhorter à faire quelque chose mais finalement cela restera leur propre décision. On a le sentiment qu'ils étaient eux-mêmes, et non pas ancrés dans les traditions ; ils possèdent une forte résistance à l'enculturation. Ces personnes se ressemblent, et sont indépendants de leur siècle, indépendants de leur culture. Il cite encore une fois Lincoln, qui se faisait sa propre opinion et qu'on ne pouvait pas duper ; mais aussi Jefferson, qui allait à contre-courant, prêt à ne pas être populaire en suivant sa propre voie, passant au travers des moqueries et des critiques. Il reprend l'exemple de Mrs. Roosevelt, lorsqu'elle était dénoncée par la presse dans les années 30 ; elle était raillée de tous les côtés et pourtant, elle leur pardonnait et les comprenait, restait indulgente. Selon Maslow, elle a d'ailleurs créé une nouvelle façon de vivre en étant femme de président, a inventé le fait de vivre une vie active en étant Première Dame des Etats-Unis (Shostrum 43:54-47:50/54:22).

### D-3 Acceptation

Pour Maslow, l'acceptation comprend l'acceptation de soi, mais aussi des autres et de la nature. Il s'agit de prendre les faiblesses, les péchés, et les maux de la nature humaine avec le même état d'esprit inconditionnel avec lequel on peut prendre tous les aspects de la nature (Shostrum 47:53-48:10/54:22).

Il prend comme exemple les femmes qui acceptent leur féminité, et ne tombent pas dans le travers de se focaliser sur le fait d'être une femme, ou les hommes qui acceptent leur masculinité, et ne sont pas en conflit avec eux-mêmes. Ces individus ne luttent pas contre la réalité, il s'agirait plutôt d'une extension ou réelle perception de la réalité : ils ne se disent pas qu'ils auraient pu faire mieux. Ils sont détendus dans le monde tel qu'il est, monde qu'ils définissent comme agréable. Il ne s'agit pas d'un sentiment divin, ou d'un sentiment de mécontentement suggérant que les choses auraient dû être différentes. Ces personnes acceptent la nature des arbres, des douleurs de l'enfantement, de la grossesse, des animaux : tout cela va de soi pour eux. Ils vivent de manière confortable dans leurs maisons, acceptent la façon dont le foyer a été configuré, et se sentent à l'aise dans le monde, sont reconnaissants.

L'acceptation est donc la capacité à voir à quel point la nature humaine est intéressante,

plutôt que d'avoir des théories sur combien elle est horrible ou combien elle est merveilleuse. En d'autres termes, l'acceptation signifie prendre les choses comme elles viennent. Il cite de nouveau Mrs. Roosevelt, et son rapport à la nature humaine. En effet, lorsqu'elle travaillait avec les Nations Unies, et qu'un désaccord surgissait dans le groupe, elle restait calme. Si quelqu'un ne comprenait pas ou était en tort, elle ne se mettait pas en colère, mais expliquait à nouveau. Lors d'une conférence, elle a déclaré que la politique était une façon de travailler avec les êtres humains, une manière d'étendre son pouvoir. C'est le seul moyen qu'on ait : il est très facile pour une femme d'aider deux, trois ou quatre bébés mais pour aider deux ou trois millions de bébés, la seule façon de le faire est de faire partie de comités. Cela revient à accepter la nécessité de la nature humaine (Shostrum 48:12-52:37/54:22).

### Les valeurs de l'être

En 1971, Maslow a écrit un livre intitulé *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*. Il parle des personnes dont il s'est servi pour ses études ; il s'agissait de personnes âgées qui avaient vécu en profitant de la vie, et qui manifestement avaient réussi leur vie (42). Il écrit qu'en étudiant ce genre de personnes, saines, fortes, créatives, saintes, perspicaces, on voyait l'humanité différemment. Il pose cette question particulièrement intéressante : « On se demande à quel point les individus peuvent croître, qu'est-ce qu'un être humain peut devenir ? » (42). Maslow affirme ensuite que les personnes engagées dans le processus d'accomplissement de soi ont toutes, sans exception, une chose en commun : ils sont engagés dans une cause extérieure à eux-mêmes :

Ils sont dévoués, travaillent sur une tâche, sur quelque chose qui leur est infiniment précieux – une vocation dans le vieux sens du terme, celui de la vocation sacerdotale. Ils travaillent sur quelque chose que le destin les a, en quelque sorte, appelés à faire, et sur laquelle ils travaillent, qu'ils aiment, de façon à ce que leur dichotomie travail-joie disparaît. (42)

Il explique ensuite que ces personnes sont toutes à la recherche de ce qu'il appelle les « valeurs de l'être » (« B values », B étant l'abréviation de « being ») ; ils vont chercher ces valeurs de l'être toute leur vie. Ces valeurs leur sont intrinsèques ; elles sont naturelles, innées, congénitales, et représentent quelque chose qu'ils ont cherché toute leur vie. Ci-dessous, se trouvent les quatorze valeurs de l'être énoncées par Maslow dans *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* :

- 1-V. La vérité : l'honnêteté, la réalité, la sobriété, la simplicité, la richesse, la sensualité, l'ardeur, la pureté, la propreté et une réelle plénitude.
- 2-V. La bonté : la justesse, la désirabilité, l'ardeur, la justice, la bienveillance, l'honnêteté. C'est quelque chose qu'on aime, qu'on approuve, et qui nous attire.
- 3-V. La beauté : la justesse, la forme, la vitalité, la simplicité, la richesse, l'intégrité, la perfection, l'accomplissement. Il s'agit d'être doux et honnête.
- 4-V. L'intégrité : l'unicité, la synergie, le fait d'avoir des inclinations homonymes et intégrées, de ne pas être affilié.
- 4a-V. La dichotomie : la transcendance, l'acceptation, la résolution, l'intégration. En d'autres termes, la transcendance des dichotomies, des polarités, des opposés, ou des contradictions ; leur synergie, c'est-à-dire la transformation des oppositions en unités, celle des antagonistes en partenaires, qui collaborent ou s'enrichissent mutuellement.
- 5-V. La vitalité : un processus de vie, au contraire d'un processus de mort ; la spontanéité, l'autorégulation, le bon fonctionnement. Il s'agit de changer tout en restant le même, de s'exprimer.
- 6-V. L'unicité : l'idiosyncrasie, l'individualité ; il s'agit de la nouveauté, du quale, du cela, de ce qui est incomparable.
- 7-V. La perfection : la justesse, l'exactitude, la pertinence, la justice et la plénitude. Il n'y a rien au-delà, tout est juste comme ça devrait l'être ; il n'y a rien de superflu, rien de manquant, chaque chose est à sa place, et ne peut être améliorée.
- 7a-V. La nécessité : l'inévitabilité ; cela doit être de *cette* façon précise, ne peut être altéré de la moindre façon, et c'est bien que ce *soit* de cette façon.
- 8-V. L'achèvement : la fin, la finalité, la justice ; il n'est plus possible de changer le Gestalt. C'est la réalisation, le *finis* et le *telos*, où rien n'est absent ou manquant ; la totalité, l'accomplissement de la destinée, le paroxysme, mais qui est aussi la clôture de l'achèvement, à la fois la mort et la renaissance, la cessation mais également la réalisation de la croissance et du développement.
- 9-V. La justice : l'équité, le sens du devoir, l'adéquation, la qualité architectonique, l'inévitabilité, le désintéressement, et l'impartialité.



- 9a-V. L'ordre : la légalité ou légitimité, la droiture ; il s'agit d'une disposition parfaite, où rien n'est superflu.
- 10-V. La simplicité : l'honnêteté, la sobriété, l'essentialité, c'est l'abstraction indéniable. Il s'agit de la structure de base essentielle ou du cœur du sujet, de la franchise, d'avoir seulement ce qui est nécessaire, sans fioriture, sans rien de supplémentaire ou de superflu.
- 11-V. La richesse : la différenciation, la complexité, l'intrication et la totalité. Rien n'est absent ou caché, tout est là ; tout est aussi important, tout est valide, chaque chose est laissée telle qu'elle est, rien n'est bougé, simplifié, réduit ou réarrangé.
- 12-V. La fluidité : l'aisance, l'absence de tension, d'effort, ou de difficultés ; il s'agit de la grâce, du fonctionnement à la fois parfait et magnifique.
- 13-V. L'allégresse : le divertissement, la joie, l'amusement, la gaieté, l'humour, l'exubérance et la fluidité.
- 14-V. L'autosuffisance : l'autonomie, l'indépendance, le fait de n'avoir besoin de rien à part soi pour être soi ; l'autodétermination, l'environnement, la transcendance et la séparation. Il s'agit de vivre selon sa propre loi, son identité. (128-129).

#### Comportements menant à l'accomplissement de soi

Dans le même livre, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, Maslow énumère les huit comportements à avoir en permanence, qui mènent à l'accomplissement de soi d'un individu :

- 1-B. Vivre pleinement, généreusement, de manière intensive et vive, en absorbant tout.
- 2-B. Un processus de choix, l'un après l'autre.
- 3-B. Il existe un soi à réaliser, à accomplir.
- 4-B. Dans le doute, mieux vaut être honnête.
- 5-B. Faire de meilleurs choix ; être courageux plutôt que peureux, prendre responsabilité en écoutant sa voix intérieure et être honnête.
- 6-B. Le processus d'accomplir, de réaliser son propre potentiel ; devenir plus avisé, utiliser son intelligence.
- 7-B. Prendre conscience des moments éphémères qui brisent les illusions ; se débarrasser des fausses idées, trouver ce à quoi nous ne sommes pas bons,

apprendre ce que nos potentialités ne sont pas – car c'est aussi découvrir ce que l'on est.

- 8-B. Découvrir qui on est, ce qu'on est, ce qu'on aime, ce qu'on n'aime pas, ce qui est bon et mauvais pour nous, où on va et quelle est notre mission (43-49).

Cette étude s'organise en trois parties : Chapitre I : Biographie - les pas ; le premier chapitre retrace la vie de Theodor Seuss Geisel. Les notes de bas de page révèlent le processus d'accomplissement de soi, tout au long de sa vie. Chapitre II : Œuvres – le chemin ; dans la deuxième partie, un synopsis de chaque œuvre est suivi de mon interprétation de sa signification et de la manière dont il se rattache à l'accomplissement de soi. Le code est appliqué tout au long de la recherche dans les notes de bas de page, de manière à dévoiler l'accomplissement de soi qu'effectue Theodor à travers ses œuvres, ainsi que ce qui était important pour lui. Chapitre III : Réception - les empreintes de dinosaur ; le dernier chapitre présente une sélection d'extraits d'articles de journaux et de ses œuvres, dès les 25 ans de Theodor à aujourd'hui ; les notes de bas de page associent les articles au processus d'accomplissement de soi.

L'hypothèse de cette étude était : « Theodor Geisel s'est accompli par le Dr. Seuss. » Selon Maslow, la définition de la réalisation de soi est la suivante : « Un musicien doit faire de la musique, un artiste doit peindre, un poète doit écrire, s'il veut pouvoir être heureux à la fin. Ce qu'un homme peut être, il doit l'être... la tendance pour un individu de s'accomplir dans ce qu'il est potentiellement » (Maslow *A Theory* 7). Maslow a suggéré qu'il était plus facile de vérifier la réalisation de soi d'une personne âgée ou d'une personnalité historique, puisqu'ils peuvent être étudiés indirectement. Il écrit que lorsque le sujet prenait conscience de la recherche en cours, il devenait « embarrassé, se bloquait, tournait en dérision l'effort dans son ensemble, ou mettait un terme à la relation. Par conséquent, depuis cette expérience initiale, tous les sujets âgés ont été étudiés indirectement ; en fait, presque subrepticement » (*Motivation and Personality* 151). Il continue en expliquant que :

« puisque les personnes étudiées étaient encore en vie et que leurs noms ne pouvaient pas être divulgués, il fut impossible d'atteindre deux desiderata, ou plutôt deux critères que requiert tout travail scientifique ordinaire : à savoir, la reproductivité de l'enquête et l'accessibilité publique des données à partir desquelles les résultats ont été tirés. Ces

difficultés ont été en partie surmontées par l'étude de personnes et d'enfants, dont les données pouvaient vraisemblablement être rendues publiques » (151-152).

Voici une liste d'exemples de personnages historiques qu'il a proposé pour les études de cas de l'accomplissement de soi : Abraham Lincoln (1809 – 1865), Thomas Jefferson (1743 – 1826), Eleanor Roosevelt (1884 – 1962), Jane Addams (1860 – 1935), Einstein (1879 – 1955), William James (1645 – 1707), Aldous Huxley (1894 – 1963), Baruch Spinoza (1632 – 1677), Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 – 1882), Frederick Douglass (1818 – 1895), Pierre Renoir (1885 – 1952), Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807 – 1882), Thomas More (1478 – 1535), Walt Whitman (1819 – 1892) ainsi que d'autres, qui sont listés dans son livre *Motivation and Personality* (152).

Mon étude de cas a donc porté sur Theodor Geisel, sa vie, son œuvre, et sa réception par le public. Cette étude pourrait être reproduite, et il serait intéressant de voir quels seraient les résultats d'un autre chercheur ; mais pour conclure, voici les points principaux résumant chaque chapitre, suivis des conclusions, recherches futures et observations finales.

## Chapitre 1 Biographie – Les pas

Les événements difficiles dans la vie de Theodor l'ont fait réfléchir, ils ont pesé sur sa conscience, et l'ont forcé à s'exprimer à travers du Dr. Seuss. Les défis ont permis à Theodor de se réaliser, de s'accomplir, et ce surtout lorsqu'ils venaient d'amis, du public, de la société ou d'injustices. Theodor a toujours choisi la voie de la difficulté ; jamais celle de la facilité, mais il a profité de chaque jour, vivant sa vie pleinement. Il possédait un réseau d'amis intimes, qui le poussaient et l'encourageaient. Theodor faisait partie de ces personnes qui voient le monde différemment de la norme, il prenait le microscope à l'envers pour le regarder.

Il était un homme qui se dépassait et repoussait ses limites en permanence, car il connaissait ses forces ainsi que ses faiblesses, et capitalisait sur ces dernières. Theodor a trouvé son moyen de s'exprimer pleinement et librement, par le biais du Dr. Seuss. Il s'est distancé de ses échecs, que ce soit dans des domaines spécifiques ou certaines de ses œuvres qu'il jugeait trop faibles. Theodor a su maintenir sa dynamique en allant d'un succès à l'autre, et c'est ainsi qu'il a pu se réaliser, s'accomplir.

## Chapitre 2 – Le chemin

Les livres du Dr. Seuss révèlent un chemin à suivre pour la société : devenir une meilleure version de soi-même, à la fois individuellement et collectivement. Theodor s'est servi de ses livres comme d'une plateforme à partir de laquelle s'exprimer. Ils dévoilent le travail intérieur continu de Theodor, sa transformation en un être accompli, réalisé, et sa transcendance. Ils révèlent également une méthodologie de l'apprentissage : on y trouve l'amusement d'un côté, et la joie de l'autre, avec au milieu, au cœur du processus, l'imagination. Cette imagination est essentielle, et comprend une liberté de parole et de penser. Les personnages des livres du Dr. Seuss exemplifient les caractéristiques de l'accomplissement de soi : l'honnêteté, la prise de conscience, la liberté et la confiance. En outre, ses personnages possèdent le point de vue d'un enfant; dans les histoires, ils répondent souvent aux adultes, et leur lancent des défis.

## Chapitre 3 Réception - Les empreintes de dinosaure

Theodor était imprévisible, et il a fait son apparition à un moment précis de l'histoire, où un changement était nécessaire. Alors que les enfants adoptèrent le Dr. Seuss immédiatement, le monde des adultes s'est d'abord montré méfiant : il s'agissait d'accepter quelqu'un et quelque chose de différent, une façon de penser subversive. Mais finalement, le public a accueilli favorablement les créations de Theodor, jusqu'à les attendre avec impatience.

Une dichotomie existait, entre les parents et les enfants, par rapport aux livres du Dr. Seuss ; ils en pensaient exactement le contraire. Son public poussait Theodor, l'encourageait ; ce besoin l'a conduit à donner la parole aux enfants, et à leur donner leur propre place, unique dans la société.

L'héritage que Theodor a laissé à la littérature de jeunesse est à l'image de l'impact qu'il a eu sur cette dernière, et qu'il continue à avoir en touchant le cœur et l'esprit du public ; d'où les empreintes de dinosaure : il n'y avait personne comme lui, il était unique.

Les conclusions que j'ai tirées de mes recherches sont les suivantes:

Theodor Geisel s'est bel et bien réalisé à travers le Dr. Seuss ; il était né pour être un illustrateur et écrivain, et, en effet, est devenu un des plus grands auteurs pour enfants de tous les temps. Les principaux événements historiques de sa vie ont affecté sa croissance personnelle,

notamment au niveau de ses convictions et de ses expériences ; on peut y observer les caractéristiques de l'accomplissement de soi en jeu (voir tableau 1).

En ce qui concerne les livres, leur ordre chronologique révèle le processus intérieur d'accomplissement de soi du Theodor Geisel ; l'observation des thèmes dans l'ordre chronologique peut également donner une idée particulière de ce dont un enfant a besoin dans sa progression pour devenir un être accompli, réalisé. Ainsi, les livres les plus célèbres du Dr. Seuss démontrent-ils les caractéristiques de l'accomplissement de soi (voir tableau 1). Les livres créent également une hiérarchie de besoins psychologiques fondamentaux pour les enfants, comparable à la hiérarchie des besoins d'Abraham Maslow (voir diagramme 2 – Pyramide).

Les deux hommes, Theodor Geisel (1904-1991) et Abraham Maslow (1908-1970), présentaient quelque chose de nouveau et de différent à leur époque, et au même moment ; Theodor avec ses personnages francs, farfelus et comiques, et Maslow avec son approche positive de la réalisation de soi. Une grande partie de leurs convictions et de ce qu'ils ont présenté est similaire, voire parallèle; leurs œuvres sont complémentaires. Ils ont tous deux résisté à l'épreuve du temps et restent les « Pères » de ce qu'ils ont créé : Theodor Geisel, le Père de la littérature pour enfants et Abraham Maslow, le Père de la théorie de la hiérarchie des besoins et de l'accomplissement de soi (voir tableau 1).

Non seulement Theodor Geisel est devenu un être accompli, mais il est allé au-delà de l'accomplissement et de la réalisation : jusqu'à la transcendance, en aidant les autres et en donnant de sa personne à la société. De fait, le Dr. Seuss reste présent dans le cœur des gens, ses livres sont toujours des *bestsellers*. Dans l'article "Long-Running Children's Best Sellers of 2017" de *Publisher's Weekly*, sous le titre de Picture Books, trois des dix livres listés sont du Dr. Seuss : 42 semaines, *Dr. Seuss's ABC Board Book* ; 35 semaines, *Oh, The Places You'll Go* ; et 30 semaines, *Green Eggs and Ham* (Milliot, Jim). Theodor Geisel continue de toucher le cœur et l'esprit du public du monde entier.

Selon cette recherche, Carl Rogers avait tort lorsqu'il pensait que l'environnement devait être adéquat pour devenir un être accompli ; les événements difficiles ont façonné le caractère de Theodor et lui ont permis de trouver les vérités selon lesquelles il a vécu, ce qui l'a mené vers

l'accomplissement de soi. Enfin, la réalisation de soi est donc un processus continu ; les choix que l'on fait nous conduisent vers notre destinée et vers l'accomplissement de soi.

Caractéristiques principales de l'accomplissement de soi de Maslow	Evénements principaux dans la vie de Theodor Geisel	Livres les plus vendus du Dr. Seuss	Vie de Theodor Geisel et thèmes principaux des livres du Dr. Seuss
<p>A. Honnêteté :</p> <p>A-1 Humour</p> <p>A-2 Intérêt social</p> <p>A-3 Relations interpersonnelles</p>	<p>Première Guerre mondiale :</p> <p>enfant, Theodor s'est senti rejeté et était harcelé ; la vérité de son origine allemande était une réalité brutale, mais sa famille a été honnête et a accepté cette réalité, ils étaient travailleurs. L'humour était une façon de faire face à cette vérité et aux relations humaines.</p>	<p><i>How the Grinch Stole Christmas</i> :</p> <p>Le Grinch a compris que Noël était plus que des cadeaux et des décorations ; Noël est dans le cœur de l'humanité. En écrivant le Grinch, Theodor s'est regardé dans le miroir et a vu le Grinch ; il a été honnête avec lui-même. Theodor et le Grinch confrontèrent leurs pensées, et la réalité a fait grandir leurs cœurs.</p>	<p>Theodor était honnête avec lui-même, avec son talent, ce qu'il aimait ou n'aimait pas ; il a prélevé cette honnêteté et a confronté l'humanité avec ses illustrations et ses livres. Ses véritables relations étaient triées sur le volet et il les gardait fermées.</p>
<p>B. Conscientisation</p> <p>B-1 Réalité</p> <p>B-2 Perpétuelle découverte</p> <p>B-3 Expériences paroxystiques</p> <p>B-4 Conscience éthique</p>	<p>La Grande Dépression :</p> <p>Theodor a pris conscience du besoin réaliste de devoir illustrer et écrire en même temps, pour des raisons financières.</p>	<p><i>The Lorax</i> :</p> <p>Le Lorax était conscient de la cupidité qui existait dans le cœur des hommes, et de ce que cette cupidité pouvait faire – détruire l'environnement. Theodor était conscient des dangers de la pollution et de la cupidité, et a donc créé une conscience éthique avec ce livre.</p>	<p>Durant toute sa vie, il était conscient de ce qui l'entourait, des événements, des problèmes, des personnes, appréciait les détails, et était conscient éthiquement jusqu'à la fin de sa vie ; ses livres traitent de questions sociales et d'une prise de conscience à la fois de l'esprit et du cœur.</p>
<p>C. Liberté</p> <p>C-1 Détachement</p> <p>C-2 Créativité</p> <p>C-3 Spontanéité</p>	<p>La Prohibition :</p> <p>Theodor a créé son pseudonyme, Dr. Seuss, ce qui lui a permis de s'exprimer à Dartmouth dans le journal <i>Jack-O-Lantern</i> ; grâce à ce moyen d'expression, il pouvait être créatif, spontané et libre dans sa pensée.</p>	<p><i>The Cat in the Hat</i> :</p> <p>A travers ce livre, Sally et son frère font l'expérience de la liberté de penser différemment, d'être créatif et d'agir spontanément ; tout ce que les enfants ont vocation à être.</p>	<p>Theodor a vécu sa vie en faisant toujours ce qu'il avait à faire, constamment en train de créer et de répondre aux événements autour de lui et à sa voix intérieure ; ses livres contiennent ces thèmes d'individualité, d'imagination, et d'amusement.</p>
<p>D. Confiance</p> <p>D-1 Mission de vie</p> <p>D-2 Autonomie</p> <p>D-3 Acceptation</p>	<p>Deuxième Guerre mondiale :</p> <p>Theodor a trouvé sa mission de vie dans l'illustration et l'écriture de livres pour enfants ; il y avait alors un grand besoin pour cette littérature, dû aux bébés nés pendant la guerre ; Theodor dénonça les injustices</p>	<p><i>Green Eggs and Ham</i> :</p> <p>Sam encourage un vieux monsieur à manger des œufs verts et du jambon. Se faire confiance à soi-même pour faire de nouvelles expériences, être fidèle à soi-même, trouver sa mission et avoir confiance en</p>	<p>Enfant, sa confiance s'est développée dans des moments difficiles, l'a guidée vers sa mission, suivant son propre rythme, et lui a permis de s'assumer. Ses livres ont un objectif, un caractère unique, et à travers ses livres, chaque personne dans le public peut trouver sa propre place, se faire confiance et</p>

	sociales.	elle.	trouver sa propre voix, unique.
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Tableau 1. "Le processus continu d'accomplissement de soi dans la vie de Theodor Geisel, dans ses livres, et la dichotomie de Theodor et du Dr. Seuss." Prutzman, Coralee, 2018.

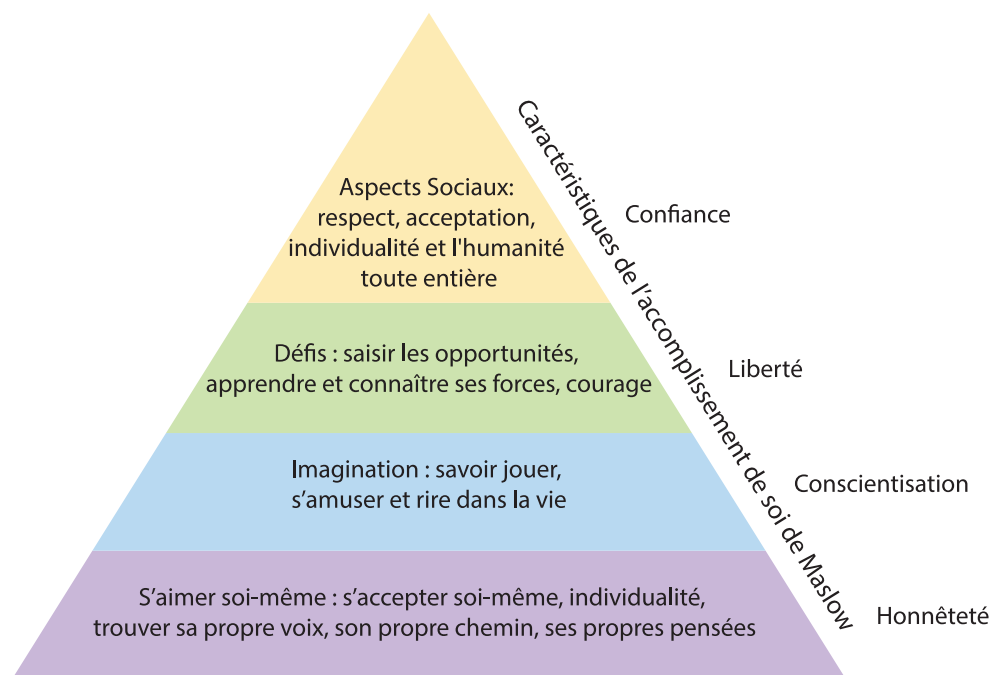


Diagramme 2 : Thèmes importants dans les livres du Dr. Seuss ; Prutzman, Coralee, 2018.

Le potentiel des recherches futures dans ce champ d'étude est significatif, je me contenterai donc ici d'évoquer quelques pistes de recherches qui me paraissent pertinentes.

Il serait intéressant d'examiner deux des articles de Theodor ; d'une part, "But for Grown-ups laughing isn't any fun", écrit en 1952, afin d'effectuer une étude approfondie de sa réflexion sur le rire, et de la façon dont elle est liée à un esprit ouvert. D'autre part, à partir de l'article "Brats Books on the March", publié en novembre 1960 dans le *Los Angeles Times*, pour observer comment la mentalité a changé au cours du 21<sup>ème</sup> siècle. Il serait judicieux de considérer également si les livres pour enfants ont évolué depuis le Dr. Seuss, s'ils ont gardé des similitudes et s'ils portent la marque de son influence.

Ainsi, à propos des convictions et réflexions de Theodor sur l'importance du fait d'écrire pour les enfants, il serait important de déterminer de quelle manière il a développé ses convictions dans ses livres. Une comparaison entre les œuvres d'art privées de Theodor et ses



livres serait particulièrement féconde, afin de mettre à jour les différences et les similitudes entre ceux-ci, et leurs thèmes apparents.

De plus, un examen attentif des caricatures politiques de Theodor serait sans doute révélateur, dans la mesure où elles constituèrent la base de son écriture de livres pour enfants. En effet, ses croyances fondamentales se situant dans ces caricatures, il s'agirait de déterminer de quelle manière il les a ensuite développées dans ses histoires. De là s'ensuivrait une comparaison entre son œuvre politique et ses livres, qui étudierait les glissements, les similitudes et différences. De même, une étude approfondie des films de Theodor serait intéressante, afin d'examiner quels besoins humains y sont abordés.

Le style artistique de Theodor serait également pertinent à analyser, afin de déterminer la manière dont il est lié aux autres scénaristes et dessinateurs de son époque, par exemple Charles Schultz. Une autre recherche pourrait également être effectuée sur les personnages principaux des livres du Dr. Seuss ; une comparaison et une mise en perspective permettrait certainement de trouver des éléments significatifs.

D'autre part, l'analyse d'une œuvre complète d'un auteur permettrait d'observer ce qui peut être trouvé dans son ensemble, à partir du corpus entier – ce qui offrirait une vision plus globale de l'auteur, de son(ses) message(s), de la conscience sociétale ; de ce qu'on peut en apprendre, ainsi que de ce qui est toujours d'actualité, pertinent aujourd'hui et dans le futur.

L'application du codage créé dans cette recherche, à savoir les caractéristiques de l'accomplissement de soi d'Abraham Maslow, les valeurs de l'Etre et les comportements, serait particulièrement judicieuse dans des domaines tels que l'éducation, les cours de perfectionnement professionnel, ainsi que tout autre domaine dans lequel on encourage et on parle de la réalisation de soi. De même, une utilisation de la hiérarchie des thèmes de cette recherche, d'après les œuvres du Dr. Seuss, permettrait de les appliquer aux programmes éducatifs et aux cursus des écoles, aux domaines quotidiens de l'interaction sociale, et aux futurs livres.

En outre, il serait enrichissant de revenir aux fondements de l'accomplissement de soi, et d'approfondir ainsi les recherches sur des écrivains, auteurs, artistes, ou dirigeants politiques. Il s'agirait ensuite d'observer, comme nous l'avons fait dans cette recherche, s'il existe des similarités, des différences et des schémas entre la vie de l'écrivain, son œuvre, et sa réception.

Enfin, quant à Theodor Geisel lui-même, une recherche sur sa qualité de visionnaire serait judicieuse, ainsi que sur sa pensée subversive. En effet, Theodor a lui-même déclaré être un homme subversif ; il s'agirait de rechercher à qui il s'adressait, et de déterminer ce qui a donné naissance à cette voix subversive en lui. La dernière question que l'on peut se poser est de savoir si la rançon du succès était trop lourde à porter pour lui, en référence à son livre, *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*. Dans quelle mesure ses dons d'illustrateur, ses mots, ses pensées et son message lui ont-ils pesé, jusqu'à ce qu'il commence à les partager avec d'autres personnes ?

Pour conclure, Maslow écrit que les individus accomplis sont « principalement un groupe intellectuel, [...] la plupart desquels possèdent déjà une mission, et sentent qu'ils sont en train de faire quelque chose de vraiment important pour améliorer le monde » (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 173). Theodor est né avec une mission : dans ses livres pour enfants, il a offert de l'imagination, de l'espoir, de la joie, des rires et de l'amusement dans l'apprentissage de la lecture, mais aussi de l'individualité, du soulagement, de l'humour et du jeu, et ce dans un mode de pensée subversif. Theodor Geisel est devenu un être accompli par le Dr. Seuss ; les quatre caractéristiques d'un individu accompli selon Abraham Maslow, à savoir l'honnêteté, la conscientisation, la liberté et la confiance, sont, de manière frappante, constamment présentes et apparentes dans la vie de Theodor ainsi que dans son œuvre, du fait de la porte qu'il a créée et découverte, et que sa destinée lui a amenée, au travers du Dr. Seuss. Les deux dichotomies, Theodor Geisel et le Dr. Seuss « se sont résolues, les polarités ont disparu, et bien des oppositions considérées comme intrinsèques ont fusionné et se sont coalisées pour former des unités » (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 178-179). Non seulement Theodor s'est accompli, « pour devenir encore plus ce que l'on est, pour devenir tout ce dont on est capable de devenir » (Maslow *A Theory* 8), mais il s'est élevé jusqu'au plus haut niveau de la théorie de la hiérarchie des besoins de Maslow, la transcendance, le fait d'aider les autres : « la transcendance se réfère au niveau le plus haut et le plus inclusif ou holistique de la conscience humaine, agir et se comporter en tendant vers la fin plutôt que les moyens, envers soi-même, envers ses proches, envers les êtres humains en général, envers les autres espèces, la nature, et le cosmos » (Maslow *The Farther Reaches* 269). Chaque personne possède un but unique ; à travers l'accomplissement de soi, la nécessité de la vocation s'accroît, celle d'aider la société, de donner généreusement, de faire de ce monde un endroit meilleur pour l'(les) individu(s) et la société

toute entière.

En étudiant Theodor Geisel, en examinant ses pas, ce que l'on voit est un homme qui a emprunté un parcours spécifique, qui l'a conduit vers l'accomplissement de soi ; il s'est trouvé et s'est développé. Ces pas pourraient être comparés aux caractéristiques de l'accomplissement de soi de Maslow, dans l'optique de déceler de quelle façon ils coïncident et se correspondent. Les livres du Dr. Seuss laissent derrière eux des pierres angulaires, des clés que les enfants peuvent apprendre très tôt – des vérités fondamentales, qui leur serviront toute leur vie. Ses livres ne sont pas seulement destinés aux enfants, mais aussi aux parents, pour qu'ils puissent y être attentifs en les lisant à leurs enfants ; ces livres contiennent des fils directeurs pour l'humanité. La réaction de son public a été révélatrice de la façon dont l'humanité réagit face à une personne qui est honnête, consciente, libre et qui a confiance en elle ; ils émettent souvent des réserves, sont hésitants, vigilants, et critiques ; pourtant, lorsqu'ils voient la profondeur, la vérité, la faisabilité et la validité d'un tel développement positif de l'homme dans une bonne direction, les personnes acceptent, s'y joignent, en veulent plus, et deviennent des individus, des adeptes et des étudiants loyaux, donnant un réel soutien. C'est exactement ce que fit le public de Theodor, à la fois les enfants et les parents. L'impact que Theodor a laissé sur son public, sur l'humanité, était et continue d'être monumental, semblable à des empreintes de dinosaure.

La pertinence de l'œuvre d'un homme préserve son héritage ; une œuvre qui continue à toucher le cœur des hommes et leur condition, en leur donnant de l'espoir et des rires. Dans le cas de Theodor Geisel alias Dr. Seuss, il a laissé des empreintes incommensurables et un héritage vivant ; alors que l'homme continue à vivre, une génération après l'autre, les vérités applicables que l'on trouve dans ses livres restent fondatrices et fondamentales. Theodor Geisel, au travers du Dr. Seuss, continue de parler à des générations de personnes, les petites personnes et les grandes personnes, un livre à la fois, un Lorax à la fois, un Grinch à la fois, un Cat in the Hat à la fois... il suffit d'une fois pour changer le cœur des hommes.

## DISSERTATION INTRODUCTION

Theodor Geisel in America is not as well-known as Dr. Seuss; yet they are one in the same. Ask anyone walking down the street if they know Dr. Seuss and the first words will be: “Of course, *The Cat in the Hat!*” The domain of research for this paper is applicable in three specific areas: (1.) children’s literature, (2.) childhood studies, and (3.) educational studies. For the domain of children’s literature, Theodor created two separate kinds of books: (a) big books, for children of all ages; these stories tell a moral in a comic fashion, and (b) Beginner Books, for children ages 3 – 7 who are learning to read and appreciate the English language. Learning to read with fun is key in the Beginner Books. He called this domain for children, Brat Books.

In the domain of childhood studies, Dr. Seuss’s books use zany and bizarre creatures to tell stories and deliver morals in a “side-ways” kind of fashion, as Theodor often said. Topics include: individuality, respect, self-love, curiosity, imagination, self-acceptance, thinking one’s own thoughts, challenges in life, fun and work, environment, greed, capitalism, commercialisms, dictatorship, bullying, accepting of others, arms control, the human race, seeing the greatness in others and encouraging each other, collectivity, the importance of convictions, creating boundaries, being able to say sorry, courage in life, and life is much easier with humor and when shared with others.

Lastly, in the domain of educational studies, both names, Abraham Maslow and Dr. Seuss, are often discussed, but rarely together, if ever. Using Abraham Maslow’s theory of hierarchy of needs, specifically focusing on self-actualization (SA), and pairing this work with Theodor Geisel’s life, books, and reception - similarities and parallel themes are evident in both lives. This study places these two geniuses on the same path to self-discovery.

The question asked in this paper is: Did Theodor Geisel become self-actualized by Dr. Seuss? The hypothesis: Theodor Geisel became self-actualized by Dr. Seuss.

Living in France for the past eight years, working in the field of education, I found at the very beginning, a different mindset in the population; almost everyone would not smile back when smiled to. I thought to myself, how can this be? What can affect a population like this? Where does it begin? Being an educator and at the time a director of a bilingual school, the conclusion to me was the education system, which starts young in France, three years of age.

The philosophy of education in France (in my observation, speaking with other teachers

and directors, and reading educational papers) is that children arrive in the classroom void. It is the job of the teacher to fill the students with knowledge. In Canada and America, the philosophy is the exact opposite: children arrive with gifts and talents and it is the job of the teacher to learn the students individually and with the curriculum guide the students through an education. The French system (this is a generalization) gives each student the same curriculum and makes no great allowances for individuality.

How does this relate to Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss? Coming home from work one day, opening the gate to my garden, I thought of a book written by Dr. Seuss: *The Sneetches*; it speaks about individuality and accepting each person as they are, with or without “a star upon thars” (Seuss *The Sneetches*), appreciating how each person is different and special. I kept this book in my office at school along with several other of his books; often I read Dr. Seuss’s books during assemblies to encourage the students and faculty to think about his ideas.

Having faculty meetings once per week, I always tried to bring in something thoughtful and enlightening for the teachers to be challenged; to look at the needs of their students individually as well as themselves. Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs was one topic of discussion. At the top of the list of the needs is self-actualization: “the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming” (Maslow *A Theory* 7). It is of course, every director’s desire, every teacher’s desire, every parent’s desire, and hopefully every person’s individual desire to become all that they were meant to be - their very best.

Thinking about this and talking with the teachers and students, Dr. Seuss and Abraham Maslow collided in my mind. Abraham Maslow estimated that only two percent of people become self-actualized (McLeod “Maslow's Hierarchy”). I was curious to see if Theodor Geisel was one of the two percent. I instantly knew what I wanted to do my dissertation on: Did Theodor Geisel become self-actualized by Dr. Seuss?

Dr. Seuss is a name familiar to most American people; Theodor Seuss Geisel is generally unknown, albeit they are the same, yet, very much a dichotomy. The books published about him are mostly in a biographical nature: *Dr. Seuss*, 1988, by Ruth K. MacDonald; *The Birth of Dr. Seuss*, 1994, by Adam Lipsius; *The Man Who Was Dr. Seuss*, 2000, by Thomas Fensch; *The Seuss The Whole Seuss And Nothing But the Seuss, A Visual Biography of Theodor Seuss Geisel*, 2002, by Charles D. Cohen; *Theodor Seuss Geisel*, 2010, by Donald E. Pease; *Dr. Seuss & Mr.*

*Geisel*, 1995, written by Judith and Neil Morgan who were close friends with Theodor - the most detailed biography; and a book for children, *Dr. Seuss*, 2015, by Deborah Grahame-Smith.

In 1999, Richard H. Minear, wrote a specific book on Theodor's editorial cartoons during World War II, titled: *Dr. Seuss Goes to War*. This book gives a different perspective of the children's author; he was a man who left "Brat Book" writing for a time, to focus on American politics. This book reveals the deep convictions of Theodor Geisel. Many of the characters in the cartoons return in his children's books years later. Philip Nel, wrote *Dr. Seuss: American Icon*, 2005, describing how Theodor became a family name, how his entire career – illustrations, cartoons, poetry, advertisements, views on politics and society, and children's books established for Dr. Seuss an iconic place in American culture and history.

On May 24, 1954, in *Life Magazine* with the cover of "Why Can't My Child Read", John Hersey who wrote an article titled: "Why Do Students Bog Down On the First R?" mentioned and challenged Dr. Seuss and other authors to do something about illiteracy. The following year, Rudolf Flesch wrote a book, *Why Johnny Can't Read*, explaining in detail why children cannot read. Hersey's concern and challenge, as well as Flesch's explanation in his book on how children can better learn to read, gave a clearer picture to Theodor on how to create his books.

In 1972, Selma G. Lanes, in her book, *Down the Rabbit Hole*, wrote about Dr. Seuss: "Seuss for the Goose Is Seuss for the Gander", explaining his style of writing and the impact he made in children's literature. A decade later, plus a year, 1983, Jonathon Cott, wrote a book, *Pipers at the Gates of Dawn*, looking at six influential children authors, one being Dr. Seuss. In the first chapter titled, "The Good Dr. Seuss", Cott delved briefly into the history of literature for children, specifically on a little book written in 1744, *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book*, by John Newbery - a book different than others of the time because of the fantasy within. Cott then likened Newbery to Dr. Seuss, both authors presenting something different for children to read; both writing about fantasy, the alphabet and ways in learning how to read. He went into detail about the style of illustrations and writings of Dr. Seuss, citing specific books. Clifton Fadiman, author, editor, intellectual and television personality wrote two books a year later, 1984, *The World Treasury of Children's Literature*, listing well-known children authors and one of their stories which contributes to children's literature; in *Book II*, Dr. Seuss is described as not really a doctor but a man who writes "funny stories and dreams up strange animals in a big, converted watchtower on the highest hill in La Jolla, California"; following is the story, *And to Think That I*

*Saw it on Mulberry Street.*

In the years of Theodor's life, many newspaper and magazine articles were written about him: his life which was very private, his home in *Architectural Digest*, but mostly about his books and style of writing. Starting in 1957, in 1965 and then in 1977, *The Saturday Evening Post* interviewed Theodor specifically a decade apart; there were other articles in *The Saturday Evening Post*, but these three were pre-planned to observe the progress of this notable author. Each interview in depth looked at his life: the first of his beginnings, "The Wonderful World of Dr. Seuss", the second, of how he got to where he is, "What Am I Doing Here?" and the last, "Dr. Seuss's at 72 – Going Like 60", his destination. Thomas Fensch, in his book, *Of Sneetches and Whos and the Good Dr. Seuss, Essays on the Writings and Life of Theodor Geisel*, created a collection of articles written about Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss, just as the title suggests; the dates are from 1959 – 1991. Theodor Geisel continues to this day to be in the news, especially as a reference in the political realm and indubitably in the sphere of children's literature and education.

This research paper is bringing two well-known men together to a road of discovery, Theodor Seuss Geisel, author, and Abraham Maslow, psychologist. Dr. Seuss is known as the father of children's literature in America and his books continue to be best-sellers. Maslow's work is still current in the field of education and psychology; his theory of hierarchy of needs and self-actualization have stood the test of time and remain part of research and conversations to date. The main focus is on Theodor Geisel: his life, his work in children's literature and the reception by the audience. Maslow's definition of self-actualization and the tools he set-out to measure this development of a person are written about in his book, *Motivation and Personality*, 1954. I created a code from Maslow's work to be used as an instrument to be applied and test Theodor Geisel in the three areas: life, books and reception, to see if he was indeed self-actualized. Having known just some of Dr. Seuss's books, I needed to get to know the man behind Dr. Seuss, Theodor Seuss Geisel. Doing research on the internet started the process. I then made a list of the books written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss, checked the ones I had in my personal library and ordered the missing books from all over the world and had them delivered to my home in France to complete the collection.

Next, a trip to La Jolla, California, Theodor's home. Here I went to UCSD, University of California San Diego, to begin my research. The Geisel Library holds most of Theodor Geisel's

works in the Special Sections department. I spent a week there, white gloves on, looking through files, newspapers, and other archives which have been meticulously identified, filed and put away for safe keeping. No photocopies were allowed, just a computer to type up the findings.

Five months later I made another trip to America. First, Theodor's hometown where he was born, Springfield, Massachusetts; here I visited the Springfield Museum which has an exhibition on the life of Dr. Seuss and a library of archives; then off to his home on Fairfield Street. Next, a three-hour drive north to Dartmouth College where I looked through archives: original drawings for his first book, original *Jack-O-Lantern* magazines, and other related materials; photos were allowed. Lastly, I flew back to La Jolla, California to do deeper research at UCSD. The highlight of the trip and this study was to meet Audrey Geisel, Theodor Geisel's second wife, in their home, the Tower. I saw where Theodor wrote and illustrated his books, the cloaks, gowns and caps from his honorary doctorates, his original paintings, the view of the Pacific Ocean from his office - which is said to have inspired him, the "Cat in the Hat" etched on the front door and had wine with his lovely wife.

The writing began with much research to go through and a zillion thoughts racing through my mind. I decided on three main parts:

1. The life of Theodor Geisel – biography: to learn about his life, the influences, the events, the people he was close to and other interesting and helpful facts which would give a clearer picture of who this person was and if he became SA. Working through the biography, books were ordered for references as well as online newspaper articles, press releases, the research from my trips and websites specializing on Theodor Geisel aka Dr. Seuss were referenced. The most thorough biographical book, *Dr. Seuss & Mr. Geisel*, was that written by Theodor's friends, Judith and Neal Morgan in 1995.

2. The books by Dr. Seuss: 47 specific books written and illustrated by him. I gave a synopsis of each story and then described the meaning I found in each book and my interpretation on how it pertained to SA. Reading through the books of Dr. Seuss was a pleasure in seeing what was important to Theodor Geisel, what he valued and how he presented this to his audience.

3. The reception from his audience – mainly the Press: looking through newspaper articles beginning in 1929 to the present, I selected parts of the articles to see what the audience, the people thought of this man and if they by their comments and observations, saw him as SA;



also to answer Maslow's question of: "how tall can people grow, what can a human being become?" (Maslow *The Farther Reaches* 42).

To test my hypothesis: "Did Theodor Geisel become self-actualized by Dr. Seuss?", I needed a clear understanding of Abraham Maslow's definition of self-actualization; I discovered Maslow's definition of SA had three specific parts: (1) the characteristics of a SA person, (2) the being values a SA person seeks, known as "B"-values, and (3) the behaviors which lead a person to SA; from this I created a measuring device in the form of a code to be used throughout the paper. The code follows in the introduction and can also be located in the Annex. Once the three chapters: Biography, Books, and Reception were complete, I then applied the above instrument to each section, looking to see if and how Theodor Geisel became self-actualized by Dr. Seuss. The coding references to SA are in the footnotes with remarks making connections to Maslow's definition.

Abraham Maslow was born April 1, 1908 in Brooklyn, New York and died June 8, 1970 in Menlo Park, California. He went to City College of New York and then to the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he studied psychology and graduated in 1931 with his Master's degree in Psychology. Focusing on psychological growth, he chose to study healthy people, rather than patients at hospitals - establishing in his studies a positive approach to psychology. His subjects included: Jane Addams, Frederick Douglas, Albert Einstein, Eleanor Roosevelt and other healthy individuals.

He is best known for studying stages of growth in human motivation and creating Maslow's hierarchy of needs: a theory outlying the pattern that human motivations generally move through, the needs of human beings in priority, beginning with the primary needs: psychological, safety, love/belonging, esteem and self-actualization - the last being the highest. The needs are further defined in more detail:

1. Biological and Physiological needs - air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sex, and sleep.
2. Safety needs - protection from elements, security, order, law, stability, and freedom from fear.
3. Love and Belongingness needs - friendship, intimacy, trust, acceptance, receiving and giving affection and love. Affiliation, being part of a group (family, friends, work).

4. Esteem needs - achievement, mastery, independence, status, dominance, prestige, self-respect, and respect from others.

5. Self-Actualization needs - realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences (McLeod).

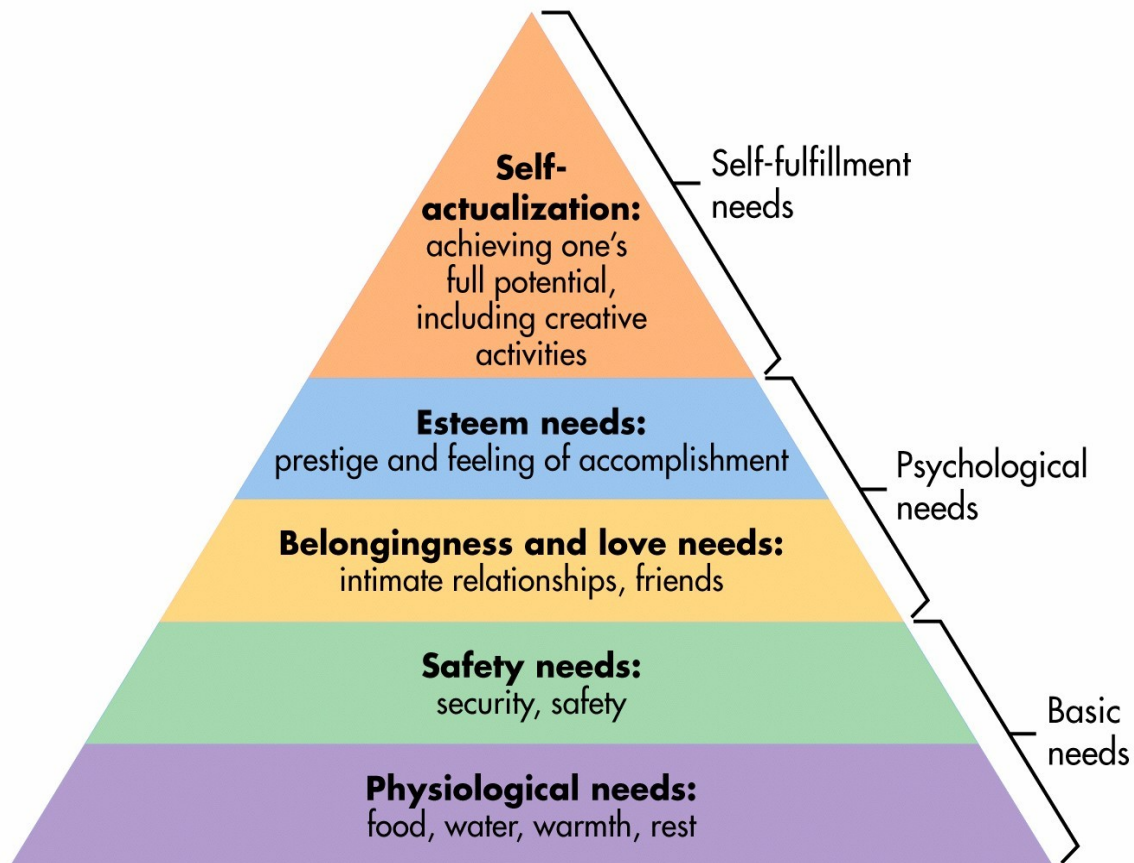


Diagram 3. McLeod, Saul. "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs." *Simply Psychology*, 2007; [www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html](http://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html).

Once the four basic needs were fulfilled, Maslow was curious to what motivated people further for the need of self-actualization: "It is quite true that man lives by bread alone – when there is no bread. But what happens to man's desires when there is plenty of bread and when his belly is chronically filled?" (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 38). He described his theory, hierarchy of needs, in his book, *Motivation and Personality*, which was published in 1954.

The term self-actualization was first coined by Kurt Goldstein, born November 6, 1878; a Jewish German neurologist and psychiatrist who escaped the Nazis in 1933 by moving to Amsterdam. He wrote *The Organism*, a holistic approach to biology derived from pathological

data in man. His subjects were patients with psychological disorders, particularly cases of schizophrenia and war trauma. In *The Organism*, the term self-actualization was first defined: “The organism has definite potentialities, and because it has them it has the need to actualize or realize them. The fulfillment of these needs represents the self-actualization of the organism” (Goldstein 168). Goldstein emigrated to America in 1935 and became a citizen of the USA in 1940; he died September 19, 1965 (“Kurt Goldstein (A Biographical Note)”).

In the *Psychological Review*, 1943, Volume 50(4), pages 370 – 396, Maslow wrote an article titled: “A Theory of Human Motivation.” In this article he defined self-actualization which as stated above, was first coined by Kurt Goldstein, yet with Maslow it was in a positive light being that his subjects were considered “healthy.” He stated the positive aspect as well as the foundation for his study from previous predecessors and their research:

The present paper is an attempt to formulate a positive theory of motivation... This theory is, I think, in the functionalist tradition of James and Dewey, and is fused with the holism of Wertheimer, Goldstein, and Gestalt Psychology, and with the dynamisms of Freud and Adler. (Maslow *A Theory* 1)

Self-actualization, according to Abraham Maslow is defined as this:

...desire for self-fulfillment, namely, to the tendency for him to become actualized in what he is potentially. This tendency might be phrased as the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming.

The specific form that these needs will take will of course vary from person to person. In one individual it may take the form of the desire to be an ideal mother, and another it may be expressed athletically, and still another it maybe expressing painting pictures or in inventions. It is not necessarily a creative urge although in people who have any capacities for creation it will take this form.

The clear and urgent of these needs rest upon prior satisfaction of the psychological, safety, love and esteem needs. We shall call people who are satisfied in these needs, basically satisfied people, and it is from these that we may expect the fullest (and healthiest) creativeness. (Maslow *A Theory* 7-8)

Maslow's theory is today a commonly used framework in many fields including: education, psychology, management, and sociology. In 1970, Maslow added a higher level after self-actualization, transcendence, "refers to the very highest and most inclusive or holistic levels of human consciousness, behaving and relating, as ends rather than means, to oneself, to significant others, to human beings in general, to other species, to nature, and to the cosmos" (Maslow *The Farther Reaches* 269). Carl Rogers, (1902 – 1987), a humanistic psychologist agreed with Maslow's theory but stipulated that for a person to be self-actualized, the environment needs to be correct, just as a plant needs water and sun, a person needs to be surrounded by: "genuineness (openness and self-disclosure), acceptance (being seen with unconditional positive regard), and empathy (being listened to and understood)" (McLeod). To date, though there is controversy over his theory, there is no one who has countered Maslow's theory completely; he remains known as the father of self-actualization and for this reason, his definition and research will be applied in this paper.

In 1968, Abraham Maslow was interviewed by Dr. E. L. Shostrum, PhD., a presentation of Psychological Films, filmed in Santa Ana, California, produced and edited by Rod Yould and can be accessed through *YouTube*. Dr. Shostrum using Maslow's book: *Motivation and Personality*, spoke with Maslow discussing the characteristics of self-actualization: honesty, awareness, freedom and trust. In each category there are sub-characteristics listed to define the main areas. I created a code from this interview. A table of the code below can be located in the Annex.

## Characteristics of Self-Actualization

### HONESTY

Honesty is to be your feelings; honesty to trust your feelings: anger and love in inter-personal relationships. In honesty there are three sub-characteristics: sense of humor, social interest, and inter-personal relations (Shostrum 2:23-2:49/54:22).

#### A-1 Sense of Humor

Sense of humor that is spontaneous, cannot be repeated, inventive, creative, it fits the situation; laughing at the human condition, good natured at the silliness, ludicrous situation of

the human situation; doesn't hurt people but teaches people; referred to as a Lincoln-ness kind of humor (Shostrum 2:50-3:15/54:22).

*Maslow explaining:* Mark Twain humor as opposed to Bob Hope kind of humor which is to just say what other's write, what one thinks is funny. Need to learn to differentiate the difference between hurting people with humor and the humor of the human condition, good natured. An example given by Maslow, that of a boy who got hit and everyone laughing at the boy, making fun of someone else, and that of good natured, laughing at the human condition, for example, someone slipping on a banana, just funny and a spur of the moment event which is funny (Shostrum 3:15-5:58/54:22).

#### A-2 Social Interest

Social interest that has a deep feeling of identification, sympathy, and affection in spite of the occasional anger, impatience or disgust (Shostrum 6:01-6:15/54:22).

*Maslow:* Negative emotions that come mostly from hypocrisy, phoniness, cruelty; those who have a reactive anger, anger at a situation, usually at cruelty, pomposity; cannot shrug off this anger or faking one way or another; it is called a righteous indignation. A social interest, feeling of identification with the human species, wide circle of people, easy sharing of humanness; easily breaking through social artificial, trivial barriers and boundaries, classes and cast systems. Also a desire to help; must do something about it; out of compassion try to do something to help, be involved. All of them had some unselfish involvement, not purely selfish involvement; love identification – or identification love, not romantic love but simply love for your brothers. Gets angry yet on the other hand a loving person helping humanity; this feeling of commonness with mankind. Walt Whitman an example, he had this nursing experience. Another example of a man who helped with the organizing of the Labor Union; then got out of it when it turned messy and turned to teaching children. Someone who kept their life trying to help people and willing to fight when that fighting was necessary (Shostrum 6:15-10:27/54:22).

#### A-3 Interpersonal Relations

Interpersonal relations that is capable of more fusion, greater love, more perfect identification, and an obliteration of the ego boundaries (Shostrum 10:30:50-10:43/54:22).

*Maslow:* There are levels of love: higher love and lower love. Higher love is a purer love; admiration for the quality of the other person that calls for admiration and love. The example of loving Abraham Lincoln, who is dead; he hasn't done anything for me, hasn't given me anything; it must be clearly admiration of Lincoln's qualities which are worthy; he calls for it. Contrary to the lower love, as in adolescence; looking for basic need gratification; more gratification, suppliers, satisfied customers, supplier of narcissistic; satisfied customers you might call it; a deficiency love level (Shostrum 10:45-13:17/54:22).

## B. AWARENESS

Awareness is the ability to know what is going on inside and to be able to express this; to be aware of one's world, to see and to hear; be aware of magic moments, peak experiences that have special significance (Shostrum 13:18-13:45/54:22).

### B-1 Efficient Perception of Reality

Efficient perception of reality is that of living in the real world of nature as opposed to the man-made mass of concepts, abstracts, beliefs and stereotypes that most people confuse with the world (Shostrum 13:45-14:05/54:22).

*Maslow:* A born perception, as if they have clear eyes, can see directly; seem to see more perspicuous; see through phonies; cannot be fooled and cannot con them. Good judgment without efficient evidence, can leap to a right conclusion and predictions in life. Can see color differences, smell more efficiently, sharper vision, sharper acuity through befuddlement and not easily fooled by nonsense lying advertising: in this sense more perception of reality (Shostrum 14:05-17:54/54:22).

### B-2 Freshness of Appreciation

Freshness of appreciation is that of appreciating over and over the basic goods of life with awe, wonder and even ecstasy (Shostrum 17:55-18:09/54:22).

*Maslow:* These basic things are all miracles; the miracles of life are repetitive, the important things like a flower or sunset or how cute a baby looks or a pretty girl. For most people familiarization breeds lack of attention and loss of reaction. A miracle remains a miracle even if it happens every morning; these people somehow respond to these as miracles; in spite that they

happen a great deal. Enjoyment again and again whereas the average person keeps looking for something new all the time (Shostrum 18:10-20:06/54:22).

### B-3 Peak Experience

Peak experience is that of an oceanic feeling, mystic experience, limitless horizons that open the vision; feeling of great ecstasy, of wonder and awe; loss of time and space; a conviction that something extremely important and valuable has happened, a magic like moment (Shostrum 20:07-20:36/54:22).

*Maslow:* Magic moments, mystical experiences, these come from many triggers: love experience, being on top of a mountain, music and/or being on a seashore. Anything that comes close to perfection produces a peak experience. Natural childbirth is an example to generalize this. Peak experiences occur widely through the population; the higher the degree of psychological health, the greater the frequency of peak experiences; the higher they reach, the more intense they are; the more cognitive they are, the more learning from them; the purer form, the more they can be remembered. Those who do remember tend to be changed, just as the mystics reported (Shostrum 20:36-24:12/54:22).

### B-4 Ethical Awareness

Ethical awareness is that of discrimination between ends and means, strongly ethical, definite moral standards; notions of right and wrong are often generally not the conventional ones; fixed on ends rather than means (Shostrum 24:15-24:32/54:22).

*Maslow:* It is as if these people know what is right and wrong; worked out for themselves, ethically. It involves the question of absolute right and wrong; for them they knew what was right and wrong, not tangled up about it and could not get suggested out of it because they know what they think is right; it is like they have an inner supreme court which they refer to rather than a need to look in a book or what mom or dad said or local customs are. They look within for the answers to the ethical questions (Shostrum 24:33-26:33/54:22).

## C. FREEDOM

Freedom is the ability to be spontaneous, to withdraw if this is what you wish, to create, to be whatever one is at the moment, no matter what that is, but to trust that self, to be freely one's self (Shostrum 27:22-28:41/54:22).

### C-1 Detachment

Detachment is the need for solitude, the need for privacy, often to remain above the battle, undisturbed and unruffled (Shostrum 28:42-28:58/54:22).

*Maslow:* There are two kinds of detachment; two kinds of objectivity; these people who they love, are willing to let it alone. For example, self-actualization of a child; so delighted they don't touch it; remain detached or objective; let the child be and enjoy them that way. To make no demands on the precept, don't twist it, let it be itself: this is in the oldest sense of the term to see the truth as it is; not as one would like it to be or as it should be. Discussion of privacy, these people who like to be alone, not in the crowd all the time; there are sacred times and enjoy being alone and want to be alone. These people don't share everything; want to keep some things to themselves (Shostrum 28:59-33:36/54:22).

### C-2 Creativeness

Creativeness that is originality, inventiveness, rather kin to naïve, an unspoiled child (Shostrum 33:40-33:52/54:22).

*Maslow:* Clearly an inventive person who every day is inventing. An example is a woman with a beautiful home with no money yet she picks wild grasses from the park: true inventiveness, spontaneous creation, spur of the moment that beautifully fits the situation. Change the conception of creativeness to true inventiveness (Shostrum 33:53-37:27/54:22).

### C-3 Spontaneity

Spontaneity is that of behavior marked by simplicity, naturalness, lack of artificiality or springing for an effect (Shostrum 37:28-37:38/54:22).

*Maslow:* It is a naturalness, ease of posture, lack of pretentiousness. Mrs. Roosevelt, she was never ashamed of her voice; Lincoln gave the public example, being casually great rather



than showing off or demanding; Adela Stevenson, another example. These people weren't actors to an audience. They were easy with their audience, not paralyzed, no stage fright and not playing to the gallery. Something inside that wanted to be expressed, rather than to win applause; this gives a sense of honesty and lack of striving, straining; it is with ease and grace (Shostrum 37:39-40:20/54:22).

## D. TRUST

Trust is to trust oneself deeply, the mission in life; to trust others and nature (Shostrum 40:24-40:38/54:22).

### D-1 Life Mission

Having a mission in life, a task to fulfill, a problem outside themselves that requires much of their energy (Shostrum 40:44-40:52/54:22).

*Maslow*: It is the search for identity; the search for self is a search for your life's work, that which suits best for the self. One is discovering; discovering one's vocation, calling, constitutional duty. If you know yourself well enough then you will discover what you are best suited for and then that is what makes you happiest; you are most effective with. "The making real of the inner self which is understood as constitutional, temperamental: and that means what you love, what you are interested in, what excites you, what fascinates you, and that is the cause outside yourself which paradoxically then becomes the defining characteristic of yourself" (Maslow - word for word). It is the defining characteristic of yourself, once found, one becomes objective, fascinated with something which allows to forget about pride, ego, showing off, applause; the fascinating thing out there becomes worthwhile in itself (Shostrum 40:53-43:35/54:22).

### D-2 Autonomy

Autonomy is the inner directedness, independence of culture and environment; they are dependent for their own development, their growth, own potentialities and lightened resources (Shostrum 43:38-43:52/54:22).

*Maslow*: It is an intangible quality; sense of these people being their own bosses; doing what they themselves decided to do. They are responsible to themselves, not being weather vanes

and not easy to influence. In a conformity situation they resist suggestions more readily than others, as if they choose what they wanted to do; you might urge them to do something but it was their decision. There is a sense of they were themselves, not tradition bound; resistance to in enculturation. They seem to be like each other, independent of the century, independent of the culture; for example, Lincoln made up his own mind, couldn't diddle him around; Jefferson went against the grain; he was willing to be unpopular, following his own star: walking through laughing and criticism as if he was a duck and the water was running off his back; it didn't bother him. Other examples, Mrs. Roosevelt, in the 30's, denunciation; everyone made fun of her yet she forgave them; she understood them: how could you expect something else, she was easy about that; she created a new form for a president's wife, an active life; this was her invention (Shostrum 43:54-47:50/54:22).

### D-3 Acceptance

Acceptance of self, others, and of nature; can take the frailties, sins, and evils of human nature in the same unquestioning spirit which one takes the characteristics of nature (Shostrum 47:53-48:10/54:22).

*Maslow:* For instance, women accepting femaleness, not getting caught up in being a female; men just being male, masculine, not fighting with self. As if this is an extension, a perception of reality; they do not fight with reality: the leaves are green. Not, I could have done it better. Quite relaxed in the world as it is, defining it, a very nice world. Not a god like feeling, a scolding feeling that it should have been different. These people accept the nature of trees, labor pains, pregnancy, squirrels; it was approved of. They live comfortably in their homes, accept the way the home was set-up; quite comfortable in the world, appreciative. See how interesting human nature is instead of having theories how awful it is or how wonderful it is. Simply put, taking it as it came, acceptance. An example: Mrs. Roosevelt relating herself to the facts of human nature. She worked with the United Nations and remained calm with people in a group who would disagree. She was not mad at their shortcomings if someone didn't understand it; just explained it more. In a lecture she said that politics is a way of working with human beings; a way of extending her power. It is the only way you have: it is very easy for a woman to help two, three or four babies but in order to help two or three million babies, the way you do it is get into committees; the acceptance of the necessity of human nature (Shostrum 48:12-52:37/54:22).

## The Being (“B”) Values

In 1971, Maslow wrote a book titled, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, in it he wrote of the people he used for his studies; they were older people who had lived their life out and were visibly successful (42). Maslow wrote that when he studied these sort of people: healthy, strong, creative, saintly, and sagacious - one would get a different view of mankind. An interesting question he posed is this: “You are asking how tall can people grow, what can a human being become?” (42). He continued and stated that self-actualizing people have one thing in common without exception: they are involved in a cause outside their own skin:

They are devoted, working at something, something which is very precious to them - some calling or vocation in the old sense, the priestly sense. They are working at something which fate has called them to somehow and which they work at and which they love, so that the work-joy dichotomy in them disappears. (42)

He then went on to say these people are all in search of something he called “being” values (“B” is short for the being); they will search for these B-values all their lives; they are intrinsic within them; they are natural, innate, inborn, something they have been in search of all their lives. Listed below are the fourteen *Being-Values* Maslow spoke of from his book, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*:

- 1-V. Truth: honesty, reality, nakedness, simplicity, richness, essentiality, oughtness, beauty, pure, clean and unadulterated completeness.
- 2-V. Goodness: rightness, desirability, oughtness, justice, benevolence, honesty, we love it, are attracted to it, approve of it.
- 3-V. Beauty: rightness, form, aliveness, simplicity, richness, wholeness, perfection, completion, uniqueness, honesty.
- 4-V. Wholeness: unity, integration, tendency to oneness, interconnectedness, simplicity, organization, structure, order, not dissociated, synergy, homonomous and integrated tendencies.
- 4a-V. Dichotomy-transcendence: acceptance, resolution, integration, or transcendence of dichotomies, polarities, opposites, contradictions, synergy, i.e., transformation of oppositions into unities, of antagonists into collaborating or mutually enhancing partners.

- 5-V. Aliveness: process, not-deadness, spontaneity, self-regulation, full-functioning, changing and yet remaining the same, expressing itself.
- 6-V. Uniqueness: idiosyncrasy, individuality, noncomparability, novelty, *quale*, suchness, nothing else like it.
- 7-V. Perfection: nothing superfluous, nothing lacking, everything in its right place, unimprovable, just-rightness, just-so-ness, suitability, justice, completeness; nothing beyond; oughtness.
- 7a-V. Necessity: inevitability, it must be *just* that way, not changed in any slightest way, and it is good that it *is* that way.
- 8-V. Completion: ending, finality, justice, it's finished, no more changing of the Gestalt, fulfillment, *finis* and *telos*, nothing missing or lacking; totality, fulfillment of destiny, cessation, climax, consummation closure, death before rebirth, cessation and completion of growth and development.
- 9-V. Justice: fairness, oughtness, suitability, architectonic quality, necessity, inevitability, disinterestedness, nonpartiality.
- 9a-V. Order: lawfulness, rightness, nothing superfluous, perfectly arranged.
- 10-V. Simplicity: honesty, nakedness, essentiality, abstract unmistakably, essential skeletal structure, the heart of the matter, bluntness, only that which is necessary, without ornament, nothing extra or superfluous.
- 11-V. Richness: differentiation, complexity, intricacy, totality, nothing missing or hidden, all there, "nonimportance," i.e., everything is equally important, nothing is unimportant, everything left the way it is, without moving, simplifying, abstracting, rearranging.
- 12-V. Effortlessness: ease; lack of strain, striving, or difficulty; grace: perfect and beautiful functioning.
- 13-V. Playfulness: fun, joy, amusement, gaiety, humor, exuberance, effortlessness.
- 14-V. Self-sufficiency: autonomy, independence, not-needing-any-thing-other-than-itself-in-order-to-be-itself, self-determining, environment-transcendence, separateness, living by its own laws; identity. (128 – 129)

## Behaviors Leading to Self-Actualization

In the same book as listed above, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, Maslow listed eight on-going behaviors that lead to a self-actualized person:

- 1-B. Experiencing fully, vividly, selflessly, with full concentration and total absorption.
- 2-B. A process of choices, one after another.
- 3-B. There is a self to be actualized.
- 4-B. When in doubt, be honest rather than not.
- 5-B. Making better choices; to be courageous rather than afraid, take responsibility for listening to inner voice and being honest.
- 6-B. The process of actualizing one's potential; becoming smarter, using one's intelligence.
- 7-B. Transient moments that break off illusions; getting rid of false notions, learning what one is not good at, learning what one's potentialities are *not* – this is discovering also what one is.
- 8-B. Finding out who one is, what one is, what one likes, what one doesn't like, what is good for one and what is bad, where one is going and what is the mission (43-49).

The Organization of the paper is in three parts: Chapter I: Biography – Footsteps; the first chapter goes over the life of Theodor Seuss Geisel. The footnotes reveal the process of SA throughout his life. Chapter II: Books – Stepping Stones; in the second chapter, the books of Dr. Seuss are given a synopsis, followed by my interpretation of the meaning and how it relates to SA. The code is applied throughout with footnotes below continuing to reveal the SA of Theodor through his books and what was important to him. Chapter III: Reception – Dinosaur Prints; the last chapter, the reception, edited parts of newspaper articles and selections in books are given, beginning when Theodor was twenty-five years of age through to the present; the footnotes link SA in the articles.

## CHAPTER I: BIOGRAPHY - FOOTSTEPS

### Introduction Chapter I

The hypothesis of this paper is: “Theodor Geisel became self-actualized by Dr. Seuss.” Chapter one goes over the life of Theodor and the steps he took in his life which led him to become self-actualized. It reveals how he kept his basic needs met, for example: finding work, keeping important people close to him, finding success in his illustrations and writings; how success brought him confidence to take another step forward; how coincidence or providence, he often called it accident, was leading him to an undertaking he had to do - a deep calling from within which pulled him, directed him, brought circumstances and people into his life which would help him find and do what he was best suited for, his life mission; how he as a person made choices that led him in the right direction; how he learned what was good for himself and what he needed in order to be successful in his work and life. The steps he took reveal what was morally important to him, his values and where they would direct him to a path of self-discovery.

The major events and influences in Theodor’s life also had a great impact on him - the way he thought and was motivated; he was born in a city, Springfield, MA, where invention and progress were on the minds of the citizens; he would experience World War I, Prohibition, the Great Depression, World War II, and be surrounded by many social issues: illiteracy, environmentalism, arms control, conformity, prejudices, anti-Semitism, commercialism, and other cultural concerns. Theodor was an individual who was creative, subversive, used his voice, yet at the same time was shy and timid. He saw life through the wrong end of the telescope, adored humor and pranks, never backed down from a challenge but rose to the occasion and super-exceeded – went above and beyond, had a sense of the absurd in serious situations, had an unleashed imagination and a tendency to exaggerate. He was a man of conviction and one who believed in childhood and fantasy.

At approximately the same time period, Abraham Maslow was writing and working on his theory of basic needs and self-actualization. The footnotes throughout the text will highlight the moving bullet going through Theodor Geisel’s life to reveal how he hit the target of becoming self-actualized: highlighting the characteristics found in a SA person, the B-values a SA person seeks and behaviors that lead to SA. Self-actualization again defined: “the desire for self-fulfillment, namely, the tendency to become actualized in what one is potentially; the desire

to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming” (Maslow *A Theory* 7). Theodor Seuss Geisel has been described as a conservatively shy and attentive, gentleman, “but beneath this outer austerity beats a wildly impulsive heart. Even with the most serious intentions, the mind of Ted Geisel is so fanciful that he has never been able completely to subdue it” (Cahn). This heart and mind will take this individual on an unforgettable journey.

## 1904 – 1925 Formative Years

To set the stage where the subject of this research was born and raised, one must look at the energy and environment he was born into. The year was 1904, the place was Springfield, Massachusetts, USA, nicknamed the “City of Progress” and here is why it boasted:

Growing everyday improving all the time.

A clean, progressive, thrifty city... steam and electric roads radiate in all directions.

A healthy public spirit and civic patriotism.

An efficient city government which aims to keep abreast with the best of modern municipal practices.

Its classic public buildings elevate the standard of architecture; teach new and beautiful ideas.

The purest filtrated water supplied from the Berkshire Hills.

Its fire department leads every American city in use of motor equipment.

1.50 miles of tree lined streets finished like a state road.

A river front of .5 miles.

Parks and playgrounds covering 600 [735] acres valued at 3 million dollars.

A model street railway system of 137 miles which radiates through an unrivalled picturesque region.

Springfield products valued at 40 million dollars are yearly sold from' its 330 factories, employing 15 thousand skilled mechanics.

At the front in education and art.

Its new city library, built at a cost of 355 thousand dollars, has a capacity for 500 thousand books, free for all to use.



Its art museum is celebrated throughout the world.

The technical high school teaches the useful trades.

The commercial high school gives our youth a business training.

The kindergarten school system originated here.

A thrifty city rapidly becoming wealthy.

The twelve theatres and amusement places are of a high class.

The “garden of the east,” where life's worth living.

...

Here's to the town that Pynchon founded;

Could he know

How we've grown

Wouldn't he be astounded!

Come to Springfield, Massachusetts, the city of progress and “see something worthwhile.” (Storrs, George)

Being a progressive city, with a river running through it, parks to play in, education a priority, buildings created to teach beautiful new ideas, transportation at its best, pure water to drink, jobs to have, money to make, and the chance at the American dream, surely life was worth living there, and thus, it attracted many immigrants from Europe.

Two families, the Geisels and the Seusses both arrived from Germany during the Civil War and planted roots. Both families, industrious and hardworking, found success and wealth to be in the middle to upper class in society. Children from the two families met, Theodor Geisel met Henrietta Seuss, they married in 1901 and from this union, the subject of the research was born in 1904. It is evident that this individual was born into an environment where ingenuity and invention were on the minds of the people; there was a spirit of creativity and imagination within his family and within the city. In 2011, Springfield changed its nickname to “City of Firsts” and

here is why:

1794: First US armory

1825: First automobile, powered by steam, invented by Thomas Blanchard

1844: First vulcanization of rubber by Charles Goodyear, later used for tire production

1845: First railroad sleeping car, produced by Wason Manufacturing Company

1847: First Merriam-Webster dictionary published

1853: First national horse show

1854: First monkey wrench, produced by Bemis & Call

1858: First publication of Emily Dickinson's poems in *Springfield Republican*

1860: First popular American board game, *The Checkered Game of Life* (now *The Game of Life*) by Milton Bradley

1873: First US postcard printed by Morgan Envelope Factory

1875: First dog show in US

1885: *Good Housekeeping* magazine founded

1892: Basketball invented by local professor, Dr. James Naismith

1895: First gasoline-powered automobile, the Duryea

1901: First motorcycle, the American Indian

1907: First fire department with mobilized fire engine, built by Springfield's Knox Automobile Company

1920: Rolls Royce first produced in Springfield

1930: First marketing of frozen foods by Clarence Birdseye, using Springfield as a test market

1931: "Gee Bee" monoplane first produced in Springfield by Granville Brothers Aircraft

1937: Seymour Planetarium at Springfield Museum of Science built, now oldest operating planetarium in the country

1937: *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street* published, first children's book written by Springfield native Theodor Geisel, also known as Dr. Seuss. (Springfield Museum)

The last entry mentioned in the "City of Firsts" is the subject of this research paper: Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss. He titled his first book, *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*, after a street in Springfield, his hometown; the city of progress and firsts, which would also be seen in his life, progress – a way of thinking, looking to the future, a visionary...a mind moving and thinking forward, and firsts – an imagination that creatively looked at life through the wrong end of the microscope to create with illustrations and writings worlds for children to explore and get lost in. But important events occurred before 1937 and after, which brought Theodor to the place where he would be associated and often better be known as Dr. Seuss and be self-actualized.

Headline in *The Springfield Republican Sunday* newspaper read: "At start of a century, Ted Geisel born into a bustling Springfield" (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. "At Start of a" Section E). Theodor Seuss Geisel was born March 2, 1904 at 22 Howard St, Springfield, Massachusetts to Theodor Robert and Henrietta (Seuss) Geisel, parents of German origin. Theodor's grandparents on his father's side, Theodor and Christine (Schmaelgel) Geisel, were immigrants from Germany; he from Mühlhausen, Baden and she from Württemberg; they settled in Springfield, MA during the Civil War. Theodor's grandparents on his mother's side were also immigrants; George Seuss, was born in Bavaria and Margaretha Greim was also born in Bavaria (Reitwiesner).

Theodor had two sisters, his older sister Margaretha Christine, (known as Marnie) and a younger sister named Henrietta, named after his mother, who "died of pneumonia at just eighteen months old. Ted was not yet four when Henrietta died; the image of the child's tiny casket reposing in the music room was a memory that stayed with Ted his entire life" ("Dr. Seuss." *Exhibit*). At the age of four, his family moved to 74 Fairfield Street where he remained until he went off to college (Grahame-Smith 7).

He lived in a pale grey house on Fairfield Street in a brand new development of Forest Park, an area of predominately middle and upper-middle class families.

The house was spacious, with three bay windows on the first floor. The front porch was shaded by a trellis, a perfect place for Ted to march his toy soldiers. The living room was a dark oak-paneled room with heavy wainscoting. The house also had a music parlor with an upright piano.

In these years Forest Park was an idyllic place to grow up and learn about the world.<sup>1</sup> The large park that Everett Barney had given to the city was just a short walk away. (“Dr. Seuss” *Exhibit*)

Theodor was born into this strong German family which had a long history of success and challenges.<sup>2</sup> Theodor’s paternal grandfather, a former jeweler (Springfield Museums “Seuss in”), changed professions and with Christian Kalmbach, in 1876, opened a brewery named Kalmbach & Geisel Springfield Brewery Company, on Boston Road, in Springfield, MA; it became one of the largest breweries in New England. Theodor’s father worked at the brewery for 35 years and became president of the company in January, 1920; a day before Prohibition. “My grandfather was a German cavalry officer who decided he didn’t want to be one,” is the way Theodor always told the tale. “He came here and started a brewery in Springfield. It was called Kalmbach and Geisel’s and everyone knew it as ‘Come Back and Guzzle.’ He left the brewery to my father the day before Prohibition set in” (Sullivan 22).

Theodor’s grandparents on his mother’s side were very active in the German community in the city; they ran a bakery in the South End of Springfield on Howard Street and his grandfather was the founding president of the Springfield Turnverein, a social and gymnastics club (Springfield Museums “Seuss in”).

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<sup>1</sup> Maslow asked this question regarding motivation and man’s potential once his basic needs are met: “It is quite true that man lives by bread alone – when there is no bread. But what happens to man’s desires when there is plenty of bread and when his belly is chronically filled?” (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 38). Theodor was born into a middle to upper-class family; the biography will reveal the motivation of Theodor’s steps and what happened to this man who had his daily fill of bread.

<sup>2</sup> Theodor learned from his grandparents and parents that with challenges, great opportunities can arise. In his life, he would learn to embrace challenges; these challenges would direct him step by step toward his life mission, toward SA.

German was the language spoken at home and at the Protestant church his family attended. Springfield had a large community of German immigrants numbering about a thousand (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 5). Theodor was bilingual, able to speak German and English. His made-up, zany, and creative words<sup>3</sup> have been attributed to his ability to speak two languages. “From the start this tall, skinny, dark-haired boy showed a love of the absurd<sup>4</sup> and a penchant for exaggeration, elevating ordinary neighborhood happenings into events of excitement and intrigue.<sup>5</sup> His parents came to consider his recall to be formidable and his ear for meter unrelenting<sup>6</sup> – in both English and German, the language of the household” (4).

Theodor’s mother, Henrietta, referred to as Nettie, was a tall beautiful woman of six feet, nearly two hundred pounds, athletic, and “known for her fearless and grace as a high diver” (6). She read to Theodor and his older sister Marnie every night and chanted rhymes she had learned as a young girl working at her family’s bakery which was across from the Howard Street Armory (Springfield Museums *Exhibit*). “Apple, mince, lemon...peach, apricot, pineapple...blueberry, coconut, custard and SQUASH!” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 7). His mother encouraged both her children’s imagination. “I was always drawing with pencils, pens, crayons, or anything,” he said. “And nearly always it was animals, goofy-looking ones. My mother over-indulged me and seemed to be saying, ‘Everything you do is great, just go ahead and do it’”<sup>7</sup> (Sullivan 22). She even encouraged Theodor drawing cartoons on his bedroom walls.<sup>8</sup> Marnie was quoted: “Not long ago we had this house repapered which necessitated stripping the walls. In every room on the bare plaster was a cartoon done by Ted many years ago. It had one good result. The workmen hurried through their stripping so as to get to the next room and see what it contained” (“Gay Menagerie” 5G).

Theodor’s father, Theodor, was a tall man with black hair and a moustache, who dressed impeccably; he was a man of quiet discipline, never raising his hand and rarely his voice. If angry with someone, he would simply stop talking to them. His counsel to his son was: “You will never be sorry for anything you never said” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 7). His

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<sup>3</sup> C-2 Creativeness

<sup>4</sup> A-1 Sense of humor

<sup>5</sup> B-2 Freshness of appreciation

<sup>6</sup> B-1 Efficient perception of reality

<sup>7</sup> 3-B There is a self to be actualized; realizing encouragement developed their gifts within.

<sup>8</sup> C-1 Detachment: let the child be and enjoy them as they are. C-2, Creativeness, original.

father also was very self-disciplined physically; each morning he would hold his favorite rifle above his head for ten to twelve minutes. In 1902, as an expert marksman, he held a world title at two hundred yards (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 7). “My father had an all-consuming hobby that I always thought was silly and unproductive. It was shooting holes in paper targets. But he was an inspiration. Whatever you do, he taught me, do it to perfection” (7). Later in life, Theodor framed a paper target of his father’s which was perforated by his father’s exact shots, and kept it mounted on the wall wherever he lived; “To remind me of perfection”<sup>9</sup> (*Fensch Of Sneetches* 87).

Theodor in his young elementary school years attended three different schools: 1910 – 1911, Belmont Ave. School; 1911 – 1914, Sumer Ave. School and in 1914 – 1916, Forest Park School. At the age of 12, Theodor entered an advertising contest in *The Springfield Union* newspaper and won a prize. He drew an advertisement for a fishing tackle. But his first drawings were of the animals in the Forest Park Zoo. “I used to go to the zoo a lot, and when I returned home I would try to draw the animals...” (108). “I could never draw things as they are, but I can draw weird animals” (Shea 5b). In an interview in 1980, Theodor reflected on his beginnings of drawing animals:

“My style of drawing animals... derives from the fact that I don’t know how to draw. I began drawing pictures as a child – as I mentioned before – trying, let’s say, to get as close to a lion as possible; people would laugh, so I decided to go for the laugh.<sup>10</sup> I can’t draw normally. I *think* I could draw normally if I wanted to, but I see no reason to re-create something that’s already created.”<sup>11</sup> (*Fensch Of Sneetches* 109)

From 1916 – 1920, while attending Central High School, activities included playing tenor banjo in a jazz band, editor for the yearbook *PNALKA* and editor of the school newspaper, *The Central Recorder* (“Dr. Seuss” Springfield Museums).

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<sup>9</sup> 7-V Perfection: everything in its right place.

<sup>10</sup> A-1 Sense of humor. Theodor’s intelligence within directed him toward humor and his life mission.

<sup>11</sup> C-1 Detachment: don’t twist it, let it be itself. C-2 Creative: true form of inventiveness; Theodor was brilliant in following his own star; he was a creator.

Ted's creativity with both words and images began to emerge during his high school years.<sup>12</sup> At Central High School (later Classical) Ted began submitting work to *The Central Recorder*. He also began using pseudonyms at about this time. Later as a "boys' news editor" he wrote reports about the debate club and produced creative items that reflected his skill as a poet and illustrator.<sup>13</sup> ("Dr. Seuss" Springfield Museums)

According to Marnie, his first "bid for fame came by contributing to *The Recorder*" ("Gay Menagerie" 5G). The poem, "O Latin", was a parody of Walt Whitman's "O Captain! My Captain" which was written in 1865 ("Dr. Seuss" Springfield Museums). It was Theodor's first published piece of work, appearing in *The Recorder* issue, February 7, 1919; at the same time, he also began to submit cartoons to *The Recorder* as well ("Dr. Seuss" Springfield Museums).

"O LATIN"

O Latin! My Latin! that study hour is

done

My brain has weathered every verb, the

translation now is won,

The time is near, the bell I hear,

the pupils all revolting,

While follow eyes the unforeseen, a

"comp" test grim and scarring.

But O heart! heart! heart!

The wrong lesson I have read,

And at the desk the teacher sits,

My lord, what she has said!

O Latin! My Latin! O when will ring

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<sup>12</sup> D-1 Life Mission: an energy that came from within, emerging; this would be Theodor's vocation, calling – creativity with both words and images.

<sup>13</sup> C-2 Creativeness: a true form of inventiveness; the skill of a poet and illustrator was recognized in the items Theodor created.

that bell?

Rise up! rise up! For you are next—ye,

gods, but this is—,

For you bad marks and scarlet “D’s”, for

you a failing waiting,

For you she calls, the teacher dear, her

dark green eyes are gleaming.

O trot! dear trot!

The time is almost sped,

It would be fine if on the desk

The teacher would fall dead.

I surely cannot answer, my lips are tight

and still,

My teacher looks so wild and bold, she

gives me now a chill.

My classmates snicker, now they grin, a

murmur starts to run.

A fearful class! I’ll never pass! my les-

sons are not done.

Walk out, O class, when rings the bell!

But I with mournful tread



Go to the room at her request

And come out almost dead.

Theodor Geisel, 20 ½.

(Geisel, Theodor Seuss. “O Latin!”)

A short poem written after “O Latin”: Pete the Pessimist says:

It’ll be just our luck to be in Latin Class when they turn back the clocks. T.S. G.

(Geisel “O Latin!”)

Another poem published in the school paper, *The Central Recorder*; Theodor’s thoughts on what the students wanted and how to get it organized:<sup>14</sup>

#### A PUPIL’S UNION

We, the undersigned down-trodden  
pupils of Central, hereby establish a Pupil’s Union.

We intend to gain the Student body as a  
Whole in this organization and

Strike until we gain the following

Objects.

1. A two day week, a three  
hour day, and extra pay for home-  
work.
2. Easy chairs in Rooms 1 – 36  
inclusive.

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<sup>14</sup> D-2 Autonomy: lightened resources, not tradition bound. 5-B, courageous rather than afraid. Theodor enjoyed expressing his thoughts through the written text mixed with humor. It was the beginning of a need to protect the lower-class, “down-trodden” - the students.

3. Entertainment, as dancing  
and movies, in all study rooms.

T.S.G.

(Geisel “A Pupil’s Union.”)

His one and only art class was short and brief:

“I did attend one art class in high school. And at one point during the class I turned the painting I was working on upside down – I didn’t know exactly know what I was doing, but actually I was checking the balance:<sup>15</sup> If something is wrong with the composition upside down, then something’s wrong with it the other way. And the teacher said, ‘Theodor, real artists don’t turn their paintings upside down.’ It’s the only reason I went on – to prove that teacher wrong.”<sup>16</sup> (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 109)

His teacher also said to Theodor: “You will never learn to draw, Theodor. Why don’t you just skip class for the rest of the term?” (Shea). She also told him that if he broke the rules of an artist it would lead him to failure (Grahame-Smith 10); he never returned to another art class.<sup>17</sup> “That teacher wanted me to draw the world as it is,” said Geisel, “and I wanted to draw things as I saw them”<sup>18</sup> (Sullivan 22). He left art class after a day, and took his “peculiar view” to the school paper.<sup>19</sup> Ironically, by his fellow classmates he was called the class artist.<sup>20</sup>

During the time of World War I, 1914 – 1918, Theodor was a young boy going into

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<sup>15</sup> C-2 Creativeness: inventiveness. B-1 Efficient perception of reality: clear eyes, leap to a right conclusion, sharper acuity. Theodor said he didn’t know what he was doing but in fact his inner talents and gifts were directing him; his life mission was greater than he and guided him.

<sup>16</sup> Theodor rose to challenges in his life; something in him told him to turn the paper upside down; he was in fact correct in doing this; his inner knowing, B-1 efficient perception of reality was guiding him. Maslow wrote that this characteristic, brought good judgement without efficient evidence.

<sup>17</sup> D-2 Autonomy: following his own star; resist suggestions. 5-B Making better choices; responsibility for listening to inner voice. The strength within Theodor was greater than the pressure of following the crowd or a teacher with her point of view.

<sup>18</sup> C-2 Creativeness: originality.

<sup>19</sup> 2-B Process of choices. Theodor made choices which directed his life and led him toward his life mission; the ongoing process of self-actualization.

<sup>20</sup> Theodor’s friends saw clearly, without shutters on their eyes, or opinions of what adults or artists were “suppose” to do; they saw Theodor’s talent as an artist; they could see clearly: B-1 efficient perception of reality.

adolescence; Anti-Deutschland sentiment was at a high; he and his sister, Marnie, were often made fun of and shunned due to their German heritage. They suddenly were not welcome or popular in their neighborhood as they once had been. “Before the war his family was well respected in the community. After the war began, when Ted was just 10 years old, friends and neighbors subtly altered their interactions with his family” (Dr. Seuss. “Exhibit.” Photo 5026). Theodor was known as “the German kid with the three-legged dog” (Grahame-Smith 10). President Woodrow Wilson spent federal money to produce films demonizing “Huns” (Mancini). Huns were originally nomadic people with eastern European origin. President Woodrow Wilson gave the Germans the title of Huns. Advertisements ran to warn Americans of these evil people and what they were capable of:

Another CPI unit secured free advertising space in American publications to promote campaigns aimed at selling war bonds, recruiting new soldiers, stimulating patriotism and reinforcing the message that the nation was involved in a great crusade against a bloodthirsty, antidemocratic enemy... Other ads showed cruel “Huns” with blood dripping from their pointed teeth, hinting that Germans were guilty of bestial attacks on defenseless women and children. “Such a civilization is not fit to live,” one ad concluded. (Daly)

Even the word “sauerkraut” was changed to “liberty cabbage” (Mancini) and the frankfurters were called “hot dogs” because of the German controversy. German books were removed from the libraries. The language at church changed from German to English.<sup>21</sup>

To be accepted in the community, the Geisel’s became very active to show their pride and dedication to American. The Boy Scouts began selling war bonds as a nationwide campaign to aid U.S. forces abroad (Mancini). Theodor’s grandfather eager to show the family’s patriotism bought \$1000 in bonds (Springfield Museums “Seuss in”). Theodor making one of the top ten in sales, thanks to his grandfather, was invited to the town’s Municipal Auditorium to receive an award from former President Theodore Roosevelt. An error was made which affected Theodor for the rest of his life. President Roosevelt was given only nine medals while there were actually ten children; Theodor being the tenth. When the President came to Theodor with no medal to

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<sup>21</sup> These circumstances affected a young Theodor in how he was accepted and as a young pre-adolescence how he saw himself. It also brought a realization that being different from his friends or neighbors had hurtful consequences; this stayed with him for the rest of his life and was put into his book, *The Sneetches*.

give, he asked quite harshly what this child was doing on stage. With no explanation the Scoutmaster quickly hastened Theodor off the stage. This moment has been duly noted time and time again, as the moment when Theodor developed a phobia for large crowds and speaking in public<sup>22</sup> (New England Historical Society).

1920, the year of Prohibition, another event that affected the Geisel family in a life changing way, the Brewery was closed. Yet, being a hard worker and used to financial success, Theodor's grandfather was a resourceful man and had been investing in properties. Theodor's father found work at the parks in Springfield and eventually became Superintendent of Parks including the Forest Park Zoo where he worked into his eighties (Grahame-Smith 11). This event also had a dramatic effect on Theodor's life as he began to spend hours with his father at the zoo, looking at, observing and drawing the animals. These memories helped inspire many of his "creatures."<sup>23</sup> "So my father instead became Curator of Public Parks. He put in hundreds of tennis courts and built up the zoo, which is where I learned about animals. I used to hang around there a lot, and they'd let me in the cage with small lions and small tigers and I got chewed up every once in a while"<sup>24</sup> (Sullivan 22).

In 1920 ½, Theodor graduated from High school. His favorite subject in school had been English; Edwin A. Smith, the English teacher, was a great inspiration to many students at Central High and spoke often of Dartmouth College, his Alma Mater where he had graduated in 1917. Theodor inspired, headed off to Dartmouth College. Theodor was quoted: "The reason so many kids went to Dartmouth at that particular time from the Springfield high school was probably Red Smith, a young English teacher who, rather than being just an English teacher, was one of the gang — a real stimulating guy<sup>25</sup> who probably was responsible for my starting to write" (Lathem 3).

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<sup>22</sup> A-2 Social interest: negative emotions that come from hypocrisy, cruelty. At a young age, Theodor faced a situation of rejection which would stay with him for the rest of his life.

<sup>23</sup> B-1 Efficient perception of reality: can see clearly; one who has sharper vision, sharper acuity; Theodor with his unique vision created animals as he saw them. Also, as Theodor spent many hours observing the animals, a resource of animals was beginning to be logged in his mind; a resource he would use for the rest of his life.

<sup>24</sup> B-3 Peak experience: magic moments as a child.

<sup>25</sup> A-3 Interpersonal relations: call for admiration.

## 1920 – 1925 Dartmouth College

In the fall of 1920, Theodor entered Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire with a major in English. While at Dartmouth he began spending most of his free time working on the campus humor magazine,<sup>26</sup> *The Jack-O-Lantern*. At the end of his junior year he became editor-in-chief, replacing Norman Maclean. Maclean and he had fun writing, taking turns with composing the lines. Theodor called it “sport writing” (Lathem 7). “Soon...I was essentially writing the whole thing myself” (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 62). Theodor noted that there were two very important aspects while working for the humor magazine which would give “the only clue to my future life.” One was the aspect of “combining humorous writings with zany drawings.” He explained:

"This was the year I discovered the excitement<sup>27</sup> of 'marrying' words to pictures. I began to get it through my skull that words and pictures were Yin and Yang. I began thinking that words and pictures, married, might possibly produce a progeny more interesting than either parent.<sup>28</sup> It took me almost a quarter of a century to find the proper way to get my words and pictures married. At Dartmouth I couldn't even get them engaged." (Lathem 10)

This idea of marrying words and pictures would be a defining style in Theodor’s life.<sup>29</sup> The second aspect involved a practice *The Jack-O-Lantern* had concerning the editorial writing; it would go unsigned but the art work was signed. Since it was the time of Prohibition, drinking was forbidden. In the spring of 1925, Theodor would have another turning point in his life that would further define him for the rest of his life. He explained:

“The night before Easter of my senior year there were ten of us gathered in my room at the Randall Club. We had a pint of gin for ten people, so that proves nobody was really drinking.<sup>30</sup> But Pa Randall, who hated merriment, called Chief Rood, the chief of police,

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<sup>26</sup> 8-B Finding out what one is good at, what one likes. 6-B Actualizing one’s potential; becoming smarter, using one’s intelligence.

<sup>27</sup> B-3 Awareness: Peak experience; limitless horizons that open the vision.

<sup>28</sup> D-1 Life mission: search for life’s work, calling, vocation.

<sup>29</sup> C-2 Creativeness: true inventiveness.

<sup>30</sup> A-1 Sense of humor: cannot be repeated, good natured in silliness. Theodor found humor in sticky situations and at a young age had a subversive nature which he mixed with satire.

and he himself in person raided us. We all had to go before the dean, Craven Laycock, and we were all put on probation for defying the laws of Prohibition, and especially on Easter Evening.” (Lathem 10)

The disciplinary action for this was that Theodor was removed as the editor of *The Jack-O-Lantern*. Needing to publish the paper, he continued to write,<sup>31</sup> which did not cause a problem, as the writings were not signed. “Articles and jokes presented no problem, since they normally appeared anonymously; thus, anything the deposed editor might do in that area could be completely invisible as to its source” (10). But the cartoons posed a problem as they were always signed. Theodor with a great imagination found a solution:<sup>32</sup> he signed his cartoons with various and curious names:

The final four *Jacko* issues in the spring of 1925 contained, accordingly, a number of Geisel cartoons anonymously inserted or carrying utterly fanciful cognomens (such as "L. Burbank" "Thos. Mott Osborne '27," and "D. G. Rossetti '25"), and two cartoons, in the number of April twenty-second, had affixed to them his own middle name (in one case "Seuss" alone and in the other "T. Seuss"). —

"To what extent this corny subterfuge fooled the dean, I never found out. But that's how 'Seuss' first came to be used as my signature. The 'Dr.' was added later on." (Lathem 11 - 12)

During his time at Dartmouth, he took only one creative writing course from an inspirational teacher, Ben Pressey:<sup>33</sup>

“Well, my big inspiration for writing there was Ben Pressey [W. Benfield Pressey of the Department of English]. He was important to me in college as Smith was in high school.

“He seemed to like the stuff I wrote. He was very informal,<sup>34</sup> and he had little seminars

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<sup>31</sup> 5-B Making choices; courageous rather than afraid; take responsibility to inner voice.

<sup>32</sup> C-2 Creativeness: inventive, original. D-2 Autonomy: dependent for own potentialities, lightened resources. Where there was a problem, Theodor applied imagination and found solutions. Imagination, thinking beyond reality to possibilities, it is in his imagination where he would find solitude and his mission in life.

<sup>33</sup> A-3 Interpersonal relations: clear admiration for worthy qualities.

<sup>34</sup> C-3 Spontaneity: effortless, ease, lack of pretention. 12-V Effortlessness; lack of strain.

at his house (plus a very beautiful wife, who served us cocoa). In between sips of cocoa, we students read our trash aloud.

“He’s the only person I took any creative writing courses from ever, anywhere, and he was very kind and encouraging.

“I remember being in a big argument at one of Ben’s seminars. I maintained that subject matter wasn’t as important as method. (I don’t believe that at all now.)

“To prove my point,<sup>35</sup> I did a book review of the Boston & Maine Railroad timetable. As I remember, nobody in the class thought it was funny – except Ben and me.” (Lathem 3 – 5)

Theodor graduated from Dartmouth College in 1925; as well, he was voted least likely to succeed<sup>36</sup> (Pease 141).

#### 1925 – 1926 Oxford College

Being the joker he was known to be, and having a serious father who enjoyed excelling at all he did as well as being proud of his children, Theodor played a joke on his father which had life altering affects.<sup>37</sup> Knowing his father wanted him to further his studies to become a college professor, Theodor explained:

"I remember my father writing me and asking, 'What are you going to do after you graduate?'

"I wrote back, 'Don't you worry about me, I'm going to win a thing called the "Campbell Fellowship in English Literature" and I'm going to Oxford.'

"He read the letter rather hurriedly. The editor of *The Springfield Union* lived across the street from us (that was Maurice Sherman; he was also a Dartmouth man), and my father ran across the street and said: ‘Hey, what do you know? Ted won a fellowship called the "Campbell Fellowship" and he's going to Oxford.’

“So, Maurice Sherman, being a staunch Dartmouth man, ran my picture in the paper (I think it was on the front page): 'GEISEL WINS FELLOWSHIP TO GO TO OXFORD.'

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<sup>35</sup> D-2 Autonomy: inner directedness, responsible to self, their own boss.

<sup>36</sup> Theodor was the class wit; though he was shy in public, with his peers he used humor and imagination to express his thoughts; it was not sure how a person at that time could make a living with these two characteristics, thus, considered least likely to succeed.

<sup>37</sup> A-1 Sense of humor: inventive, creative. 2-B A process of choices, one after another.

“And everybody called up my father and congratulated him.

“Well, it so happened that that year they found nobody in the College worthy of giving the Campbell Fellowship to. So, my father, to save face with Maurice Sherman and others, had to dig up the money to send me to Oxford, anyway.” (Lathem 13 - 14)

On August 24, 1925, Theodor traveled to England on the steamship *Cedric*, where he would attend Lincoln College, for one year, as a result of his “unleashed imagination and tendency to exaggerate”<sup>38</sup> which often took “him to surprisingly and wondrous places”<sup>39</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 40). Just as he would exaggerate with great imagination in life, this type of thinking and plot style was mirrored in Theodor’s method of writing children’s books: “Sometimes he questioned how he got into these jams, but more often he was plotting how to get out”<sup>40</sup> (40). He majored in English Literature, thinking “he must try to consider becoming a professor of English literature”<sup>41</sup> (40). “Yet for the rest of his extraordinary life, he would marvel at the unexpected events and influences of that Oxford year, none of them academic, that put his life in focus”<sup>42</sup> (40).

Lincoln College, the eighth oldest at Oxford, was not as grandiose as other colleges at Oxford; it was less expensive and since World War I, the enrollment was down. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, was its most acclaimed member (40). Theodor did not like arrogance or pomposity,<sup>43</sup> but “he liked Lincoln’s heart-of-Oxford setting on the narrow street called Turl, just steps from Blackwell’s cavernous bookshop and the fanciful dome of the Radcliffe Camera library”(41). The days at Oxford began with morning chapel, followed by lectures and tutorials; the afternoons were often going to Fuller’s tea shop to tell stories and discuss lectures. “Ted was beginning to feel ‘appallingly ignorant,’<sup>44</sup> preferring sketching<sup>45</sup> to reading required books, and

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<sup>38</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creativeness: spur of the moment, inventiveness.

<sup>39</sup> Trust: D-2 Autonomy: inner directedness, dependent for own development. 3-B Self to be actualized.

<sup>40</sup> These “jams” or could be called challenges, Theodor was attracted to; throughout his life challenges seemed to find him and he excelled at surmounting them; in his writings he would create challenges for the characters for the need to find solutions, a way out.

<sup>41</sup> 7-B Transient moments that break off illusions; learn what one is not good at.

<sup>42</sup> Trust: D-1 Life Mission. D-3 Acceptance. 4-B When in doubt, be honest.

<sup>43</sup> B-1 Efficient perception of reality. A-2 Social interest: negative emotions that come from phoniness.

<sup>44</sup> 7-B Break off illusions; get rid of false notions, learn what one is not good at.

<sup>45</sup> 8-B Finding out who one is, what one likes. 2-B Process of choices, one after another.



treasured the eccentricities of Oxford above its academic life” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 41).

“Ted was sensitive about his German background, and since he was neither a serious intellectual nor an extrovert, and certainly not an athlete, he spent most of his free hours with ‘other outsiders.’”

.....

“Even his few English friends were of the merrily rebellious sort, especially an undergraduate named Mirabel, whose father was ‘the twin brother of the Earl of Devonshire’... Her daring nature and affinity for pranks delighted<sup>46</sup> the commoner from New England, who was put off by the celebrated Oxford reserve.” (41- 42)

Theodor seemed to create situations where his pranks pushed the limits with people in authority.<sup>47</sup> An example of this is one time during a boat race at the Oxford College, where the crowd was dressed in “silks and satins” and enjoying the day, Theodor and Mirabel went to the race in Turkish fezzes and filmed a love affair for all to see; just a prank of course, yet, Mirabel coming from an aristocratic family, very proper, this was not looked highly upon. The rector of the college seeing the prank “announced that such high jinks were an American insult against English respectability, and he never acknowledged Ted again” (42).

The college in the 1920s was considered “a sanctuary of the aristocracy,”... “but Theodor saw little of that flamboyant scene. His brash and burgeoning sense of the absurd was beginning to shape his life; he hated pretense and wanted to laugh”<sup>48</sup> (44). Theodor found Oxford boring and stuffy. Three people are credited for giving him the wisdom and courage to leave after the first year. The first, A. J. Carlyle, nephew of the great Thomas Carlyle, who became Theodor’s tutor (Lathem 13-14).

“My tutor was A. J. Carlyle, the nephew of the great, frightening Thomas Carlyle. I was surprised to see him alive. He was surprised to see me in any form. I was bogged down

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<sup>46</sup> 13-V Playfulness: amusement. His steps in life attracted him to playfulness and humor. Theodor was known for going for the “laugh.”

<sup>47</sup> Freedom: C-3 Spontaneity: springing for an effect.

<sup>48</sup> Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: see through phonies. Trust: D-1 Life mission.

with old High German and Gothic and stuff of that sort, in which I have no interest whatsoever – and don't think anybody really should.” (Sullivan 25)

“Well, he was a great historian,<sup>49</sup> and he quickly discovered that I didn't know *any* history. Somehow or other I got through high school and Dartmouth without taking one history course.

“He very correctly<sup>50</sup> told me I was ignorant, and he was the man who suggested that I do what I finally did: just travel around Europe with a bundle of high school history books and visit the places I was reading about – go to the museums and look at pictures and read as I went. That's what I finally did.”<sup>51</sup> (Lathem 13-14)

The second was his professor, Émile Legouis, better known as Professor Oliver Onions (Sullivan 25), of Shakespearean texts:

"That was the man who really drove me out of Oxford. I'll never forget his two-hour lecture on the punctuation of *King Lear*.

"He had dug up all of the old folios, as far back as he could go. Some had more semicolons than commas. Some had more commas than periods. Some had no punctuation at all.

"For the first hour and a half he talked about the first two pages in *King Lear*, lamenting the fact that modern people would never comprehend the true essence of Shakespeare, because it's punctuated badly these days.

"It got unbelievable. I got up, went back to my room, and started packing.”<sup>52</sup> (Lathem 15)

Thirdly, sitting in this Shakespearean course with Theodor was a fellow student, Helen Marion Palmer, six years his senior; she asked why he was in here, when he should be

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<sup>49</sup> Honesty: A-3 Interpersonal relations: admiration for qualities.

<sup>50</sup> 7-B Getting rid of false illusions.

<sup>51</sup> 2-B Process of choices. 3-B Self to be actualized. 5-B Making better choices; to be courageous rather than afraid.

<sup>52</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: search for self. D-2 Autonomy: makes up own mind. Theodor was aware of something inside himself, guiding him; the class became so unbelievable, he said, he started packing. This was a major step in his life; a step toward actualizing himself.

cartooning.<sup>53</sup> She had observed that he found the class “very dull, and drew pictures constantly during lectures” (“Dr. Seuss.” *Readers’ Choice*).

"She was a gal who was sitting next to me when I was doing this notebook, and she was the one who said, ‘You’re not very interested in the lectures.’ She ‘picked me up’ by looking over and saying, ‘I think that’s a very good flying cow.’

"It was she who finally convinced me that flying cows were a better future than tracing long and short E through Anglo Saxon.

"She was the one who convinced me that I wasn't for pedagogy at all."<sup>54</sup> (Lathem 17)

Robert Sullivan, in writing a memoir of Dr. Seuss in the *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*, 1991 winter addition, noted Helen’s effect on Theodor: “Geisel, who always responded positively through self-effacingly to flattery, was smitten... She became Geisel’s friend, and from the first, his best critic” (25). Helen also became Theodor’s fiancé the spring of 1926.<sup>55</sup> “Geisel was bombing along one of those winding English byways on his motorcycle, with Helen traveling in the sidecar. Geisel proposed, Palmer accepted, the tire blew and the two of them landed, bruised but unbowed, in a ditch” (26).

Theodor remembered these times talking about his English notebook and what lay inside: "I think this demonstrates that I wasn't very interested in the subtle niceties and complexities of English literature.<sup>56</sup> As you go through the notebook,<sup>57</sup> there's a growing incidence of flying cows and strange beasts. And, finally, at the last page of the notebook there are no notes on

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<sup>53</sup> Helen had an awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality. Life brought Helen into Theodor’s life to help him along the path to SA, to fulfill his life mission. She had clear eyes to see what he could not or did not want to see at that moment.

<sup>54</sup> Helen was honest: A-2 Social interest: breaking through social artificial barriers. A-3 Interpersonal relations: admiration for the quality of the other person that calls for admiration and love.

<sup>55</sup> 2-B Process of choices, one after another.

<sup>56</sup> Honest to be one’s feelings. 4-B When in doubt, be honest. 5-B Making better choices.

<sup>57</sup> This notebook is on file at the UCSD special archives collection of Theodor Geisel. “That notebook remains as the most enchanting of Ted’s unpublished books, illustrated evidence of his wandering mind during lectures on Geoffrey Chaucer (whom he called Jeff), Shakespeare and Milton” (Morgan, D. and Morgan, J. *Dr. Seuss* 44). This revealed a freedom in his mind; C-1 Detachment: Theodor enjoyed being alone in his mind where he could be truly C-2 creative and inventing strange animals and characters.

English literature at all. There are just strange beasts”<sup>58</sup> (Lathem 15). The notebook revealed that perhaps a future other than that of a professor of English literature was drawing him, pulling him.<sup>59</sup>

Adam Lipsius summed up Theodor’s reasoning to leave Oxford:

When he’d gone to Oxford with plans of professing it was done in large part to appease his father and to match the academic aspirations of his more studious classmates at Dartmouth. He muddled through, despite his distaste for the work because he lacked the faith in himself to accept what he really wanted to be doing. The reason he mustered the gumption to leave at all, was that he found, in a woman he loved, the inspiration and example to pursue his own dreams... he was no longer isolated in his ambitions. He had a partner.<sup>60</sup> (197 - 199)

Dr. Seuss

When he began adding the Dr. to Seuss is debatable; yet practice with pseudonyms had as previously been noted, started at a young age in high school. In an interview dated November 28, 1937 in *The Springfield Daily Republican*, Theodor’s sister, Marnie, said he first started using “Dr. Seuss” at Dartmouth College:

“Ted went to Dartmouth college where he was editor-in-chief of *The Jack O’ Lantern*. That was where he first adopted his pseudonym. It was mother's maiden name, you know. As editor he had to provide fillers for odd places in the magazine, so he put his little sketches merely to fill up space, and not wishing to be identified with the drawings, signed them ‘Dr. Seuss.’” (“Gay Menagerie”)

In the *Reader’s Choice of Best Books*, November, 1939 issue, it stated:

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<sup>58</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: search for life’s work, that which suits best for self. He went for the laughter and absurd. These strange beasts were waiting to be put on paper; they had a story to tell and a mission to accomplish.

<sup>59</sup> 7-B Break off illusions. D-1 Life mission, that which takes up your energy, a calling.

<sup>60</sup> 5-B Making better choices; be courageous. 10-V Helen was honest; at the heart of the matter. She gave him confidence; Theodor when he was filled with confidence would take great steps toward self-fulfillment.

On his return from Europe he settled down to draw in earnest, signing himself ‘Dr. Seuss,’ the Dr. born of a long-coveted Ph.D. which he never got around to earning, [though later in life he was granted eight honorary doctorates] and the ‘Seuss’ a borrowing from his mother’s maiden name.<sup>61</sup> (He was reserving his real name for the literary career which meanwhile hung in abeyance).” (“Dr. Seuss.” *Readers’ Choice*)

Theodor said: "The main reason that I picked 'Seuss' professionally is that I still thought I was one day going to write *The Great American Novel*. I was saving my real name for that — and it looks like I still am" (Lathem 20). Theodor also told the addition of Dr. this way:

“I started to do a feature called ‘Boids and Beasties.’ It was a mock-zoological thing, and I put the ‘Dr.’ on the ‘Seuss’ to make me sound more professional.”

At first the self-bestowed “Dr.” was accompanied by “Theophrastus” or “Theo” in by-lines and as a signature for drawings, but with the passage of time ‘Dr. Seuss’ was settled on as the standard form of his identification. (24)

“The beasties were begot by ‘Dr. Theophrastus Seuss’ because Geisel thought this grandiloquent name lent a properly scientific cachet to his silly zoology”<sup>62</sup> (Sullivan 27).

In *The New Zealand Herald*, May 1, 1976 Theodor paid tribute to his father for the addition of Dr.; asked why he had chosen “Dr.” in his pen-name, Theodor chuckled and said, “Well, I went to college in America and then to Oxford University. I dropped out of Oxford. So, I figure that I saved my father a lot of money by just adopting the title doctor without first gaining a doctorate” (“From fly-spray came drum-tum Snumm”).

## 1926 – 1940 Early Years

### 1926 - 1927 - Traveling Europe

Leaving Oxford, Theodor, still holding onto a glimmer of hope in obtaining his doctorate first headed to the University of Vienna to study drama (Lipsius 184). This lasted less than a month and then he headed to Paris to attend the University of Sorbonne. Previously, while at a lecture at Oxford, the French professor, Emil Legouis, the leading authority on Jonathan Swift,

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<sup>61</sup> C-2 Creative: true inventiveness.

<sup>62</sup> Humor: A-1 Sense of humor. Freedom: C-2 Creativeness.

encouraged Theodor to enroll at the Sorbonne University to do a research study on Swift which was to take him two years. Theodor recounted:

“He talked to me at the end of the lecture and began selling me on going to study with him at the Sorbonne. And, after I left Oxford, I did so.

“I registered at the Sorbonne, and I went over to his house to find out exactly what he wanted me to do.

“He said, ‘I have a most interesting assignment which should only take you about two years to complete.’ He said that nobody had ever discovered anything that Jonathan Swift wrote from the age of sixteen and a half to seventeen.

“He said I should devote two years to finding out whether he had written anything. If he had, I could analyze what he wrote as my PhD thesis. Unfortunately, if he hadn’t written anything I wouldn’t get my doctorate.

“I remember leaving his charming home and walking straight to the American Express Company and booking myself a passage on a cattie boat to Corsica.”<sup>63</sup> (Lathem 17-18)

After Corsica, Theodor did as Carlyle’s suggested, for ten months he travelled the European continent, spending most of his time in France and Italy, reading history books, going to museums, and drawing pictures<sup>64</sup> (18). It was at this time he had the idea to write a great book: *The Great American Novel* and for this book he would use his real name, Theodor Geisel.

"While floating around Europe trying to figure out what I wanted to do with my life, I decided at one point that I would be the Great American Novelist. And so I sat down and wrote *The Great American Novel*.<sup>65</sup>

"It turned out to be not so great, so I boiled it down in *The Great American Short Story*. It wasn't very great in that form either.

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<sup>63</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: search for identity. D-2 Autonomy: inner directedness. Just as Theodor packed his bag after his class on Shakespeare at Oxford; he didn’t waste any time at the Sorbonne; he made a decisive step and finally left the university world and headed to Corsica.

<sup>64</sup> 1-B Experiencing fully. 2-B Process of choices. 3-B Self to be actualized. 5-B Better choices.

<sup>65</sup> 7-B Transient moments that break off illusions; learning what one is not good at.

"Two years later I boiled it down once more and sold it as a two-line joke to *Judge*."<sup>66</sup>  
(Lathem 18)

Boredom was not an option for Theodor,<sup>67</sup> not with the imagination bubbling within. In a 1974 interview, he recalled the path he had started down, going to Oxford, but made a change of plans:<sup>68</sup> "I was headed toward a career of professional boredom (teaching) after Dartmouth and Oxford" (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 58). Theodor through Dr. Seuss was finding himself and letting his talents within come to life:

His "serious" novel, however, was fated for failure, because the whimsical, long-suppressed spirit of Seuss was too apt to enjoy the spectacle of so much seriousness, all in one self-absorbed spot... Nonetheless, the plans of Ted Geisel were trampled by the talents of Dr. Seuss, and once he returned from Europe and decided he wanted to share his inverted, impossible, incredible vision of the world, there was no stopping him.<sup>69</sup>  
(Lipsius 200-202)

#### 1927 - Back Home in Springfield

Coming back from touring Europe, living at his parent's home in Springfield, Theodor decided to strike out as a cartoonist<sup>70</sup> (Sullivan 26).

"His future, he was coming to realize, lay in 'flying cows' and the woman who loved them, and when he returned home to Springfield, Massachusetts he worked like crazy to get his cartoons and creatures out there and seen by as wide an audience as possible."<sup>71</sup>  
(Lipsius 201)

"Fantastic representations of bears, lions, flying cows, hippocrasses and blinkets (for some of which the scientific identification is not entirely clear) were sent to dozens of magazines. And all of them came bouncing back again" ("Dr. Seuss." *Readers' Choice*). Finally, his first nationally published cartoon, a cartoon depicting two tourists on a camel, appeared in the

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<sup>66</sup> Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: laughing at himself, human condition.

<sup>67</sup> 5-V Aliveness: full-functioning, expressing self.

<sup>68</sup> 5-B Making better choices; courageous rather than fearful, taking responsibility for listening to inner voice and being honest.

<sup>69</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission. D-3 Acceptance of Dr. Seuss by Theodor Geisel.

<sup>70</sup> 5-B Courageous rather fearful. 3-B Actualizing self. 6-B Actualizing one's potential.

<sup>71</sup> 1-B Full concentration and total absorption. Trust: D-1 Discovering life mission.

July 16, 1927 issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*; he signed it Seuss. This single \$25 sale encouraged Theodor to move from Springfield to New York City.<sup>72</sup>

“When the *Post* paid me twenty-five bucks for that picture, I informed my parents that my future success was assured; I would quickly make my fame and fortune in *The Saturday Evening Post*.

“It didn’t quite work out that way. It took thirty-seven years before they bought a second Seuss: an article in 1964 called ‘If At First You Don’t Succeed – Quit!’

“...Bubbling over with self-assurance, I told my parents they no longer had to feed or clothe me.<sup>73</sup>

“I had a thousand dollars saved up from the *Jack-O-Lantern*...and with this I jumped onto the New York, New Haven, & Hartford Railroad; and I invaded the Big City, where I knew that all the editors would be waiting to buy my wares.” (Lathem 20)

1927 - New York, *The Judge* & Married Life

Now living in New York City, with a former friend from Dartmouth, John C. Rose, in a one-room studio above a nightclub in Greenwich Village, where each evening the two would be “standing on chairs, and with canes we’d brought for the purpose, playing polo with the rats to try and drive them out” (Sullivan 27), Theodor began his career drawing cartoons for several humor magazines including *Judge*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *College Humor*, *Vanity Fair*, *Life*, *Redbook*, and *Liberty* (“Geisel, Theodor Seuss.” *Current Biography* 138). But this noted success was not immediate:

“And I wasn’t selling any wares. I tried to do sophisticated things for *Vanity Fair*, I tried unsophisticated things for the *Daily Mirror*.

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<sup>72</sup> 2-B Process of choices, one after another. 5-B Courageous rather than afraid; with confidence and experience Theodor listened to his inner voice.

<sup>73</sup> 14-V Self-sufficiency: independence. Confidence within gave Theodor courage to take another step.



“I wasn’t getting anywhere at all, until John [his roommate] suddenly said one day, ‘There’s a guy called “Beef Vernon,” of my class at Dartmouth, who has just landed a job as a salesman to sell advertising for *Judge*.’” (Lathem 21)

John set-up the meeting with Norman Anthony, the editor of the *Judge*; the meeting was successful and Theodor was hired to draw cartoons and write “some crazy stories... It was a combination, about fifty-fifty; the articles always tied in with drawings”<sup>74</sup> (Lathem 22). The agreement was that he would be paid seventy-five dollars a week, though later he was paid with due bills. His first cartoon was of three turtles which stood stacked high on each other’s back; this was his first cartoon for the *Judge* which appeared on October 22, 1927 (“Dr. Seuss.” *Readers’ Choice*).

Theodor, again having success, his confidence boosted, made a big move; on the 29<sup>th</sup> of November, 1927, he married Helen Marion Palmer,<sup>75</sup> (“Dr. Seuss.” *Readers’ Choice*); the woman in his Oxford class who liked the flying cows and asked why he was at Oxford when he should be a cartoon artist. Helen by profession, a teacher and a children’s author, later became his business manager and closet collaborator<sup>76</sup> (“Geisel, Theodor Seuss.” *Current Biography* 141).

“We got married on the strength of that. Then, the magazine went semi-bust the next week, and my salary went down to fifty dollars.

“And the next week they instituted another fiscal policy (I was getting a little bit worried by this time) in which they dispensed with money entirely and paid contributions with due bills. Due bills?

“*Judge* had practically no advertising. And the advertisers it attracted seldom paid for the ads with money; they paid the magazine with due bills. And that’s what we, the artists and writers, ended up with in lieu of salary.

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<sup>74</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creativeness: true inventiveness; characterized Dr. Seuss’s style. Freedom: D-1 Life mission.

<sup>75</sup> 2-B Process of choices, one after another. 5-B Courageous rather than afraid; listening to inner voice.

<sup>76</sup> 9a-V Order: rightness, perfectly arranged.

“For instance: a hundred dollars; the only way for me to get the hundred dollars was to go down to the Hotel Traymore in Atlantic City and move into a hundred-dollar suite.

“So, Helen and I spent many weeks of our first married year in sumptuous suites in Atlantic City – where we didn’t want to be at all.

“Under the due-bill system I got paid once, believe it or not, in a hundred cartons of Barbasol shaving cream. Another time I got paid in thirteen gross of Little Gem nail clippers.

“Looking back on it, it wasn’t really so bad, because I didn’t have to balance any checkbooks – or file any income tax.

“How can you file an income tax when you’re being paid in cases of White Rock soda?”  
(Lathem 23-24)

The *Judge* was considered “the world’s wittiest weekly” (Minear 9). In *The Springfield Republican Daily* newspaper, dated March 1929, the headline read: “Young Geisel Making Good as Writer and Illustrator.” It went on to tell how the young man was now writing for the *Judge*;

The current issue of *Judge*, known as the *Jungle Number*, has particular interest as the cover illustration and one entire inside page, both drawings and articles are by a Springfield young man, who is now on the staff of the well-known comic magazine.

Theodor S. Geisel, son of the president of the Park Commission, Theodor R. Geisel and Mrs. Geisel, is the young man, who under the name Dr. Seuss, has won his spurs and is making rapid strides to the front among those who draw and write for the humorous magazines. He has been a frequent contributor to *Judge* and other magazines in New York, and some months ago became a member of the staff of *Judge*. He has been living in New York for the last two years, devoting himself to illustrating and satirical writing, for which he shows a decided flair.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: one’s calling, vocation, that which suits best for the self.

While Theodor had “won his spurs” in his illustrating and writing, his place of residence was not so good. The first home of the newlyweds was across from a stable in Hell’s Kitchen, on 18<sup>th</sup> Street.

“Horses frequently died in the stable, and they’d drag them out and leave them in the street, where they’d be picked up by Sanitation two or three days later.

“That’s where I learned to carry a ‘loaded’ cane. It was about a three-block walk to the subway. If you weren’t carrying a weapon of some sort, you’d be sure to get mugged.

“So, Helen and I worked harder than ever to get out of this place. And we finally managed to move north, to 79<sup>th</sup> Street and West End Avenue.<sup>78</sup> There were many fewer dead horses.” (Lathem 23)

1928 - ESSO, Standard Oil of New Jersey

While working for the *Judge*, Theodor created a “medieval knight who, after spending the whole day spraying every cranny of his castle with ‘Flit’ was thanklessly awakened from a sound by a dragon” (“Dr. Seuss.” *Readers’ Choice*). The knight quickly yells: “Quick Henry! The Flit!” to kill the dragon. Theodor explained this life changing incident with humor and how he chose the name Flit:

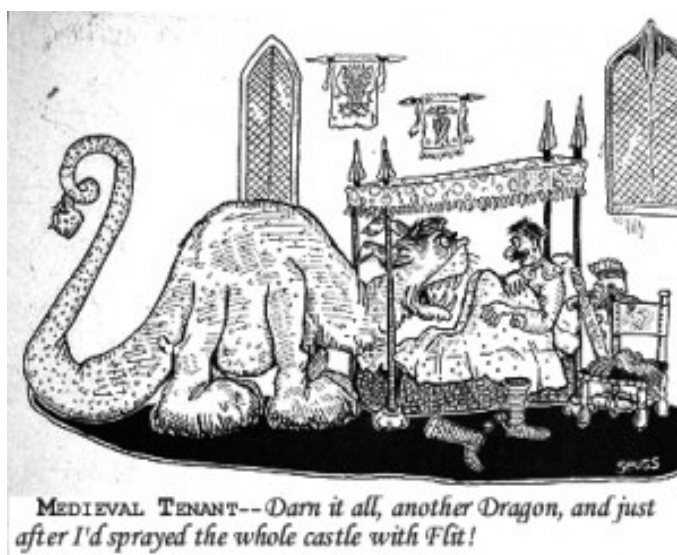


Fig. 2 Geisel, Theodor Seuss. “Medieval Tenant.” Theodor’s first cartoon which first appeared in the *Judge*.

“I’d been working for *Judge* about four months when I drew this accidental cartoon which changed my whole life.<sup>79</sup> It was an insecticide gag.

<sup>78</sup> 1-B Full concentration and dedication. 2-B Choices one after another. 6-B Actualizing one’s potential, intelligence. Theodor’s work ethic and determination was evident; this he had learned growing up in Springfield under the inspiration of his family and the innovative and forward thinking energy in the “City of Progress.”

“It was a picture of a knight who had gone to bed. He had stacked his armor beside the bed. There was this covered canopy over the bed, and a tremendous dragon was sort of nuzzling him.

“He looked up and said, ‘Darn it all, another Dragon. And just after I’d sprayed the whole castle with...’

“There were two well-known insecticides. One was Flit and one was Fly Tox. So, I tossed a coin. It came up heads, for Flit.<sup>80</sup>

“So, the caption read, ‘Darn it all, another Dragon. And just after I’d sprayed the whole castle with Flit!’” (Lathem 25-26)

Mrs. Lincoln Cleaves, the wife of an executive at McCann-Erickson, who had an account with Standard Oil of New Jersey, which manufactured Flit, saw the cartoon while at the beauty parlor, went home and told her husband that they needed to hire this cartoon artist (“Geisel, Theodor Seuss.” *Current Biography* 139). In Theodor’s own words:

“Here is where luck came in.<sup>81</sup>

“Very few people ever bought *Judge*. It was continually in bankruptcy – and everybody else was bankrupt, too.

“But one day the wife of Lincoln L. Cleaves, who was the account executive on Flit at the McCann-Erikson advertising agency, failed to get an appointment at her favorite hairdresser and went to a second-rate hairdresser’s, where they had second-rate magazines around.

“She opened *Judge* while waiting to get her hair dressed, and she found this picture. She ripped it out of the magazine, put it in her reticule, took it home, bearded her husband

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<sup>79</sup> 3-B Self to be actualized; doing things without realizing creating destiny for self.

<sup>80</sup> Theodor often said it was luck when something good happened in his life from a decision he made. From this toss of the coin, being heads for Flit, his steps took him along a path that would lead him directly to become a child’s author and illustrator. Was it luck? Coincidence? Destiny? His life mission D-1, was directing and calling him; the voice within and the echo from without.

<sup>81</sup> Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: fits the situation, cannot be repeated.

with it, and said, ‘Lincoln, you’ve got to hire this young man; it’s the best Flit ad I’ve ever seen.’

“He said, ‘Go away.’ He said, ‘You’re my wife, and you’re to have nothing to do with my business.’

“So, she pestered him for about two weeks, and finally he said, ‘All right, I’ll have him in, and I’ll buy one picture.’

“He had me in. I drew one picture – which I captioned ‘Quick, Henry, the Flit!’ – and it was published.

“Then, they hired me to do two more – and seventeen years later I was still doing them.”<sup>82</sup> (Lathem 26- 27)

It was the first time in advertising history where humor was used successfully in advertising (“Dr. Seuss.” *Readers’ Choice*). An income of \$12 000 per year during the Great Depression met more than his basic needs. Seuss said: “It wasn’t the greatest pay, but it covered my overhead so I could experiment with my drawings”<sup>83</sup> (Minear 10). With this salary, again success and confidence, he moved to an apartment at 1160 Park Avenue.<sup>84</sup>

### 1931 - Boners & A Death

Besides creating advertisements for ESSO, Theodor was doing other advertising for magazines and in 1931 *Boners* and its sequel, *More Boners*, were both published by Viking Press (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 17). He explained:

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<sup>82</sup> 2-B Process of choices; one after another. Life, one step after another; Theodor flipped a coin and decided on Flit; drawing a cartoon for *Judge* and the wife of Lincoln L. Cleaves happened to be in a hair salon and picked up the magazine to see the cartoon with Flit, whom her husband happened to be the account executive of; steps, preparation, coincidence, people, exact moments in time - destiny all coming together to bring Theodor to his calling: a mission that needed to be done for the betterment of mankind. This is what Theodor was living, day by day steps - choices.

<sup>83</sup> Basic needs met so one could self-actualize.

<sup>84</sup> 2-B Process of choices. 5-B Courageous rather than afraid. Success gave confidence for more difficult choices: step/action brought success which gave deeper confidence resulting in another step. Step by step toward SA.

“The book was originally published in England, where it was called *Schoolboy Howlers*. Some smart person at Viking Press in New York (I think it was Marshall Best) brought out a reprint of the English edition, under the title *Boners*.

“Whereupon hundreds of teachers in the U.S.A. began sending in boners from *their* examination papers. And the Boner Business boomed.

“That was a big Depression year. And although by Depression standards I was adequately paid a flat fee for illustrating these best sellers, I was money-worried.<sup>85</sup> The two books were booming and I was not.

“This is the point when I began to realize that if I hoped to succeed in the book world, I’d have to write, as well as draw.”<sup>86</sup> (Lathem 31)

Sullivan, writing for the *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* stated that “Geisel in the thirties was an unfulfilled academician, frustrated novelist, and semi-employed humorist making ends meet with what he considered blood money” (27).

Sullivan continued to write:

He wanted to be a downtown aesthete, but he was a slave to Madison Avenue, and living uptown to boot – on Park in fact. His seemed to be the good life. Since he could do a year’s worth of Flit work in a half-a-year, he and Helen were able to spend four

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<sup>85</sup> Basic needs: psychological needs. Theodor wanted more than just to meet his needs; the calling within gave him a hunger for something more.

<sup>86</sup> Trust: D-2 Autonomy: following his own star. Awareness: B-4 Ethical awareness: Theodor knew what was right for him; he was aware, attuned to his needs, the push within; the focus of success in the book world would become his focus; it directed him. As his father had a world record at 200 yards for marksmanship, hitting the bull’s eye; as well, Theodor began to see where he needed to shoot if he wanted success – at the center of children’s books. 4-B When in doubt, be honest. He was honest with himself and wanted to more than be “adequately paid.” With his honesty, a realization was faced.

months annually in Europe. For a fellow who had a lifelong wanderlust<sup>87</sup> as Geisel did, this was the life of Riley. (Sullivan 28)

Yet Theodor was not settled or content. He stated: “I was really tired of doing gags and cartoons that would disappear next week”<sup>88</sup> (28). It was during this unsettling time that Henrietta Seuss Geisel, Theodor’s mother, died March 8<sup>th</sup>, 1931, at the age of fifty-two of an inoperable brain tumor. Theodor was twenty-seven years old.

#### 1934 – Essomarine & the Seuss Navy

Theodor created an entire campaign for Essomarine from 1934 – 1941; the products were lubricants for motor boats which were produced by Standard Oil (“Seuss I am, an Oilman.”). In 1934, he produced a 30-page booklet titled *Secrets of the Deep*; the following year, in 1935, for a boat show, he made cards to be filled out and at the show, the *Secrets* were given; in 1936 the visitors to the exposition received Certificates of Commission, and each year following Theodor created various pieces. In 1938, he wrote a six-act play, designed the scenery, which included a mock ship deck called the *SS Essomarine*; with nine other characters in costume, Theodor joined the cast and dressed-up as the captain. In 1941, his final year on this advertising campaign, he designed a mermaid named, Essie Neptune, who had a pet whale. Along with the exhibit, customers had their pictures taken for their *Happy Cruising* passport. Theodor gained a significant public profile as a result of working with Essomarine<sup>89</sup> (Cohen 122 -132).

#### 1935 - Sunday Comic Pages - April 7

*Hejji* was Theodor’s only venture into the Sunday comic pages; this was short-lived lasting only twelve weeks as he was one of the last people hired and then fired (172). *Hejji* was a young apprentice genie in the land of Baako who had extraordinary adventures. Theodor created many creatures: Bearded Bees, Wombats, the great Pitzu bird and the Mighty One, *Hejji*’s master; in his later works one can see these creatures return (174).

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<sup>87</sup> 8-B Finding out who one is, what one likes, where one is going and what is the mission. Awareness: B-3 Peak experiences; these travels inspired Theodor, opening his mind to a higher degree of psychological health which in turn delivered new ideas.

<sup>88</sup> 6-B Becoming smarter. Trust: D-1 Life mission: inner voice within, calling him.

<sup>89</sup> 2-B Process of choices, one after another. 3-B Actualizing self. 6-B Actualizing one’s potential.

1937 - *And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street*

Marnie spoke of Theodor's day to day life and of an ambition of her brother's which was soon to become a reality:

“He works very hard. He has a studio of his own in the apartment and sometimes for a rush order has to work all day and all night. But he takes a short walk every few hours and indulges in handball and squash whenever he has a chance so he hasn't put on surplus weight. He is as tall and slim as ever and his hair is still dark' ... then...she added, 'You might say that Ted's ambition is to do children's books, writing the rhymes as well as drawing the pictures.<sup>90</sup> The children have something to look forward to.’”<sup>91</sup> (“Gay Menagerie”)

Working for Standard Oil Company seemingly closed the doors to ‘other opportunities,’ actually opened the right door for Theodor's future.<sup>92</sup> Theodor explained:

“My contract with the Standard Oil Company was an exclusive one and forbade me from doing an awful lot of stuff.

“Flit being seasonal, its ad campaign was only run during the summer months. I'd get my year's work done in about three months, and I had all this time to spare and nothing to do.

“They let me work for magazines, because I'd already established that. But it crimped future expansion into other things.

.....

“I would like to say I went into children's-book work because of my great understanding of children. I went in because it wasn't excluded by my Standard Oil contract.”<sup>93</sup> (Lathem 31)

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<sup>90</sup> D-1 Life mission: people close to Theodor recognized his calling and desire.

<sup>91</sup> The people close to Theodor recognized his talents and the calling within him.

<sup>92</sup> Destiny knows how to close one door yet to open another, directing in the right direction. The bullet was not haphazardly shot in the life of Theodor; its target was sure.



Theodor and his wife enjoyed traveling. It was during these trips he found inspiration and reason to create his future ahead. “After nine years of marriage, Ted and Helen counted thirty nations to which they had traveled in Europe, the Middle East and Latin America, and they kept spinning the globe for more” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 79). The couple had no children and with a steady income from ESSO, they were free and had money to travel, a passion they both shared.

On a trip back from Europe on the *M.S. Kungsholm*, the summer of 1936, with stormy seas, and a rocking ship, Theodor led his fellow passengers in a little game: “make up a rhyme that could ride the da-da-da *dum* rhythm of the ship’s churning engine” (Sullivan 28). It was Theodor who heard in his head a rhyme from the engines below:

“I was on a long, stormy crossing of the Atlantic, and it was too rough to go out on deck. Everybody in the ship just sat in the bar for a week, listening to the engines turn over: da-da-ta-ta, da-da-ta-ta, da-da-ta-ta...”

“To keep from going nuts, I began reciting silly words to the rhythm of the engines.<sup>94</sup> Out of nowhere I found myself saying, ‘And that is a story that no one can beat; and to think that I saw it on Mulberry Street.’

“When I finally got off the ship, this refrain kept going through my head. I couldn’t shake it. To therapeutize myself I added more words in the same rhythm.

“Six months later I found I had a book on my hands, called *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*. So, what to do with it?

“I submitted it to twenty-seven publishers. It was turned down by all twenty-seven. The main reason they all gave was there was nothing similar on the market, so of course it wouldn’t sell.

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<sup>93</sup> Trust: D-2 Autonomy: inner directedness, following his own star.

<sup>94</sup> 2-B Process of choices, one after another. 5-B Making better choices, to be courageous rather than afraid.

“After the twenty-seventh publisher had turned it down, I was taking the book home to my apartment, to burn it in the incinerator, and I bumped into Mike McClintock (Marshall McClintock, Dartmouth 1926) coming down Madison Avenue.

“He said, ‘What’s that under your arm?’

“I said, ‘That’s a book that no one will publish. I’m lugging it home to burn.’

“Then, I asked Mike, ‘What are you doing?’

“He said, ‘This morning I was appointed juvenile editor of Vanguard Press, and we happen to be standing in front of my office; would you like to come inside?’

“So, we went inside, and he looked at the book and he took me to the president of Vanguard Press. Twenty minutes later we were signing contracts.

“That’s one of the reasons I believe in luck. If I’d been going down the other side of Madison Avenue, I would be in the dry-cleaning business today.”<sup>95</sup> (Lathem 31 - 33)

The Morgan’s, having personally interviewed Theodor told their version of how his first book began:

The sea frothed and a summer storm hammered the ship with gale-force winds. It was too rough to go out on deck and Helen took refuge in their cabin. Ted, finding it impossible to settle, strode from one to another of the Kungsholm bars, gripping the ship’s rails. In an upper-deck lounge he ordered another vodka on the rocks, took two sheets of Kungsholm stationary and began scribbling a rambling plot:

A stupid horse and wagon  
Horse and chariot  
Chariot pulled by flying cat

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<sup>95</sup> 2-B Process of choices; not giving up, tenacious character. Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: Theodor in his life always looked at the funny side. This step of walking on the right side of Madison Avenue occurred time and time again in his life, whether it be a flip of a coin, a wind blowing on his desk to shuffle papers to create a new book, a contract with a missing phrase; according to Theodor “luck” was on his side. Or perhaps a future need in the world, was pulling him to something he had to accomplish.

Flying cat pulling Viking ship  
 Viking ship sailing up a volcano  
 Volcano blowing hearts, diamond and clubs

I saw a giant eight miles tall  
 Who took the cards, 52 in all  
 And played a game of solitaire...

As the ship plowed the sea for eight days, the chugging rhythm of its engines reverberated in Ted's head: Da-da-DA-da-da-DUM-DUM, da-DA-da-da-DUM.

To keep his mind off the choppy waters and the shuddering of the ship he began reciting words to the rhythm. "Twas the night Before Christmas" fit well enough, but then he heard himself saying, "And that is a story that no one can beat, and to think that I saw it on Mulberry Street." (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 80)

In the *New Zealand Herald*, 1976, Theodor said the publication came on a day that started out unlucky but ended lucky:

"I was wandering down Madison Avenue in New York, humping around my battered manuscript and feeling pretty sorry for myself.

"Suddenly a fellow I knew stepped out of an office doorway. We chatted a while and I told him of my bad luck. Then he told me of his good luck: he'd just been appointed children's books editor of a big publishing house. And so, then and there, I got another job – writing and drawing books for kids...

"But just supposing I hadn't been walking down Madison Avenue at that particular moment and on that particular side of the street...Yes, I've been extraordinarily lucky."<sup>96</sup>  
 ("From fly-spray came drum-tum Snumm")

Many inspirations from his childhood can be seen in the book: people he knew from the neighborhood, the police, the trolley car conductors, and the circus parades on Springfield

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<sup>96</sup> 2-B Process of choices, one after another which leads to 6-B, actualizing one's potential, using one's intelligence.

Streets. *Current Biography*, 1968, reported: “The book was enthusiastically received by critics who observed that it had the bright color and dynamism of a comic strip without the vulgarity.” A review in *The New York Times*, November 14, 1937, stated: “a masterly interpretation of the mind of a child in the act of creating one of those stories which children often amuse themselves and bolster up their self-respect” (139).

In *The Springfield Republican*, October 3, 1937, a headline read: “Crazy Doings on Mulberry Street Told in Book That Is Hard to Beat.” A subtitle further explained: “Ted Geisel of Our Little City Makes a Hit with Foolish Ditty – Dr. Seuss, the Witless Dope, Gives His Creations Lots of Rope” (10–11, Arts). The title was announcing without knowing it, that Theodor himself, who was considered “class wit” by his class peers, needed lots of rope and would soon make a big hit with Dr. Seuss, in not just their little city, but worldwide.<sup>97</sup> The article further read:

If you see a crowd of frantic men and women in front of Johnson’s bookstore on Main street early tomorrow morning you can make a safe bet that they live on Mulberry Street! What will bring them there? Just a more or less routine window display of a new book. But the book is “And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street.” The author is a former Springfield man and might well have seen what transpired on Mulberry Street. He is Theodor S. Geisel, more familiarly known as Dr. Seuss.

Guy McClain, Director of the Lyman and Merrie Wood Museum of Springfield, described Mulberry Street as nothing but ordinary:

"It was a street very close to his grandparents' bakery," McClain says. "And I think also ... it was the rhythm, the sound of the word that was very important with Dr. Seuss. Because there's nothing special about the street, really." Except for the fact that the ordinary little street launched one extraordinary career.<sup>98</sup> (NPR Staff)

Theodor reflected on the start when he was congratulated for becoming an author:

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<sup>97</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission recognized by others.

<sup>98</sup> The arrow of SA began where Theodor grew up, in the “City of Progress,” the “City of Firsts” shooting an arrow through destiny, using a man, guiding a man into an extraordinary career and life.

“In those days children’s books didn’t sell very well, and it became a bestseller at ten thousand copies, believe it or not. (Today, at Beginner Books, if we’re bringing out a doubtful book, we print twenty thousand copies.)

“But, we were in the Depression era, and Mulberry Street cost a dollar – which was then a lot of money.

“I remember what a big day it was in my life when Mike McClintock called up and announced: I have just sold a thousand copies of your book to Marshall Field. Congratulations! You are an author.”<sup>99</sup> (Lathem 33-34)

In particular, there was one review in *The New Yorker*, on November 6, 1937, by Clifton Fadiman, which encouraged Theodor greatly throughout his entire life as he could quote it right until the end of his life:<sup>100</sup>

“Clifton Fadiman, I think, was partially responsible for my going on in children’s books. He wrote a review for *The New Yorker*, a one-sentence review.

“He said, ‘They say it’s for children, but better get a copy for yourself and marvel at the good Dr. Seuss’s impossible pictures and the moral tale of the little boy who exaggerated not wisely but too well.’

“I remember that impressed me very much: If the great Kip Fadiman likes it, I’ll have to do another.”<sup>101</sup> (Lathem 34)

The infamous Beatrix Potter, author of *Peter Rabbit*, gave this response to a friend after reading the book:

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<sup>99</sup> The realizing and recognizing of Theodor’s calling; his vocation had affirmation with the sales of the books and the title “author” ascribed to him; it was another important step which gave him confidence to continue.

<sup>100</sup> Honesty: A-3 Interpersonal relations: Clifton gave Theodor recognition, confidence, and encouragement as Theodor admired Clifton for his talents as well.

<sup>101</sup> 2-B Process of choices. 5-B Courageous rather than afraid. Success gave confidence for more difficult choices: finally publishing the first book after 27 rejections, given encouragement from a fellow author, a great man in Theodor’s eyes, delivered success which gave deeper confidence resulting in another step, another book and many more to come. Step by step toward SA.

“What an amusing picture book ... I think it the cleverest book I have met with for many years. The swing and merriment of the pictures and the natural truthful simplicity of the untruthfulness ... Too many story books for children are condescending, self-conscious inventions – and then some trivial oversight, some small incorrect detail gives the whole show away.” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 84)

1938 - *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*

The following year, 1938, Dr. Seuss wrote: *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*, which was published by Vanguard Press. The idea for this book came from a moment on a train; there was a passenger in front of him wearing a hat:

“I was sitting in a railroad train, going up somewhere in Connecticut”, ... “And there was a fellow sitting ahead of me, who I didn’t like. I didn’t know who he was. He had a real ridiculous Wall Street broker’s hat on, very stuffy, on this commuting train.<sup>102</sup> And I just began playing around with the idea<sup>103</sup> of what his reaction would be if I took off his hat and threw it out the window.” ... “And I said, ‘He’d probably just grow another one and ignore me’” ... “I began to think of appurtenances around the castle, and one of them would be a bowman, and then it occurred to me there would also be an executioner. And I said, ‘We gotta get a little bastard of a crowned prince in here.’ And I would draw and semi-write that sequence up. Then I would put in [it] on the wall and see how they fit. I’m not a consecutive writer.”<sup>104</sup> (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 87)

He wrote and dedicated this book to his imaginary daughter, Chrysanthemum-Pearl, as he and Helen could not have children; “To silence friends who bragged about their own children, Ted

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<sup>102</sup> SA people have a dislike for phoniness; in Theodor’s mind, the hat represented Wall Street and the games people play to be grown-up. B-1 Efficient perception of reality: the hat was a perception of a place in society.

<sup>103</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creativeness: spontaneous creation, spur of the moment created inventiveness in his mind fitting the situation.

<sup>104</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creativeness: inventiveness in the way Theodor worked and created.

liked to boast of the achievements of their imaginary daughter... Chrysanthemum-Pearl (aged 89 months, going on 90)”<sup>105</sup> (Nel “Seuss”).

### 1939 – Year of Experimentation

Theodor attempted one adult cartoon book in 1939, *The Seven Lady Godivas*, from the persuasion of Bennett Cerf, who was the spokesperson for Random House. This book was not a success;<sup>106</sup> out of 10,000 copies printed, 500 sold. Theodor said: “I can’t draw convincing naked women,” ... “I guess I didn’t make them sexy enough. I put their knees in the wrong places” (Sullivan 29). The same year, 1939, Random House published Seuss’s fourth book, *The King’s Stilts*; unlike many of Dr. Seuss's books, it was narrated in prose rather than verse.

In 1939, in New York City, the World’s Fair was held. “The fair endeavored to show visitors ‘the world of tomorrow.’ Novel technologies shown at the fair included fluorescent lighting, air conditioning, nylon, and color photos” (J.R.). Theodor with Ralph Warren, a business partner, tried to invent an Infantograph, which promised to show how a couple’s child would look. “Although they never quite got it to work, Geisel did write advertising copy for the camera’s expected debut at the World’s Fair: ‘IF YOU MARRIED THAT GAL YOU’RE WALKING WITH, WHAT WOULD YOUR CHILDREN LOOK LIKE? COME IN AND HAVE YOUR INFANTOGRAPH TAKEN!’”<sup>107</sup> (J.R.).

### 1940 – Faithful One-Hundred Percent

In 1940, Theodor published *Horton Hatches the Egg*, a book that reveals how time, persistence, and patience pays off in the end; the famous quote in the book is: “I meant what I said, and I said what I meant. An elephant's faithful one-hundred percent.”<sup>108</sup> By 1940, with four children’s books and one failed adult book, (*The Seven Lady Godivas*), Theodor “was clearly finding a direction. What he called ‘the brat-book business’ was seeming, more and more, to be his calling”<sup>109</sup> (Sullivan 29). Yet at this same time, with the threat of World War II, Theodor was

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<sup>105</sup> If Theodor and Helen needed a child, since they could not have one naturally, his inventive mind imagined one up, giving it a name; just like the characters he had begun to create and would further create; all beginning from his mind - imagination.

<sup>106</sup> 7-B Transient moments that break off illusions; adult books were not Theodor’s life mission.

<sup>107</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creative inventiveness. Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: saying the truth with humor.

<sup>108</sup> 1-V Truth: honesty. 4a-V Dichotomy: opposites, contradictions, mutually enhancing partners.

<sup>109</sup> D-1 Life mission recognized by others.

finding his mind going not to his characters but to the world outside America:

“While Paris was being occupied by the clanking tanks of the Nazis and I was listening on my radio, I found I could no longer keep my mind on drawing pictures of Horton the Elephant. I found myself drawing pictures of Lindbergh the Ostrich.”<sup>110</sup> Seuss is referring to Charles Lindbergh, the world-renowned American pilot and prominent isolationist. Lindbergh and other members of the America First Committee thought that the U.S. should stay out of the wars in Europe and the Pacific. Seuss disagreed. (“Biography”)

### 1941 – 1966 Middle Years

#### 1941 - *PM* & World War II

In 1941, with the rise of Hitler, Theodor’s life, along with the rest of the world changed; he found a ray of sunshine at this dark time in history: “The only good thing Adolph Hitler did in starting World War II was that he enabled me to join the Army and finally stop drawing ‘Quick, Henry, the Flit!’ animated cartoons. Flit was pouring out of my ears and it was beginning to itch me”<sup>111</sup> (Lathem 27).

During World War II, Theodor worked for a left wing magazine called the *PM*, drawing political cartoons; in two years he drew more than 400 cartoons between April, 1941, and January, 1943 (“Biography”). His cartoons used satirical humor to poke fun of isolationists, yet at the same time were very serious and true to *PM*’s position. “They mock[ed] the leaders of the Axis powers — Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, and Hideki Tojo. They oppose[d] fascism. They criticize[d] discrimination against Jews and against African Americans, at a time when such discrimination was both legal and common”<sup>112</sup> (“Biography”). They were “the only angry pictures I ever did in my life,” he said years later. “And I’m not proud of their overstatement but I still believe in what I was saying”<sup>113</sup> (Sullivan 29). Then with humor he defended that his

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<sup>110</sup> Honest: A-2 Social interest: feeling of identification to a cause. Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: Theodor sensed the seriousness; sharper sense of reality.

<sup>111</sup> Honest: A-1 Sense of humor: fit the situation. It was time to move on; destiny was pulling Theodor elsewhere.

<sup>112</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: anger at a situation, breaking through boundaries. Awareness: B-4 Ethical awareness: to Theodor he knew right from wrong, an inner supreme court. Taking steps boldly to express thoughts and beliefs.

<sup>113</sup> Theodor followed his inner voice, convictions that guided him and caused him to express these beliefs in his work.



illustrations were what he believed in *most* of what he said, and the other he described as a funny but not so funny incident: “He did *not* mean to say what he apparently had said about dachshunds in the cartoon where he drew them in the form of Nazis. The dachshund lovers of America raised an awful ruckus. ‘I’ve learned it was better to draw imaginary animals,’ said Geisel” (Sullivan 29).

How Theodor began working for the *PM* is in Seuss style: serendipity came to play.<sup>114</sup> He drew a cartoon depicting Virginio Gayda, who was the editor of *Il Giornale d’Italia*, a fascist publication. In the cartoon, Gayda, hanging from a hook around his belt, is hammering away at a steam typewriter, on the right of the banner is a dead bird representing America; it is in the air coming out of the steam and to the left is Mussolini with wings holding up the banner with the words: “*Virginio Gayda Says*” (Minear 10). Theodor also wrote a letter to the editor of *PM*, Ralph Ingersoll, expressing his sentiments:

Dear Editor: If you were to ask me, which you haven’t, whom I consider the world’s most outstanding writer of fantasy, I would of course, answer: “I am.” My second choice, however, is Virginio Gayda. The only difference is that the writings of Mr. Gayda give me a pain in the neck. This morning, the pain became too acute, and I had to do something about it. I suddenly realized that Mr. Gayda could be made into a journalistic asset, rather than a liability. Almost every day, in amongst thousands of words that he spews forth, there are one or two sentences that, in their complete and obvious disregard of fact, epitomize the Fascist point of view. Such as his bombastically deft interpretation of a rout as a masterly stroke of tactical genius. He can crow and crawl better than any other writer living today. Anyhow... I had to do a picture of Gayda.

Dr. Seuss.<sup>115</sup> (Minear 12)

Theodor showed the cartoon to a friend who worked for *PM*, who then passed the letter and the cartoon to Ralph Ingersoll, the editor of *PM*. This was Theodor’s first editorial cartoon

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<sup>114</sup> 2-B Process of choices, one after another. Freedom: D-1 Life mission: Theodor used humor and satire to deliver an important message.

<sup>115</sup> Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor at the ludicrous situation of the human situation, specifically Mr. Gayda. Aware: B-4 Ethical awareness: right and wrong, listening to inner supreme court; forced to speak out. Theodor listened to his inner voice and used his position to express his sentiments: “I had to do a picture”, as if a greater mission lay within directing him.

which gave him work for the next two years.<sup>116</sup> “The cartoon exemplified the sharp wit, the wealth of detail, and many of the stylistic elements that were to characterize Dr. Seuss’s work for the next two years... A steam typewriter? Who but Dr. Seuss could have imagined it?” (Minear 10).

Ralph Ingersoll, former journalist for *Time* and *Life*, founder and editor of the *PM* held this position on what the *PM* wrote about:

“We are against people who push other people around, just for the fun of pushing, whether they flourish in this country or abroad. We are against fraud and deceit and greed and cruelty and we seek to expose their practitioners. We are for people who are kindly and courageous and honest... We propose to applaud those who seek constructively to improve the way men live together. We are American and we prefer democracy to any other form of government.” Or again: “The Fascist philosophy [represents] a live threat to everything we believe in, beginning with a democratic way of life... We do not believe either the study of the works of Karl Marx or membership in the Communist Party in America is antisocial.” (13)

The *PM* was a new type of paper:

It cost five cents per copy when its competitors sold for two or three cents. It ran no comics (at least at first), crossword puzzles, or stock market reports. It specialized in photographs and other visuals using an improved “hot ink” printing process ... It accepted no advertising ... It pioneered radio pages, the early equivalent of the newspaper television guides of today. It attracted some of the greatest names of the day in American journalism and letters ... Most important, *PM* was outspoken in its politics.<sup>117</sup> (12)

Theodor, a man to express his opinion found a place where he could speak to the American people on real and important issues with the use of humor;<sup>118</sup> he saw this as a place to put his voice before great names of influence in that what he had to say could have an impact.<sup>119</sup> As

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<sup>116</sup> 2-B Process of choices; one after another. Theodor’s sketches, which were his thoughts on current events led him to work.

<sup>117</sup> Outspoken – this attracted Theodor; he was outspoken and found mediums to express his thoughts.

<sup>118</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: to voice opinion with humor and satire.

<sup>119</sup> 6-B Actualizing one’s potential; using one’s intelligence.

well, *PM* was at the leading edge of printing practices both physically and philosophically.

It was into this volatile picture that Dr. Seuss plunged.<sup>120</sup> He joined forces with *PM* to produce the cartoons in this volume. After the initial few months, during which the cartoons appeared anywhere in *PM*'s twenty news pages, they appeared most often on the editorial page, usually as the only illustration on that page. Side by side with the signed editorials, the cartoons enjoyed a prominence of place exceeded only by the cover, and a half dozen *PM* covers themselves carry Dr. Seuss's cartoons.<sup>121</sup> (Minear 16)

In 1940, President Roosevelt, a democrat, was elected into his third term of office; Theodor voted for Roosevelt, going directly on the opposite side of politics from his conservative father. One promise the President made but could not keep was to keep the United States out of WWII. It was a time when War World II was just beginning. The American population was on the side of the British and thought it a good idea to help them except in the physical act of going to war – this term was called *Isolationism* (Minear 1).

*PM*'s daily circulation was around 150 000; as compared to *The New York Times*, with a circulation of 500 000 and the *Daily News* at over 2 000 000 in circulation (13). *PM*, like Theodor, was on the other side of these papers, speaking out against inactivity in the War; being an editorial cartoonist for the *PM*, he used this position to speak out against isolationism, racism, and anti-Semitism.<sup>122</sup> In Richard Minear's book: *Dr. Seuss Goes to War*, Art Spiegelman stated:

“Dr. Seuss said that he ‘had no great causes or interests in social issues until Hitler,’ and explained that ‘*PM* was against people who pushed other people around. I liked that.’<sup>123</sup> More of a humanist than an ideologue...Dr. Seuss made these drawings with the fire of honest indignation and anger that fuels all real political art.”<sup>124</sup> ... Spiegelman goes on to say: “If they have a flaw, it's an absolutely endearing one: they're funny.”<sup>125</sup> (6)

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<sup>120</sup> Plunged, going in head first, completely committed: this was Theodor's personality; though he was said to be shy of crowds, his inner voice was loud and held no boundaries.

<sup>121</sup> 6-B Process of actualizing one's self; becoming smarter, using intelligence.

<sup>122</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: Theodor identified with the human situation in Europe and the lack of empathy in America. Awareness: B-4 Ethical awareness: causing a need to speak out.

<sup>123</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: breaking cast systems. 9-V Justice: non-partiality.

<sup>124</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: others noted Theodor's righteous indignation.

<sup>125</sup> Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: others realized Theodor's sense of the absurd in serious situations and his ability to make a serious point with humor. This he would use throughout his life.

In the editorial section of the *PM*, letters to Rev. John H. Holmes, revealed the sentiments of the readers to *PM* regarding going to war:

OPINION – letters – Monday, page 22

Pro Dr. Holmes

Dear Editor:

Your Dr. Seuss has long been a thorn in *PM*'s pages. Jan 12 he erected a “war monument” to John Haynes Holmes, “who spoke the beautiful words: ‘The unhappy people are our brothers!’”

If the Japanese people are not “our brothers”, what are they to us? Our mortal enemies?

New York – Mark Heyman

In my abysmal ignorance the thought that the Japanese people (and all people for that matter) were no worse than and no better than any other people on the globe was deeply etched in my mind. The absurd notion that the common people of these war-driven countries, the working masses, were the first real sufferers of a terroristic Fascist-capitalist regime has been replaced by the scientific actuality that those people are inherently militaristic and savage as suggested by your Dr. Seuss.

New York - Herbert Barrett. (“Opinion Letters”)

On paper with pencil crayon and hand written – blue over Dear Doctor and Dear Americus... in a green slime color another opinion was given and directed at Dr. Seuss: *Dear Doctor...*

(typed) Why did a nice guy like you work for that crummy New York newspaper *PM*?

American Vesputius Fepp

Theodor wrote a response to American Vesputius Fepp in *PM* explaining why he decided to draw cartoons advocating going to war:

[hand written] *Dear Americus...* [green pencil crayon is over this]

The answer to that is very simple.

I got irritated<sup>126</sup> into becoming a political cartoonist by one of our nation's most irritating heroes, the late Col. Charles Augustus Lindbergh.

In 1940, when Adolf Hitler was putting out the lights and bestowing terror on the people of Europe, Col. Lindbergh was *bestowing* [this is in black ink] defeatism and appeasement on the people of the U.S.A.

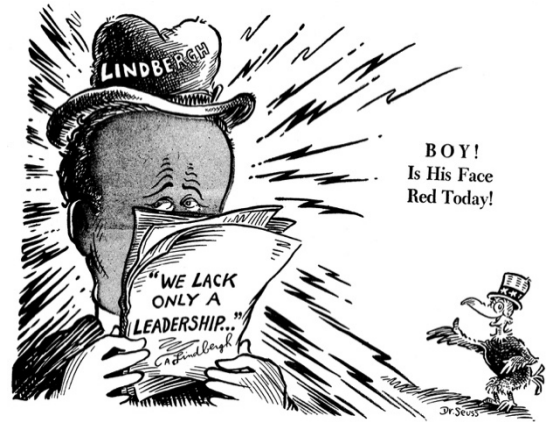


Fig. 3 Geisel, Theodor Seuss. "Lindbergh." Cartoon by Dr. Seuss for *PM* during WWII.

"The Lone Eagle had flown

The Atlantic alone

With fortitude and a ham sandwich.

Great courage that took.

At the sound of the gruff German landqwich."

Lindbergh and his American Firsters and their sour-note choir leaders, Senators Burton K. Wheeler and Gerald Nye, seemed to be on the radio or at a Madison Square Garden rally every nighty preaching the gospel that we must not get involved because we were licked before we started.

Retired Major General Wood, from his Sears Roebuck command post in Chicago, was announcing that we shouldn't worry about Hitler one little bit until after he'd conquered all of South America up to a certain wood-designated latitude in Brazil.

Father Charles Coughlin, from his pulpit in his Church of the Little Flower, was poisoning the air of the entire middle-west with radio sermons right out of Mein Kampf.

<sup>126</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: righteous indignation at Charles Lindbergh at his pacifist attitude.

Congress, caving in under these pressures was on the verge of junking the Draft Law and telling the few half-trained soldiers in our almost armless army to forget the whole silly nonsense and go home.

A Gallop Poll established the fact that 70 to 85% of all Americans were strongly opposed to any involvement in the war.

And so was I.

But I also believed that we had absolutely no choice in the matter and had better by God get prepared for a war that sure as hell was going to sock us.<sup>127</sup>

And on the night of June 14, 1940, while Paris was being occupied by the clanking tanks of the Nazis and I was listening on my radio, I found I could no longer keep my mind on drawing pictures of Horton the Elephant. I found myself drawing pictures of Lindbergh the Ostrich.<sup>128</sup>

The next thing I knew I was *PM's* political cartoonist in charge of Lindbergh, Wheeler and Nye.

Incidentally, Mr. Frepp, *PM* was not “crummy.” We were, admittedly, frequently adept at going off halfcocked. We were sometimes over-enthusiastic victims of our own peculiar hyper-exuberance.<sup>129</sup>

The New Yorker magazine dismissed us as “a bunch of young fogeys.” But I think we were, rather, a bunch of honest but slightly cockeyed crusaders, and I still have prideful memories of working alongside such guys as Kenneth Crawford, Izzy Stone, Ralph Ingersoll and dozens of other hard working souls who helped Marshall Field lose thirty million dollars backing a truly unique newspaper that refused to accept advertising.

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<sup>127</sup> Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: not easily fooled by lying advertisements. B-4 Ethical awareness: strongly ethical, definite moral standards; could not keep quiet.

<sup>128</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: could not shrug off this, had to respond and Theodor did with political cartoons.

<sup>129</sup> 1-B Experiencing fully, full concentration with total absorption. 3 Freedom: C-3 Spontaneity: something inside wanted to be expressed.

Whatever I lacked ... (And it was plenty) ... as a polished practitioner of the subtle art of caricature, I did become prolifically proficient in venting my spleen.<sup>130</sup>

As *Newsweek* commented in February, 1942, I had left the world of “other-world creatures that have made a national institution of Seuss” and was not “blasting away like Malice in Wonderland.” (“Opinion Letters”)

Theodor said: “I was intemperate, un-humorous in my attacks...and I’d do it again.”<sup>131</sup> (Minear 265).

For the summer of 1941, the Geisel’s went to La Jolla, California; here he drew cartoons for the *PM* and would “fight rattlesnakes, bees and man-eating rabbits in the patio, then fight Lindbergh” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 103). He noted that “the enlightened members of this community know about my books ... but nobody in Southern California seem to keep ’em in stock” (103). This was sure to change.

#### 1941 - 1945 – Visionary & WWII

December 11, 1941, Japan declared war on America. Three days earlier, December 8, 1941, Dr. Seuss published a cartoon with the bird, representing America, the word Isolationism written on its body, being blown into the air by the word WAR. To the left of the picture the words are written: “He Never Knew What Hit Him” (Minear 28). It was signed, Dr. Seuss. Theodor used satire to send a message to the American public, three days before WWII was declared.<sup>132</sup> According to Minear, Hitler was Theodor’s most frequent subject of attack with Charles A. Lindbergh coming in second<sup>133</sup> (17). Lindbergh, having successfully flown across the Atlantic solo, had gained an ear in notoriety and politics. He was against going into the war, much like many Americans, opposite of Theodor. Lindbergh wrote:

I am not attacking either the Jewish or the British people. Both races I admire. But I am saying that the leaders of both the British and the Jewish races, for reasons which are

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<sup>130</sup> 2-B Process of choices, one after another. 6-B Process of actualizing one’s potential.

<sup>131</sup> B-1 Efficient perception of reality: conviction directed Theodor on where he would take his thoughts and steps. He respected his inner tuition and beliefs, giving voice to them by way of satirical cartoons.

<sup>132</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: a defining characteristic of Theodor was his use of satire and humor in all areas of life; humor through illustrations and writing was his voice to the public.

<sup>133</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: Theodor’s righteous indignation came out on paper.

understandable from their viewpoint as they are inadvisable from ours, for reasons which are not American, wish to involve us in the war. We cannot blame them for looking out for what they believe to be their own interests, but we must look out for ours. We cannot allow the natural passions and prejudices of other peoples to lead our country to destruction. (Minear 17)

In 1942, Theodor began supporting the war effort by drawing posters for the Treasury Department and the War Production Board.<sup>134</sup> “Ted’s cartoons grew savagely eloquent and often very funny displaying his gift for derision [contemptuous ridicule or mockery]”<sup>135</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 104). *Newsweek*, February 1942, labeled Theodor’s drawings and satire “razor-keen” as he was “stirring up ‘hornets’ nests”<sup>136</sup> (104).

The following year, 1943, he joined the Army as a Captain and was commander of the Animation Department of the First Motion Picture Unit of the United States Army Air Forces which was headed by film director Frank Capra (Swift 4-6). Together they created films in an old Fox film lot (Sullivan 29). Army “propaganda” indoctrination films were created to prepare the soldiers for what they would encounter upon arrival in Europe. One film, *Your Job in Germany* reissued later as *Hitler Lives*, won an Academy Award as best short documentary of 1946 (29). Meeting Chuck Jones, a cartoon animator, Theodor was introduced to animation and developed a series of animated training films for army troops; the cartoon character, Private Snafu, entertained and at the same time kept the soldiers aware of the dangers abroad during wartime.

Theodor, one Sunday, in 1945, picked up a copy of *The New York Times* and read about an “energy so strong that the amount contained in a glass of water might wipe out Minneapolis” (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 55); since he and his colleagues were writing films to keep the soldiers motivated to stay in the army, they wrote a hypothetical scenario around this idea and sent it to

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<sup>134</sup> 5-B Making better choices; being courageous rather than afraid.

<sup>135</sup> Others saw Theodor’s ability to use satire and humor as a sharp tool. This was used over and over in his books - humor to look at serious issues, A-1 Sense of humor. Children saw the laughable in the stories; as well the books were used as a side door to give parents a message to think about as they read Dr. Seuss’s books to their children.

<sup>136</sup> Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: newspapers recognized Theodor’s sharp vision and good judgement.



the Pentagon for approval.<sup>137</sup> He was quickly contacted by high ranking officials and told to destroy his source of information instantly and not to speak to anyone of this; Theodor along with his platoon of men burnt the offensive scenario in a wastebasket<sup>138</sup> (*Fensch Of Sneetches* 55).

In 1947, Theodor made a documentary on Japan's position at the end of the war, entitled: *Design for Death*; this film gave him his second Academy Award (Sullivan 29). Neither film would survive. "As the years passed, prints disappeared – withdrawn, Ted was convinced, under government order" (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 120). While in the army, he was awarded the Legion of Merit.

Between the war years, in 1945, Marnie, Theodor's sister died: "Dead of a coronary thrombosis, Marnie was buried near her mother in the family plot at Oak Grove Cemetery. Her death was a subject so painful for Ted that he avoided talking about it for the rest of his life with a silent shake of his head. Helen wondered how soon he would be able to make people laugh again"<sup>139</sup> (117).

#### 1947 - *McElligot's Pool*

The summer of 1946, Helen and Theodor were invited to stay in a summer home overlooking the Pacific Ocean, at Palos Verdes Estate, southwest of Los Angeles (120). It was here Theodor decided<sup>140</sup> he "wanted to live the rest of his life in a climate that allowed him 'to walk around outside in my pajamas'"<sup>141</sup> and also here where his illustrations for his next book, *McElligot's Pool*, were inspired and painted with watercolors (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 121). Theodor's strange and zany creatures were finding a place on paper:

Even the Vanderlips' prized fifteenth-century credenza was submerged in swirls of blues and greens, inhabited by the oddest creatures Elin had ever seen. There was a fish that was part cow and another with a saw tooth snout so long it had to be towed by a gasping

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<sup>137</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creativeness. C-3 Spontaneity: not acting to an audience, something inside wanted to be expressed.

<sup>138</sup> A-1 Sense of humor: humor used in a very serious but funny situation – innocence from the animators but serious to the Pentagon.

<sup>139</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: Theodor's ability to make people laugh was a part of his identity.

<sup>140</sup> 2-B Process of choices, one after another. 3-B There is a self to be actualized; it is here he felt his own self could be actualized.

<sup>141</sup> 3-V Need for beauty, perfection, simplicity.

slave. Ted drew an Australian fish with a kangaroo's pouch and a fish from which flowers emerged in full bloom.<sup>142</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 121)

This book was dedicated to Theodor's father, a master fisherman. *McElligot's Pool* was published in 1947 and became a Junior Literary Guild selection (Grahame-Smith 23). The illustrations in water color gave him his first Caldecott citation and compared to Theodor's previous books was in "a more formal style and beauty"; "it became treasured by artists"<sup>143</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 121). The pages in the book rotate going from colored pages to black and white pages.

1948 - La Jolla – Tower

In 1948, the Geisel's sold their La Jolla Shores vacation home, put their Hollywood house up for sale and bought an observation tower at the top of La Jolla, Mount Soledad, which was "somewhere high up, overlooking everything"<sup>144</sup> (127). September 17, 1948 marked a special day: it was Helen's fiftieth birthday and construction began at the "Tower" (127). The reason it was called the Tower was because it literally was a watchtower with a room at the top; here the real-estate agents would bring their clients to give them a view of the Pacific and the developing city of La Jolla; it eventually became Theodor's study. "He began calling [it], alternately, 'The Tower' or 'The Castle.' But just as clearly, the serenity atop the mountain came to be central to his life and work"<sup>145</sup> (Sullivan 30).

They renovated the "Tower" and added rooms below: two bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a large living room with wide windows to look out to the sea. A year later they moved in (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 127). Though no children, the Geisel's had<sup>146</sup> "as many as 25 different cats over the years. In one era, there was but a single Irish setter. Then there came a segue back to cats, with a pair named Thing One and Thing Two. The animal population

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<sup>142</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creativeness: true inventiveness which became a part of Dr. Seuss's style, the absurd.

<sup>143</sup> <sup>143</sup> Trust: D-1 Acknowledgment of Theodor's life mission: to create books children wanted to read. One thing Theodor strived for was to be acknowledged as an artist.

<sup>144</sup> 2-B Process of choice, one after another. 6-V Uniqueness: nothing else like it. 3-V Beauty: completion - they stayed here for the rest of their life.

<sup>145</sup> Freedom: C-1 Detachment: need for solitude, undisturbed. Theodor understood that he needed peace to work creatively; he took this step in securing a place where he could create freely and with inspiration.

<sup>146</sup> 8-V Completion: nothing missing or lacking.

of Mount Soledad was always in flux, much like that of Geisel's literary zoo" (Sullivan 30). Theodor's hobby was gardening, mostly "rock" gardening. "That's what I do. I have a rock garden. And then I get tired of looking at the rocks in one arrangement, and so I move them"<sup>147</sup> (30). Theodor lived and worked here for the rest of his life.<sup>148</sup>

Theodor continued to have a good staunch work habit putting in a full day, as noted earlier by his sister Marnie in 1937. The Morgan's who were friends with the Geisel's wrote: "He rose after nine, went to his desk by ten and stayed there throughout the day with only brief breaks. He worked seven days a week, secluded from the distractions even of radio or taped music"<sup>149</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 128). In his own words, referring to his work ethic and schedule he said in an interview, "If I didn't, I would become a bum... I have that schedule whether I write anything or not" (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 59). Staying at his desk - drawing, doodling, writing, waiting for inspiration or chance to happen, eventually, something happened. "I make it a rule to sit at my desk six hours a day whether anything is happening or not"<sup>150</sup> ... it's disconcerting to look out there, ... and see the surfers" (81). Sometimes the "something" took longer than at other times.

"When nothing is happening, he draws 'hundreds of characters.'... 'Part of a character will evolve and part of another character will evolve and then I'll put them into conversation'<sup>151</sup> ... One of them says something and the other say something back. I never know what's going to happen next but when you get them acting and reacting, you're on to a story.<sup>152</sup> (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 80)

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<sup>147</sup> Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: the real world of nature as opposed to the manmade mass of concepts. Freedom: C-2 Creativeness: Theodor was clearly an inventive person who everyday was inventing.

<sup>148</sup> 7-V Perfection: nothing missing. 8-V Completion: fulfillment of destiny.

<sup>149</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: requiring much of one's energy. 2-B Process of choices, one after another; daily routine and discipline making good but difficult choices to bring success.

<sup>150</sup> Trust: D-2 Autonomy: responsible to one's self; resistance to enculturation. 2-B Process of choices, one after another.

<sup>151</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creativeness: inventiveness that fits the situation.

<sup>152</sup> Freedom: C-3 Spontaneity: it is a naturalness, something wanted to be expressed, needed to be expressed. Trust: D-3 Acceptance: taking it as it came, instead of having theories of how it should be.

Creativity did not come easy and he always believed he could do better.<sup>153</sup> Theodor would keep the creative process going by working at two books at one time.<sup>154</sup>

“If one book stalled, he would switch to the other. If both books were stuck, he would go to his closet and retrieve ‘a thinking cap.’ It might be his Ecuadoran fireman’s helmet, or his rock-wallaby fur, or one of a hundred others. If the hat didn’t work, he’d throw himself upon the couch and thrash around for a while.” (Sullivan 31)

According to Cathy Goldsmith, vice-president and associate publishing director at Random House: “He was a perfectionist about his work,” Goldsmith noted that his books did not require a tremendous amount of editing once he delivered them<sup>155</sup> (K. R.). Helen testified to her husband’s work ethic and focus: “He has the endurance of forty buffaloes...and thinks he can work day and night” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 129).

At night Theodor would paint when he had extra energy, “Only occasionally...do I find myself wanting to write a novel. About one in the morning once in a while. So I paint and that energy goes there”<sup>156</sup> (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 59). In the same year of buying the Tower, *Thidwick the Big-Hearted Moose* was published. It became another Junior Literary Guild<sup>157</sup> selection (Grahame-Smith 23).

#### 1949 - Writer’s Conference

July 1949, the University of Utah was having a writer’s conference and Theodor was invited to speak. Unlike previous engagements where fear prevailed, he accepted this invitation with anticipation.<sup>158</sup>

Ted had strong convictions about effective writing for children and spent weeks in research, making extensive lecture notes, for him an extraordinarily scholarly effort.

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<sup>153</sup> 7-V Perfection: striving to do better, as his father had set the example when Theodor was a child.

<sup>154</sup> 6-B Process of actualizing one’s potential; using one’s intelligence. Theodor understood what worked for him. He kept his interest fresh: B-2 Freshness of appreciation.

<sup>155</sup> Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: sharper acuity.

<sup>156</sup> 3-B There is a self to be actualized; Theodor’s creative energy needed to be expressed and released.

<sup>157</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: this reward revealed the world acknowledged Dr. Seuss’s voice, values and talents.

<sup>158</sup> 2-B Process of choices, one after another. 6-B Process of actualizing one’s potential.

Classical myths were lost on children, he believed, except for their vivid imagery: Hermes on winged sandals, Apollo pursuing Diana through the sky, Thor and his hammer, Pandora's box. He found Aesop's fables "too cold and abstract, too mathematical and intellectual" and Homer's Iliad "too complicated," but the Odyssey was "exciting" and Robin Hood rewarding for its "great roguish tricks." For Ted, Robinson Crusoe met "the seven needs" of children: love, security, belonging, to achieve and to know, and the needs for change and aesthetics. He particularly liked the books of wit and realism that had begun appearing in the Victorian era, tales by Hans Christian Andersen, Robert Louis Stevenson and Mark Twain with "characters of flesh and blood" where "warm tolerance replaced scolding's." In Utah Ted shyly allowed students to know where he placed himself;<sup>159</sup> "In the realm of nonsense, there are Mother Goose, (Edward) Lear, (Lewis) Carroll, P. L. Travers and Dr. Seuss." (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 123-124)

To ward off stage fright, Theodor the night before his conference, drew illustrations on the chalkboard to explain his points;<sup>160</sup> when he arrived the next morning, the board was wiped clean; the janitor said there had been kids in there the night before drawing but he had cleaned it for him (124). He gave lectures and workshops, giving his personal ideas of successful writing: "Write a verse a day, not to send to publishers, but to throw in waste baskets. It will help your prose. It will give you swing. Shorten paragraphs and sentences, then shorten words... Use verbs. Let the kids fill in the adjectives... Why write about the clouds over fairyland when you have better clouds over Utah that you know and understand?"<sup>161</sup> (124). Having enjoyed teaching and motivated, Theodor began outlining with great conviction<sup>162</sup> a textbook on children's book

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<sup>159</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: Theodor was beginning to identify himself with his life mission of writing books for children, enough to compare himself to other great writers.

<sup>160</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creativeness: clearly an inventive person who is inventing every day; Theodor understood his fear and creatively found a solution to aid himself.

<sup>161</sup> Trust: D-3 Acceptance: unquestioning spirit which one takes the characteristics of nature; he did not fight with reality; the clouds are better in Utah – reality.

<sup>162</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: a task to fulfill, requires much of their energy. To be a professor was too small for Theodor's life mission; his voice was greater and became known worldwide. This textbook would be useful after he became known as the "real hero of children's literature" ("Why Dr. Seuss is the real hero of children's literature.")

writing which was turned down by Random House.<sup>163</sup> Louise Bonino, the juvenile editor at Random House, wrote a letter to Theodor explaining their position regarding his idea:

You enjoy the adulation not only of the general public but also of the children's librarians<sup>164</sup>... Some of them would feel an author-artist of picture books could hardly qualify as an expert in the entire field of juvenile writing... [Saxe Commin's] concern is that it would interrupt you in the steady production of your marvelous children's books [and bring] down on your head all kinds of criticism for doing a semiformal book which tries to explain method, when there is so much inspired madness in your own work<sup>165</sup>... I am returning your notes under separate cover. (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 126)

Theodor was heartbroken. In the same year of the conference, *Bartholomew and The Oobleck* (1949), was published and became his second Caldecott citation.<sup>166</sup>

1950 – Seussian Word - Nerd

Then came: *If I Ran the Zoo* (1950), a story about a little boy named Gerald McGrew, who went into a zoo, unlocked every door and opened each cage to start over again with “beasts of a much more un-usual kind.”<sup>167</sup> With his father having run a zoo in Springfield, many of the ideas came from his time spend there. Theodor was quoted as saying: “I did it in her memory” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 132); referring to his mother who had been working on a book about a zoo when he had come back from his time at Oxford. Theodor had always aspired to become a professor of literature, which never happened but there were other doors for Theodor to walk into which would be like the unlocking of doors and cages at the zoo, allowing

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<sup>163</sup> Yet today, Random House is looking to publish this: “Wherever possible, the initiatives highlight lesser-known books, along with key titles. In January 2016, Random House is launching *Dr. Seuss's Guide to the Curriculum*, which lists every Seuss title and explains how each connects” (K. R.). [To date this has not been published]. Trust: D-1 Life mission: after the fact, the world would in fact recognize and embrace Theodor's thoughts and efforts in this textbook.

<sup>164</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: Theodor having spent much of his time in libraries both as a boy and student at Dartmouth had great regard for librarians and coveted their approval.

<sup>165</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: this was one of Theodor's trademark, his inspired madness with logic. Freedom: C-2 Creativeness: the inspired madness created inventive work.

<sup>166</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: again, the world was publicly acknowledging Theodor; this award like an applause.

<sup>167</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creativeness: clearly a creative person who is creating every day, inventiveness.

his imagination to create stories<sup>168</sup> of the unusual kind as well as new words and creatures which would become known as *Seussian*.<sup>169</sup> One word which he created was “nerd” in the book *If I Ran the Zoo*.<sup>170</sup>

#### 1950 – *Redbook* Magazine Stories

At the same time Theodor was publishing books, he was publishing stories in *Redbook* magazine. According to *The Guardian* and Stan Zielinski (Zielinski, S.), author of “Children’s Book Collecting”, all the stories were original and came out before the books, except *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. He also published stories in the *Junior Catholic Messenger* (Grahame-Smith 25).

#### 1951 – 1953 Movies

In Hollywood, Warner Brothers, was impressed with Theodor’s work on *Your Job in Germany*, and asked him to work as a writer on a screenplay that would become, much amended and a decade later James Dean’s *Rebel Without a Cause* (Sullivan 29). In January 1951, Theodor created an animated film, *Gerald McBoing*. It was about a little boy who only spoke in sound-effects. Theodor said: “As soon as I heard the record I knew I was in the wrong medium”<sup>171</sup> (30). Nevertheless, with this film, Theodor won his third Academy Award. In 1952, he wrote and designed *The 5,000 Fingers of Dr. T*. It was a live-action film and “bizarre as any Oobleck, Wocket, or Screaming Abominable” (30) with the producer being Stanley Kramer. “Hollywood said he needed to have a love interest; Ted was screaming: ‘I don’t want to have a love interest, I want that little boy running over the piano’... he wanted to make pure fantasy” said Elin Vanderlip (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 4 of 9).

The fantasy is about a ten-year old boy who is utterly bored with his piano lessons; falling asleep during his practice he goes into a dream where there is a castle with an evil man, Dr. Terwilliler, who is looking over a two-story piano and watching 500 boys who are

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<sup>168</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creative: creative freedom for Theodor’s imagination to bring his life mission to actualization, writing books for children.

<sup>169</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creative: true inventiveness; Theodor invented his own words, animals and worlds.

<sup>170</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creative freedom to imagine and invent his own words; bilingualism as a child may have been an aid in this creative ability.

<sup>171</sup> 7-B Transient moment that breaks off illusions; Theodor was learning what was not his strength. Aware: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: Theodor could see directly.

hypnotized to play at a recital. Being the hero of the story the boy must save his widowed mother and thereby leads a rebellion with the 500 boys against the evil doctor, freeing the boys and his mother. The production of the movie was postponed several times, finally on New Year's Day of 1952, Theodor withdrew from the film. Kramer, the Producer, not wanting to stop production, listened to Theodor's concerns and agreed to work with him by deleting certain scenes; Theodor gave it another try. Yet, the cost was high for the film, it was difficult finding 500 boys, and Kramer was quoted: "There wasn't enough money to do what should really have been a music extravaganza" (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 134). "Ted felt that compromises had overwhelmed his spontaneity and the logic of his nonsense,<sup>172</sup> and the picture had become more mime than fantasy" (135). The sneak preview came out in January, 1953, in a Los Angeles theater. "It turned out to be a scene of acute professional embarrassment that haunted Ted for the rest of his life. Fifteen minutes into the movie the preview audience began filing out. Ted recalled, 'At the end there were only five people left besides Kramer and our staff. It was a disaster. Careers were ruined.' For him it was 'the worst evening of my life'"<sup>173</sup> (135).

In 1991, the film was released on video and over the years there has been and continues a cult following of fans. "Its novelty remained its strong appeal; some fans treasured it as an arty feature-length cartoon with live actors and realized that nothing quite like it had been attempted by Hollywood" (137 - 138). Again, Theodor was ahead of his time.<sup>174</sup> Theodor did not stay long with the movie industry or Warner Brothers; it was not where he felt his best;<sup>175</sup> "I quit because I realized my *métier* was drawing fish"<sup>176</sup> (Sullivan 29). "Others maintain that once Ted and Helen had bought 'The Tower' in '47, Geisel's desire to work alone, quietly and intelligently, became irresistible"<sup>177</sup> (29).

Making a break from Hollywood, Theodor and Helen went to Japan with a contract from

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<sup>172</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creativeness was stifled; spontaneity was stopped as a result of the financial barriers, therefore, the nonsense could not be presented logically.

<sup>173</sup> Awareness: B-3 Peak experience of the opposite; not positive and unforgettable.

<sup>174</sup> Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: Theodor was ahead of his time, within was a born perception of forward thinking.

<sup>175</sup> 2-B Process of choices, one after another. Theodor did not waste time when knowing he was in the wrong place. His life mission D-1, was strong within, guiding him to trust his inner voice D-2.

<sup>176</sup> 10-V Simplicity: honesty. Trust: D-1 Life mission became clearer and clearer.

<sup>177</sup> Freedom: C-1 Detachment: Theodor's need for solitude, privacy grew as his talents were exercised; what was within, the books, were needing to be delivered and solitude allowed this.



*Life* to write about how the years of American occupation after Hiroshima had affected the hopes and dreams of the Japanese children (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 136). This was a moment to breathe and step back<sup>178</sup> from the film industry and “not to be dragged down by the wave of critical rejection that both expected” when the movie was to be released (135). After six weeks’ abroad, coming back to America, the reviews of *The 5,000 Fingers of Dr. T.* film were in, some of them favorable, but not enough to encourage Theodor to believe that his future lay in films<sup>179</sup> (136 - 138). Theodor began to focus again on writing children’s books<sup>180</sup> thanks to the encouragement of Saxe Commins, the chief editor at Random House; the same Commins who kept him from becoming a lecturer on children’s literature and kept him focused on writing children’s books: to keep his own “much inspired madness in your own work” and to “focus on steady production of your marvelous children’s books” (126). The Morgan’s confirm that “Saxe rekindled his ambition to grow into a creative force”<sup>181</sup> (138).

Phyllis Jackson, Theodor’s New York agent, also encouraged him to go forward in a conversation which occurred in 1953:

“It’s been seven years since I gave up being a soldier,” he said. “Now I’d like to give up on movies and advertising and anything else that means dueling with vice presidents and committees, hmmm?”<sup>182</sup>

“So what will you do?” she asked.

“I want to stay in La Jolla and write children’s books,” he said... “If I dropped everything else, do you think I could count on royalties of five thousand dollars a year?”<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> 4-B When in doubt, to be honest rather than not; Theodor had doubts about the film and realized his need to get away to get re-stabilized – 2-B process of choices; 3-B self to be actualized.

<sup>179</sup> 7-B Transient moment; breaking off the illusion of film-making.

<sup>180</sup> 5-B Making better choices; Theodor was taking responsibility for listening to his inner voice and those voices around him; he trusted them; doing this kept him focused on his life mission, D-1.

<sup>181</sup> 6-B Actualizing one’s potential requires using one’s intelligence; Theodor surrounded himself with people who believed in him, who were honest, who could see when he could not see clearly.

<sup>182</sup> 12-V Effortlessness in the way of peace with others; seeking a more beautiful way of functioning. Freedom: C-1 Detachment: Theodor’s need for solitude and tranquility, not ruffled or disturbed.

<sup>183</sup> A logical question for the basic needs to be provided for.

“It’s entirely possible,” she said. “The children’s market is building because the baby boom, and you have a reputation.”<sup>184</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 140)

Theodor did not expect to get rich and was not looking for riches: “We can live on one hundred dollars a week. If I could get five thousand dollars a year in royalties, I’d be set up for life!”<sup>185</sup> (141).

1952 – “But for Grown-ups Laughing Isn’t Any Fun”

Theodor wrote a letter defending his position as a child illustrator and writer; it was published in *The New York Times*, November 16, 1952.

By Dr. Seuss

There are many reasons why an intelligent man should never ever write for children. Of all professions for a man, it is socially the most awkward. You go to a party, and how do they introduce you? The hostess says, “Dr. Seuss, meet Henry J. Bronkman. Mr. Bronkman manufactures automobiles, jet planes, battleships and bridges. Dr. Seuss...well, he writes the sweetest, dear, darlingest little whimsies for wee kiddies!”

Mr. Bronkman usually tries to be polite. He admits there is a place in the world for such activities. He admits he once was a kiddie himself. He even confesses to having read *Peter Rabbit*. Then abruptly he excuses himself and walks away in search of more vital and rugged companionship.

Wherever a juvenile writer goes, he is constantly subjected to humiliating indignities. When asked to take part in a panel discussion along with other members of the writing fraternity he is given the very end seat at the table...always one seat lower than the dusty anthologist who compiled “the Unpublished Letter of Dibble Sneth, Second Assistant Secretary of something or other under Polk.”

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<sup>184</sup> There was a need for good children’s literature; Dr. Seuss had a successful reputation with this market; it therefore made sense to Phyllis that the two were meant to fulfill the other. She gave encouragement and direction where Theodor could find success and hit the target right in the exact place – the bull’s-eye: children’s literature.

<sup>185</sup> 10-V Simplicity: the heart of the matter, bluntness; Theodor was not seeking riches but a way of life: honesty, awareness, freedom, and trust, the four key characteristics of being SA.

Besides that, since we don't make much money, our friends are always getting us aside and telling us, "Look now, you can do better. After all, with all your education, there *must* be some way you could crack the Adult Field!"

The thing that's so hard to explain to our friends is that most of us who specialize in writing humor for children have cracked the adult field and, having cracked it, have decided definitely that we prefer to uncrack it. We are writing for the so-called Brat Field by choice.<sup>186</sup> For, despite the fact this brands us as pariahs, despite the fact this turns us into literary untouchables, there is something we get when we write for the young that we never can hope to get in writing for you ancients.<sup>187</sup> To be sure, in some ways you are superior to the young. You scream less. You burp less. You have fewer public tantrums. You ancients are generally speaking, slightly more refined.<sup>188</sup> But when it comes to trying to amuse you...! Have you ever stopped to consider what has happened to your sense of humor?<sup>189</sup>

When you were a kid named Willy or Mary the one thing you did better than anything else was laugh.<sup>190</sup> The one thing you got more fun out of than anything was laughing.

Why, I don't know. Maybe it has to do with juices. And when somebody knew how to stir those juices for you, you really rolled on the floor. Remember?<sup>191</sup> Your sides almost went crazy with the pain of having fun. You were a terrible blitz to your family. So

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<sup>186</sup> 5-B Making better choices; being courageous rather than afraid, rather than going along with the crowd. Trust: D-2 Autonomy: Theodor made up his own mind; he was independent of enculturation among his peers and what was expected to be "successful."

<sup>187</sup> 1-V Truth: Theodor was seeking the richness in the honesty of laughter. 13-V Playfulness: joy, gaiety, humor, exuberance from simplicity and truth, not phoniness. Honesty: A-2 Social interest: feeling of identification with the human species; Theodor identified with authenticity not false pretense. He was not interested in false boundaries, cast systems; had a desire to be involved, to help, to have a mission to those who were real, authentic.

<sup>188</sup> Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: Theodor used satire and humor when speaking the truth.

<sup>189</sup> Honesty: A-3 Interpersonal relations: obliteration of the ego; seeking a higher love. Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: Theodor could see through phoniness, fake laughter. B-4 Ethical awareness: definite moral standards; Theodor in his mind, knew what he thought was right and wrong, even if it went against the norm or customs.

<sup>190</sup> Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: this was most important to Theodor all through his life. This was the medium of writing and illustrating he used

<sup>191</sup> Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: to deliver a strong point; does the reader remember laughing with stitches? Creates a very clear picture to deliver a point and to ask: "Remember?"

what? Your juices were juicing. Your lava was seething. Your humor was spritzing. You really were living.

At that age you saw life through very clear windows. Small windows, of course. But very bright windows.<sup>192</sup>

And, then, what happened?

You know what happened.<sup>193</sup>

The grown-ups began to equip you with shutters. Your parents, your teachers, your everybody-around-you, your all-of-those-people who loved and adored you...they decided your humor was crude and too primitive. You were laughing too loud, too often and too happily. It was time you learned to laugh with a little more restraint.

They began pointing out to you that most of this wonderful giddy nonsense that you laughed at wasn't, after all, quite as funny as you thought.

“Now why,” they asked, “are you laughing at that? It’s completely pointless and utterly ridiculous.”

“Nonsense,” they told you, “is all right in its place. But it’s time you learned how to keep it in its place. There’s much more in this world than just nonsense.”

Your imagination, they told you, was getting a little bit out of hand. Your young unfettered mind,<sup>194</sup> they told you, was taking you on too many wild flights of fancy. It was time your imagination got its feet down on the ground. It was time your version of

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<sup>192</sup> 3-V Beauty: an image of beauty, perfection, wholeness to create a picture, an analogy.

<sup>193</sup> 4a-V Dichotomy: contradictions, transformation of opposites; Theodor struck a note of warning, accountability.

<sup>194</sup> 2-V Goodness: rightness, desirably to keep this kind of mind; necessary to have an imagination. Theodor valued this and so used sarcasm to drive home a point. 3-V Beauty: rightness, aliveness, wholeness, perfection – an unfettered mind.

humor was given a practical, realistic base. They began to teach you *their* versions of humor.<sup>195</sup> And the process of destroying your spontaneous laughter was under way.<sup>196</sup>

A strange thing called conditioned laughter began to take its place. Now, conditioned laughter doesn't spring from the juices. It doesn't even spring. Conditioned laughter germinates, like toadstools on a stump.

And, unless you were a very lucky little Willy or Mary, you soon began to laugh at some very odd things. Your laughs, unfortunately, began to get mixed with sneers and smirks.

This conditioned laughter the grown-ups taught you depended entirely on their conditions. Financial conditions. Political conditions. Racial, religious and social conditions. You began to laugh at people your family feared or despised – people they felt inferior to, or people they felt better than.<sup>197</sup>

If your father said a man named Herbert Hoover was an ass, and asses should be laughed at, you laughed at Herbert Hoover. Or, if you were born across the street, you laughed at Franklin Roosevelt. Who they were, you didn't know. But the local ground rules said you were to laugh at them. In the same way, you were supposed to guffaw when someone told a story which proved that Swedes are stupid, Scots are tight, Englishmen are stuffy and the Mexicans never wash.

Your laughs were beginning to sound a little tiny. Then you learned it was socially advantageous to laugh at Protestants and/or Catholics. You readily learned, according to your conditions, that you could become the bright boy of the party by harpooning a hook into Jews (or Christians), labor (or capital), or the Turnverein or the Strawberry Festival.

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<sup>195</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: deep feeling of identification, impatience and disgust. Theodor had a social interest for the need for humor, imagination; keeping the humanness alive in people.

<sup>196</sup> “[T]he process of destroying your spontaneous laughter”, Theodor had the wisdom to see how this process destroyed the imagination of a child, an individual. A-1 Sense of humor: humor that is spontaneous, cannot be repeated again, needed for self-actualization according to Maslow. Destroying the imagination and wild flights of fancy, making one put their feet on the ground, everything that Theodor refused to do, to become conditioned to a sense of laughter, conditioned on “their” way of thinking and seeing the world; conditioned to finances, politics, religion and social conditions – all the antithesis to become an individual who is self-actualized in one's self.

<sup>197</sup> Theodor addressed these prejudices in his books.

You still laughed for fun, but the fun was getting hemmed in by a world of regulations. You were laughing at subjects according to their listing in the ledger. Every year, as you grew older, the laughs that used to split your sides diminished. The ledger furnished more sophisticated humor. You discovered a new form of humor based on sex. Sex, a taboo subject called for very specialized laughter. It was a subject that was never considered funny in large gatherings. It was a form of humor you never indulged in at Sunday school. It was a form of humor that was subtle and smart and you learned to restrict it and reserve it for special friends.

And by the time you had added that accomplishment to your repertoire, you know what happened to you, Willy or Mary? Your capacity for healthy, silly, friendly laughter was smothered. You'd really grown up. You'd become adults... adults, which is a word that means obsolete children.<sup>198</sup>

As adults, before you laugh, you ask yourselves questions:

“Do I dare laugh at that in the presence of the boss? Sort of dangerous, when you consider how he feels about Taft Hartly.”

“How loud shall I laugh at that one? Mrs. Cuthbertson, my hostess, is laughing only fifteen decibels.”

“Shall I come right out and say I thought the book was funny? The reviewer in The TIMES said the humor was downright silly.”

These are the questions that children never ask.<sup>199</sup> The TIMES reviewer and Mrs. Cuthbertson to the contrary notwithstanding, children never let their laughs out on a string. On their laughter there is no political or social pressure gauge.

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<sup>198</sup> Honesty: S-1 Sense of humor: spontaneous, fitting the situation, unlike the definition of an adult's humor and laughter. Theodor used this definition of adults, “obsolete children” often; it was one of his most quoted phrases.

<sup>199</sup> Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: spontaneous, spur of the moment where no questions are first asked if it is right or wrong to laugh. Children do not have yet these set prejudices or rules and are free to laugh as Theodor wrote and as Theodor he himself embraced, cherished and guarded strongly through his entire life. 13-V Playfulness: fun, joy, humor.

That, I think is why we maverick<sup>200</sup> humorists prefer to write exclusively for children.<sup>201</sup>  
(Seuss. “But for Grown-ups”)

Below this article there is a cartoon with a man in the background who has a large nose, wearing a hat and walking slumped down; in the front are two cats sitting in a garbage barrel looking at the man and are saying: “*Him...? Oh, he’s nobody. They say he writes for children*”<sup>202</sup> (Seuss. “But for Grown-ups”).

1953 - Successful Children’s Author & Life at “The Tower”

Theodor continued to find peace and solitude at his home on top of Mount Soledad, above the sleepy town of La Jolla, California; he found inspiration to illustrate and write his books.<sup>203</sup> Peggy, Theodor’s niece, described how she saw life at La Jolla:

Ted could be difficult and “uptight,” but Helen usually smoothing things over. “There was tenseness when he was finishing a book. There would be doom and gloom and ‘I’m never going to write anything, I’ve lost it, I just can’t do it.’ Then suddenly when something would click he’d walk out of his studio and the world would be wonderful.”<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> Trust: D-2 Autonomy: responsible to themselves, not being weather vanes. Maverick is defined according to Merriam-Webster as “an independent individual who does not go along with a group or party.” Theodor defined exactly who he was; he knew who he was and his mission in life – D-1.

<sup>201</sup> Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: living in the real world as opposed to manmade mass of concepts, stereotypes. Theodor was attracted to the childlike laughter and humor which was genuine. B-4 Ethical awareness: Theodor had his own notions of right and wrong; he kept his ability to laugh at spontaneous situations in life. Trust: D-1 Life mission: as a young man he decided to “go for the laugh” and kept this in his style and life until the day he died. Near the end of his life, he asked Audrey: “Am I dead yet?” (Dr. Seuss' - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary, Part 9 of 9). Humor and life pulsed through his veins until the end; the life within was expressed through illustrations and words - books; it had to be released for this life, this calling, was greater than himself.

<sup>202</sup> Satire humor pointed at himself. Trust: Theodor trusted himself and his life mission unfolding enough to make fun of himself. D-2 Autonomy: he had his own inner directness, did not need the approval of others. His life work was greater.

<sup>203</sup> 12-V Effortlessness: grace, perfect and beautiful functioning. Theodor in the peace and solitude allowed for perfection and an ability to function. B-2 Freshness of appreciation: the basic things are all miracles, and allowed for inspiration and enjoyment again and again.

<sup>204</sup> B-3 Peak experience: limitless horizons that open the vision. Theodor would find the perfection he was looking for in the book creating a peak experience.

When no inspiration came, Ted retreated to his sofa and read. More often he sat at his desk eight hours a day “whether [or not] anything happens,” he said, “which is rough in a vacation community where everybody’s down at the beach or out fishing or playing golf.” Actually he was rarely tempted by such diversions.<sup>205</sup> In most ways he was a loner; he went for long walks and he swam, which was all he ever listed on his Dartmouth alumni under “Sports.”

On days when work had not gone well, he would change to old clothes and go straight to his rocks which were scattered around their acreage. “It was his hobby and his therapy. He arranged them into paths and made borders around the succulents he planted.” Helen said that her frugal husband had only two extravagances, “cigarettes and rocks.” He shaped their desert garden with color blocks of luminous pink blooms, golds and purples, a Seussian “Ravenna mosaic,” and placed the dinosaur footprint<sup>206</sup> from his father beside a shady garden path. (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 143-144)

In the wee hours of the night he would paint and later was referred to as the midnight artist.<sup>207</sup>

Ted calmed himself<sup>208</sup> by beginning to paint each day, mostly in watercolors but sometimes in gouache, ink and casein. Midnight was his favorite painting hour. He said of his paintings, “I like them. Some people like them. Art critics say they aren’t art... I could be a good painter if I could devote myself to it, hmmm?”<sup>209</sup> (180)

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<sup>205</sup> Freedom: Theodor had the ability to withdraw in order to create, to be freely who he was. C-1 Detachment: he had the ability to remain unruffled from what was going on down in the city. His life mission D-1, was where he put his energy; knowing himself enough to know what worked best for his creativity to flourish. D-3 Acceptance: Theodor accepted his perception of what mattered to him, to his work, to his reality.

<sup>206</sup> Theodor would become himself, with his books, a dinosaur print in the field of children’s literature; D-1 Life mission.

<sup>207</sup> Freedom: C-1 Detachment: need for solitude, for privacy, undisturbed. 2-B Process of choices, one after another; Theodor knew what he needed to be inspired and with this inspiration actualized himself over and over – 3-B.

<sup>208</sup> 8-B Theodor knew what worked for him, what he was good at, where he was going, how to calm himself to keep balanced.

<sup>209</sup> The question to ask is: “Why could he not?” His life mission D-1, was a greater cause; he also was a friend of words not just images and painting.



His next book, *Scrambled Eggs Super!* (1953) was published telling about a boy, Peter T. Hooper, who travels the world, gathering ingredients for “Scrambled eggs Super-dee-Dooper-dee-Booper, Special de luxe à-la-Peter T. Hooper” (Seuss, *Scrambled Eggs Super!*). Dependent on inspiration from the characters,<sup>210</sup> he would draw, always knowing the storyline came from the characters themselves. “He would start each by sketching on a large artist pad, and he would hope that the doodles would evolve into animals and that the animals would begin to interact. On the cork bulletin boards above his desk he would pin his sketches and watch storylines develop” (Sullivan 31). Yet, Cathy Goldsmith said Theodor worked “typically” first with the text, then with the pictures:<sup>211</sup> “He typically wrote first and drew second, continuing to edit the text while perfecting the pictures” (K. R.). Cathy worked with Theodor on his last six books at Random House as the art director (Goldsmith); perhaps there was a change of order with the words and pictures as time passed.

#### 1954 – 1955 - Society, Politics & Challenges

On January 31, 1954, Theodor was on live TV on NBC; Burgess Meredith was hosting the show and Theodor was acting as an art connoisseur (Nel *Dr. Seuss* 63). Helen commented on the way Theodor felt about public audiences: “Ted will probably be five pounds thinner, as that is the amount he usually loses before facing the public!”<sup>212</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr.*

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<sup>210</sup> Honesty: Theodor trusted his feelings, the inter-personal relationships that came from doodling and the characters which came alive to him, delivering stories which most times had messages. These stories delivered messages of humor, topics relevant to social interest (attacking phoniness, cruelty, hypocrisy), and interpersonal relations encouraging greater love, identification with the human race and obliteration of the ego boundaries.

<sup>211</sup> Cathy Goldsmith began working with Theodor in 1978 (Cathy Goldsmith, president and publisher of Random House’s Beginner Books line and the Dr. Seuss publishing program, is the last of the publisher’s employees to have worked directly with Theodor Seuss Geisel, beginning in 1978) (Kantor, Emma.), almost forty years since *And to Think that I Saw it on Mulberry Street* (1937), is it possible that he had more confidence in himself, in his inner-voice? Trust: D-1 Life mission: he knew at this point his own identity, his calling. The inner directedness was more vivid in himself - D-2 Autonomy: he was independent enough to write directly with words first and then from his past experiences brought various characters into play.

<sup>212</sup> Theodor 50 years old at this time still did not like the public eye on him. He confronted the public with strength and force through his books but as Theodor Geisel did not feel comfortable facing the public. His dislike for phoniness and hypocrisy poses two possible reasons why he felt this uncomfortableness: (Honesty: A-2 Social interest: negative emotions that come from hypocrisy, phoniness, cruelty) was it that he did not want to appear this way, or that he viewed adults as phony? His letter to *The New York Times*, written November 16, 1952, revealed his

*Seuss* 146 - 147).

Life at the Tower not only circled around writing and illustrating, the two cared and were involved in the social affairs of the little sleepy town which was waking up; the University of California in San Diego was in the planning stage to open a new campus in La Jolla (which opened on November 18, 1960). Helen cared deeply about the Musical Arts Society in La Jolla and Theodor lobbied at the La Jolla town council for a local billboard ban. In support of this ban, he designed and wrote an eight-page pamphlet creating two characters, Guss and Zaxx who were stone-age businessmen: with their ambition the wilderness turned community was destroyed because of their advertising signs - even the dinosaurs moved away. The pamphlet ended with these words of warning: "Which is why / our business men never shall / Allow such to happen / in La Jolla, Cal" <sup>213</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 147). Often Helen hosted private parties at their house with close friends. It was at these parties where Theodor was relaxed and enjoyed playing pranks with his guests.<sup>214</sup> Hats were often a common piece of attire which added amusement, fun, play and imagination.<sup>215</sup>

At a dinner party in late May of 1954, at the home of Nicolai Sokoloff, pianist and conductor, along with his wife, Ruth, Theodor and Helen were celebrating with the others the launch of the summer concert season at the Musical Arts Society in La Jolla. Later that night as they were leaving for home, Helen had a surge of pain in her feet and ankles. Two days later, Theodor drove Helen to the Scripps Clinic. The following day she was unable to swallow and had pain from her feet to her face. Guillain-Barre syndrome was the analysis. Unable to breathe on her own, Helen was placed in an Iron-lung and began treatment (147-149). Theodor was unable to work; Peggy Owens, Theodor's niece later said: "He was focused on her and he was strong for her but it was dreadful" ("Dr. Seuss' - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary", Part 4 of 9).

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thoughts about adults. Being on public television was sure to bring criticism to him as a person. He could accept criticism of his books because to him they were perfect (7-V perfection); the books were fantasy; it is difficult to judge fantasy; there is safety in a fantasy world.

<sup>213</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: Theodor cared about the environment aesthetically.

<sup>214</sup> Interesting to note the difference between being in the public eye and being with his close friends; honesty and freedom are seen here; freedom to be spontaneous C-3 (behavior that is marked by simplicity, naturalness) and honesty to have a sense of humor that is good natured at the silliness of human nature, just funny at the spur of the moment.

<sup>215</sup> Theodor was quoted: "Fantasy is a necessary ingredient in living, it's a way of looking at life through the wrong end of a telescope, and that enables you to laugh at life's realities." With the hats came amusement and fun; A-1 Sense of humor: spontaneous, good natured silliness.

On July 4 Helen was removed from the Iron-lung and on July 9<sup>th</sup> began rehabilitation at the California Rehabilitation Center in Santa Monica. Theodor at the time stayed at a nearby hotel and tried to work. “He felt helpless in unexpected ways. He had not kept a checkbook since early in their marriage when Helen had found himself subtracting their deposits from the bank balance; he had not even made his own coffee... “frantic and frightened... Helen had always shielded him from the real world”<sup>216</sup> said Elin Vanderlip (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 150). After several months of therapy and rehabilitation they moved back into their home. “Although she did not dwell on the terrors of her illness, Helen was never again out of pain. ‘From then on, walking was uncomfortable.’ Peggy remembered. ‘She told me she always felt that her shoes were two sizes too small’” (151). “She lived with discomfort from then on; they worked through this together” (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 4 of 9). “She never wanted to be a burden” recalled Ellen Revelle (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 151).

*Horton Hears a Who* was published in this year, 1954. It was a book “partially inspired by the previous year’s trip to Japan” (Nel “Seuss”); the reviews came out and it was considered a great success! *The New York Herald Tribune* hailed it as “wildly original”<sup>217</sup> and the *Des Moines Register* called it “a rhymed lesson in protection of minorities and their rights,”<sup>218</sup> (Kahn). Phil Nel (2010) wrote: “Seuss’s sensitivity to social injustice stems from his adolescence, the period of his life that he considered the source of his creativity.”<sup>219</sup> The overwhelming reception of the book lifted both of their spirits and as Helen began to recover, Theodor also recovered his

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<sup>216</sup> An observation from a friend that Theodor was shielded from the real world; or was it that the details of finances held no importance to him? Theodor lived in a fantasy land? Was he really living a life of awareness in all areas; maybe in his interior there was a true awareness but not to the outside world.

<sup>217</sup> Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: wildly original, cannot be repeated; not hurting someone or making fun but humor at the human condition no matter the size; his conviction for the social interest A-2, of all living beings; Horton had a feeling of identification with the speck, needing and wanting to be protected.

<sup>218</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: Horton said: “A person’s a person, no matter how small.” After Theodor’s trip to Japan, he identified himself with the people he met there, even if they had been on opposing sides.

<sup>219</sup> C-2 Creativity: His source of creativity was like a well or a spring coming from a deep source below; Theodor’s youth planted seeds in him which would develop into the form of books; they came from within, from the deep part of his experiences and soul; he had an awareness to know what was going on and to be able to express this, to be aware of one’s world.

imagination.<sup>220</sup> He wrote and illustrated the poem: “A Prayer for a Child” which was published on December 23, 1955, in *Collier’s* magazine:

“From here on earth, from my small place, I ask of You way out in space: Please tell all men in every land | what You and I both understand.<sup>221</sup> Please tell all men that peace is good. That's all that need be understood | in every world in Your great sky. We understand. Both You and I.”<sup>222</sup> (Seuss. “A Prayer”)

He also created a new book, *On Beyond Zebra* (1955) that had an expanding alphabet past the letter Z: “things that I see / That I never could spell if I stopped with the Z”, and new Seussian words.<sup>223</sup> He dedicated this book to Helen.

1955 - Honorary Doctorate from Dartmouth

Earlier in June of 1955, Theodor was bestowed from his Alma Mater, Dartmouth, the title of an Honorary Doctorate which he had at this point well-earned without ever completing more “boring” (to him) hours of lecture at Oxford, Vienna or the Sorbonne. President John Sloan Dickey presented Theodor his first, but not last, honorary degree:

Creator and fancier of fanciful beasts,<sup>224</sup> your affinity for flying elephants and man-eating mosquitoes makes us rejoice you were not around to be Director of Admissions on Mr.

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<sup>220</sup> Recovered imagination through knowing the ability within was that of making people laugh yet deliver powerful messages; there was a little voice in himself, Theodor, which he too respected.

<sup>221</sup> Theodor understood what was important; he was aware, B-1 Efficient perception of reality: within him. B-4 Ethical awareness to what is right and wrong. Theodor was seeking what called out from within himself, what he knew – peace to be good: 2-V Goodness: rightness; 3-V Beauty: perfection; 4-V Wholeness: homonymous; 7-V Perfection: nothing lacking; when nothing is lacking from the needs, can there be peace? Maybe only this can be a fantasy, in the mind of God and one who seeks it; that is all that is needed, peace.

<sup>222</sup> Peace was important to Theodor; peace between individuals, between countries, between cultures; A-2 Social interest: of mankind and the issues man vs. man had to deal with, this interested Theodor and was part of his expressions in all forms.

<sup>223</sup> Seussian words: Theodor was known to make up his own words as his own alphabet. He created characters from his imagination creating an entirely real world for himself. Freedom: C-2 Creativeness: that is originality; he changed the conception of creativeness to true inventiveness.

<sup>224</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creativeness: Theodor created his own beasts and animals with outlandish and humorous abilities as cited in the text: flying elephants and man-eating mosquitoes.

Noah's ark.<sup>225</sup> But our rejoicing in your career is far more positive: as author and artist you single-handedly have stood as St. George<sup>226</sup> between a generation of exhausted parents and the demon dragon of unexhausted children on a rainy day. There was an inimitable wriggle in your work long before you became a producer of motion pictures and animated cartoons; and, as always with the best of humor, behind the fun there has been intelligence, kindness, and a feel for humankind.<sup>227</sup> An Academy Award-winner and holder of the Legion of Merit for war film work, you have stood these many years in the academic shadow of your learned friend Dr. Seuss; and because we are sure the time has come when the good doctor would want you to walk by his side as a full equal,<sup>228</sup> and because your College delights to acknowledge the distinction of a loyal son, Dartmouth confers on you her Doctorate of Humane Letters.<sup>229</sup>

Signature – John Sloan Dickey

Hanover, New Hampshire

June 12, 1955

The vanilla 5x7 Commencement Program – with green string binding, black capped font – Times New Roman with the university emblem in the middle – aged program holds in the front a 3 x 5 off-white typed speech from John Sloan Dickey – signed by John (president of the university)

Conferring Of Honorary Degrees

The recipients will be presented by Dean Donald Harvard Morrison

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<sup>225</sup> Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: his critics and friends realized Theodor's sense of humor and the bizarre and celebrated and honored him in the humor created in his works.

<sup>226</sup> Great honor bestowed upon Theodor to be compared to a Saint; and of course with humor.

<sup>227</sup> Honesty: A-3 Interpersonal relations: interpersonal relations that is capable of greater love, obliteration of the ego boundaries; Theodor, though very funny, touched the hearts of mankind with his truth and the expressions he created and wrote.

<sup>228</sup> Dartmouth College recognized Theodor Seuss Geisel equal to Dr. Seuss; the statement is strong in that it is full recognition of a man who became self-actualized through his pseudonym. Trust in Theodor's life mission D-1: his identity was found, recognized and honored.

<sup>229</sup> Trust: D-1 Theodor's life mission was what excited him as a child and followed him to this point and beyond; it was a cause outside himself that became the defining characteristic of who he was. The love of drawing animals with knees in the wrong places, going for the laugh, became the driving forces within that created a Seussian empire, world.

*Master of Arts*

*3 names*

*Doctor of Divinity*

*1 name*

*Doctor of Science*

*1 name*

*Doctor of Humane Letters*

Rene d'Harnoncourt New York, New York

Director of the Museum of Modern Art, Theodor Seuss Geisel '25 La Jolla, California

Cartoonist and Author. (Dickey)

The day after in *The Springfield Union* newspaper, Theodor, known to the locals now as Dr. Seuss, was praised with the headline reading: "Dartmouth Honors Dr. Seuss Known in City as T. S. Geisel"; with the subtitle: "Former Local Cartoonist Gets Degree Along with Joe Martin and Other Celebrities" and the first sentence: "Theodor S. Geisel, the local man who has achieved fame as one of the country's top cartoonist under the name 'Dr. Seuss,' was among 11 celebrities who received honorary degree yesterday from Dartmouth College" ("Dartmouth Honors Dr. Seuss"). The hometown where Theodor was born and raised showed pride and honor in their hometown celebrity.<sup>230</sup>

1955 – 1957 – Turning Points

On May 24, 1954, *Life Magazine's* cover had the headline: "Why Can't My Child Read?" By John Hersey. The article by Hersey was titled: "Why Do Students Bog Down On the First R?" He began the article asking this question: "All over the country, this month and next, most of the 28,000,800 pupils in the public schools are being given standardized year end achievement test. A question that both educators and parents will want to see answered by those test is, are our young citizens learning to use our language well enough?" (136). The content of the primers

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<sup>230</sup> At one time as a boy, Theodor was rushed off the stage in his hometown by former President Theodore Roosevelt; affecting him for the rest of his life with a shyness toward public appearances, but now his hometown showed him pride and honor. D-2 Autonomy: Theodor followed his own inner direction; he was not tradition bound ever in his life.

was noted as well there were illustrations from the *Dick and Jane* primers: “Must they not look closely to see why many children resist the textbooks they are given? Is not revulsion against namby-pamby school readers perhaps a reason why they like lurid comic books so much?”<sup>231</sup> (Hersey 138). Conformity was addressed: “It is evident, however, that both the reading text and the manuals used in our schools do tend to encourage uniformity and discourage individuality”<sup>232</sup> (139).

The article caught Theodor’s attention; Hersey suggested Dr. Seuss and other illustrators at the time to give aid: “Why should they not have pictures that widen rather than narrow the associative richness the children give to the words they illustrate—drawings like those of the wonderfully imaginative geniuses among children’s illustrators, Tennyson, Howard Pyle, Dr. Seuss, Walt Disney?”<sup>233</sup> (148).

The concern of illiteracy was high nationwide. In 1955, Rudolf Flesch wrote his most famous book *Why Johnny Can't Read: And What You Can Do about It*. The book criticized the whole-word method of teaching children to read; he adamantly said phonics is the way to teach reading, learning to sound out the words with a set of rules; in the back of the book there are exercises for parents to use to teach their child to read. In chapter 8, “How Not to Teach Reading”, Flesch also wrote about a day in the “typical American school” describing the reading circles, the children sitting in their chairs and how they start to read:

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<sup>231</sup> Namby-pamby school readers compared to lurid comic books must have caught Theodor’s attention. Theodor’s writing was never “weak or indecisive” as Merriam-Webster defines namby-pamby; “melodramatic, sensational; also shocking” defines lurid also by Merriam-Webster; this was more his writing and illustrating style; thus, Hersey was affective in grabbing Theodor’s eye and mind.

<sup>232</sup> Conformity and discouragement of individuality, the exact opposite of what Theodor believed in, strived for, was his life mission in preventing. Trust: D-2 Autonomy: dependent for their own development, their growth, own potentialities; Theodor was not tradition bound; in conformity situations he resisted suggestions more readily than others (as can be seen throughout his life from childhood to adulthood); his book, *The Cat in the Hat*, written two years later, 1957, revealed Theodor’s thoughts concerning conformity and uniformity.

<sup>233</sup> A lot was said in this sentence; placing Theodor in the company of “wonderfully imaginative geniuses”; these people were challenged with a mandate to provide something new for the children to broaden their experiences with words and illustrations: 1-V Truth that is filled with richness; 3-V Beauty which contains aliveness, simplicity, richness, wholeness, perfection, completion; 5-V Aliveness with spontaneity, changing and expressing itself; 11-V Richness with differentiation, complexity, intricacy; 13-V Playfulness in the texts and illustrations giving fun, joy, amusement, humor, exuberance and effortlessness in wanting to read and learning to read.

Laboriously following the words with their finger... ‘Jack...Ran...Out...To... See... The... Truck...It...Was...Red...And...It...Was...Big...Very...Very...Big...’ ...This is the pattern, repeated day after day... They do not read a story from beginning to end, ... They read two, three, four pages, if that, starting from wherever they left off last Friday and ending fifteen minutes to make room for the next group...

But the thing that is so characteristic, the unforgettable hallmark of American instruction in reading, is the *way* they ‘read.’ It’s a sort of chant, one word at a time, each produced with the same monotone and heavy effort<sup>234</sup> ... The game consists in hitting the word that the teacher says is right.<sup>235</sup>

It is obviously ridiculous to assume that these children read the stories in any acceptable meaning of the words. There is hardly any story to begin with, ... if the words on the page have any novelty at all for Tommy and Barbara, they certainly don’t have any freshness whatever for the other six.

Finally, we watch the poorest group. They work on some ‘story’ about a boy who is terribly excited and happy because he has two new caps, a blue one and a brown one. The teacher tries her best, in her preliminary telling of the story, to get the children interested. Unfortunately, they are not. The business of the two new caps leaves them utterly cold.<sup>236</sup>

Let’s thank the teacher and take our leave. Shall we go into another classroom? Or shall we return tomorrow, or Wednesday, or Thursday? Let me assure you that it won’t be necessary. We have seen all there is to be seen. This is it; this is what happens day after

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<sup>234</sup> 12-V Effortlessness: Theodor perhaps related to this “monotone and heavy effort” from his days at Oxford studying Shakespeare; he preferred doodling as his books reveal.

<sup>235</sup> A fake way to learn to read; as if it is a game. Honesty: A-2 Social interest: feeling of identification, negative emotions that come from hypocrisy, phoniness; this type of education was phony and full of hypocrisy. Theodor was repelled by phoniness all his life, using satire to look at the human condition as well as fantasy.

<sup>236</sup> Utterly cold and bored; sure this made Theodor livid, feeling righteous indignation for these pupils who were considered the “poorest group.” A-2 Social interest: this anger and righteous indignation, feeling of commonness with mankind moved Theodor to do his greatest work and contribution; changing the way children would learn to read and perceive reading. “That is what I am proudest of; that I had something to do with getting rid of Dick and Jane,” Geisel said in 1982 (Associated Press. “Children Express”).



day. The three groups, and let's start at the top of page 53, and the chant. Every so often the chant contains words that are not on the page, and then comes the vacant stare and the attempt to remember the right word. As to the 'stories,' they hardly come into the business at all. Even if the children were able to pick up an unfamiliar story in the book, read it once from beginning to end, and understand what it says, they still wouldn't be interested. But they don't read any way. They perform a daily ritual of chanting certain words while their eyes are fixed on uncertain marks on paper.<sup>237</sup> (Flesch 89 - 95)

Flesch hounded in on the disinterest in the children, the routine, the lack of novelty, rather the heaviness of learning to read, the lack of interest, the chant more than understanding what was read, and no interesting stories being told. Theodor, a man of depth and purpose in his stories and illustrations, seemed to be touched by the lack of depth in the stories written for children used to teach reading, as he believed that children should be given the same respect and intelligence as adults: "One thing I think is wrong with children's books today is the way adults talk down to kids and give them all this bunny wunny stuff. I treat them as equals"<sup>238</sup> (Mercer).

Flesch then went on and wrote about how children looked at the pictures for clues and quoted Dr. Edward W. Dolch:

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<sup>237</sup> Flesch wrote strong and held no punches; when reading this there is a sadness for the children and an anger against the educational system; A-2 Social interest: surely Theodor felt a righteous indignation which stirred within him, causing him to think and create a solution with his talent of illustrating and writing. Something had to be done; Flesch was giving it his full force, demanding a change. Change came two years later with *The Cat in the Hat*.

<sup>238</sup> "Namby-Pamby" as Hersey wrote or as Theodor said, "bunny wunny stuff"; this struck home in the heart of Theodor. To think that a child would be bored with reading, the lack of attention given to the needs of the children in their learning, as if they were just animals to be fed a curriculum to learn how to read, with no interesting stories. Theodor attacked this problem of illiteracy with all his might. What Hersey and Flesch wrote was exactly what Theodor needed to respond. He treated children as equals; this is one of the keys to Theodor's success. Present day, Theodor's conviction still rings true with Cathy Goldsmith's (president and publisher of Random House's Beginner Books) reflections:

Goldsmith was struck by Geisel's respect for children. "The most important thing I took away was that he never talked down to children, nor did he want anyone else to. He thought they were quite clever little creatures. He wanted to intrigue them—to make them want to read and keep coming back to books," she said. "He understood that we were making books for children, and if we were lucky they'd take their love of reading with them into adulthood." (Kantor)

The child's eyes... just wandered over the page and back and forth and up and down. The reason for this habit is most obvious. For years and years, the child has got more from the pictures than from the text, so he has learned to look constantly up at the picture during the process of what he calls reading... trying to make sense out of it all. He has the eye movements of doing a jigsaw puzzle rather than of reading. This habit of 'jumping eyes' is a tremendous one to unteach. (Flesch 96)

Therefore, pictures were an important part of the reading process; Theodor could deal with that, as his pictures always gave a message; it was his style and habit. Bringing the child's personal interest came into the process of reading to make-up for the boredom of the unexciting and irrelevant stories:

Experience charts were invented by the word-method educators after it had become painfully clear that the material in the readers bored the children to death... The educational pioneers came up with a beautiful answer: Let's give the children some reading matter that deals with their own personal experience. (97)

These reading charts were stories made-up by the children and created with the teacher. According to Flesch, these charts were:

...*not* a lesson in reading, since the children only repeat sentences they themselves dictated to the teacher a minute or two before... *not* a lesson in writing, since the children simply copy in their notebooks what they see on the blackboard... *not* a lesson in spelling, since the children *dictate* to the teacher and are carefully shielded from the active experience of recording their own words on paper. If this is preparation for life, it is at best preparation for the life of an executive, complete with dictating machine and private secretary.<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> Strong sarcasm at a very important subject: children learning to read and write. Theodor could relate to Flesch; the writing was much like Theodor's own writing filled with sarcasm and satire as seen in his *PM* cartoons. Theodor was an opponent of walking with the crowd for comfort sake: D-2 Autonomy: having an inner directedness, independent of culture and environment, dependent for their own development; not being a weather vane. Theodor when creating his books had in mind that they could learn for themselves, make up their own minds; in his books he encouraged individuality, strength of character, independence, not dependent. Not every child

It may be true, as Mr. Chase points out, that this is a lesson in ‘discussion.’ But then, parents do not pay school taxes to have first graders taught ‘discussion.’ They pay to have their children taught to read, write, and spell. (Flesch 98 - 99)

Theodor took all these facts in mind when he wrote his first book addressing the illiteracy crisis in the American schools: his first book, would NOT be boring: more of rhyming than a chant, experiences that interested the children in their minds and everyday lives, with fun, bizarre illustrations that went along with the story. Many critics have written that the story of *The Cat in the Hat* allows a child to live a naughty vicarious event; the British did not like this at first as they thought it too outlandish and rebel like.

The turning point occurred in the spring of 1955: in a very old brass elevator in the Houghton Mifflin publishing house located in Boston, there were three people: the elevator operator, Annie Williams, who was wearing “a leather half-glove and a secret smile,” William Spaulding, director of the educational division, and Theodor Geisel; with these three individuals, *The Cat in the Hat* was conceived. William asked Theodor to write a new type of primer for children to aid in the fight against illiteracy. “Write me a story that first-graders can’t put down!” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 155).

There was a challenge in writing this primer: it was to have a limited vocabulary of 225 words from a list of 348 words that six-year-olds should already be familiar with; Theodor was asked to take the list home and “play with it”<sup>240</sup> (155). William spoke with Bennett Cerf, Theodor’s agent at Random House, needing to get his permission to work with another publishing company. Cerf, a clever man, walked away with the deal that Houghton Mifflin could only publish the education edition and Random House would retain the rights to market and publish the trade edition in the public domain (156).

Theodor accepted the challenge and began to work with the limited list of words.<sup>241</sup> “I

would have the luxury of a life of an executive, therefore best to prepare students with the ability to make it through life in every situation; this required using one’s mind, to think their own thoughts.

<sup>240</sup> Theodor excelled at challenges; his mind grappled with the unknown until it made sense to him. He was attracted to the unknown as the challenge made him think differently, forced to use his imagination, something he did very well – Freedom: C-2 Creativeness.

<sup>241</sup> Accepting the challenge would become one of Theodor’s major steps in his life, in becoming SA, fulfilling his life mission D-1, and in transcending to help young minds learn to read and to imagine.

read the list 40 times” Theodor said, “and got more and more discouraged. It was trying to make a strudel without any strudels”<sup>242</sup> (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 4 of 9). Desperate he decided to write a story around the first two words that rhymed which were cat and hat (Sullivan 33). “I went with the verse because in verse you can repeat,” he said. “It becomes part of the pattern. To teach, you have to repeat and repeat and repeat” (33). For *The Cat in the Hat*, it began with sketching a very peculiar cat, a cat with a character curious children and adults could relate to. “He wanted a wily character but not a mean one, a suave troublemaker, a ringleader of uncontrolled enthusiasm who is surprised when he messes up... as he shaded in a tall feline in a jaunty red-and-white stovepipe hat, he was creating what would become the best known member of the Dr. Seuss menagerie” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 155). As the cat came alive so did the other characters and words onto the paper. Over the period of one year the book slowly came together. “It took me a year of my getting mad as blazes and throwing the thing across the room,”<sup>243</sup> he said (Sullivan 33).

At the same time, Theodor was working on another book, *If I Ran the Circus*; it was published in 1956, the year before *The Cat in the Hat* was published;<sup>244</sup> he dedicated the book to his father. The story is about a young boy, Morris McGurk, who imagines a great circus: “The Circus McGurkus! The cream of the cream! Astounding! Fantastic! Terrific! Tremendous!”

#### 1957 – *The Cat in the Hat* & the Windows of Heaven Open Wide

March 12, 1957, *The Cat in The Hat* was published and “quickly became a national

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<sup>242</sup> Making strudel without any strudels is where ingenuity comes in; likewise, here Dr. Seuss and his unlimited imagination began to play its tricks and games – creating a story from out of nothing: changing the concept of creativeness to true inventiveness C-2.

<sup>243</sup> Who said self-actualization is an easy process? To listen to oneself, to be still, to create is an act of great discipline. Awareness: B-3 Peak experience: coming from being on top of a mountain requires first climbing; thus, it could be said that self-actualization is a very difficult and at times a painful journey.

<sup>244</sup> In chapter two of this paper, the following is written regarding *If I Ran the Circus*:

“Everyone has garbage: experiences, thoughts, bad or negative experiences; just need some creative imagination to clean it up to make it useful; the backyard of junk gets cleaned up and becomes something wonderful, something colorful, something everyone enjoys – life! It takes vision and a daring spirit as had Morris, who then gave it to Mr. Sneelock in the Greatest Show on Earth!”

Theodor had a vision and a daring spirit in him which would touch children’s literacy in a remarkable way. *If I Ran the Circus* was a premonition of what was to come with *The Cat in the Hat*. It would be like the circus: “The cream of the cream! Astounding! Fantastic! Terrific! Tremendous!” (Seuss *If I Ran*).

phenomenon” (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 5 of 9). The book ended up with a few less words than 225, 223 to be exact; it would make Dr. Seuss an iconic name in every American household<sup>245</sup> (Nel *Dr. Seuss* 6). The reviews came in foreshadowing a great success:

Clifton Fadiman, the first prominent reviewer to have recognized Ted’s fey talent in 1937, called it “probably the most influential first-grade reader since McGuffey.” A grateful John Hersey described it as a “harum-scarum masterpiece...[a] gift to the art of reading.” *Newsweek* declared that Ted was “the moppets’ Milton.” The *New York Herald Tribune* book reviewer confessed: “We were afraid that the limitations Dr. Seuss put upon himself might have shackled his marvelous inventiveness. Quite the contrary. Restricting his vocabulary... and shortening his verse story has given a certain riotous unity ... that is pleasing.”<sup>246</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 155 - 156)

Stores were selling the book out in a day; parents were buying the book for their children, more than the schools were, thus, Random House’s sales excelled above Houghton Mifflin’s sales (156). In an interview with Phyllis Cerf, who worked with Theodor at Random House, she compared him to Renoir:

“And that was really the beginning of Dr. Seuss's real thing, before that he was the icing on the cake. He wasn't the cake. You know they had a rhythm, they had style, they had humor. What is there to dislike about them? They were in a sense what the funny papers strived to do and Ted Geisel was the Renoir of funny papers is all I can tell you.” (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 5 of 9)

*The Cat in the Hat* sold nearly a million copies by the end of 1960 (Nel “Seuss”) at the price of \$1.95; it would later be translated into: Braille, Chinese, Danish, Dutch, Estonian, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Icelandic, Italian, Latin, Maori, Norwegian, Polish,

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<sup>245</sup> Theodor became an iconic name because his work filled a need: children were hungry for reality on their level, from a child’s perspective and with a child’s appetite. Every household with children needed books that spoke to the child, giving respect; at this time children’s literature had a void and Dr. Seuss was the answer to this need.

<sup>246</sup> Theodor was recognized by others and his life mission D-1, one of helping children read was actualized.

Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Swedish and Yiddish<sup>247</sup> (Lindemann 25 - 30). *The Cat in the Hat* opened wide the windows of Heaven.

In *The Saturday Evening Post*, dated July 6, 1957, and titled: “The Wonderful World of Dr. Seuss”, Theodor’s imagination through Dr. Seuss was praised and given acclamation; his humanness was presented and the two personas were compared, as if they were separate and unique, yet one in the same: the conservative and austere compared to the wildly impulsive and fanciful – a wonderful world.<sup>248</sup>

Theodor Geisel, alias Dr. Seuss, has captured the imagination of millions of children with his fanciful spoofs: Gerald McBoing-Boing, the Drum-Tummied Snumm, and other creatures from a world of happy nonsense... Yet for the past thirty years, under the protective alias of Dr. Seuss, Ted Geisel has been an apostle of joyous nonsense. He has fathered a whole modern mythology of bizarre creatures... His annual output of picture books, like *Horton Hatches the Egg*, *Thidwick the Big- Hearted Moose*, and *On Beyond Zebra*, have become a part of the basic children’s literature of the country<sup>249</sup>... In suburban La Jolla, however, Geisel’s madcap alter ego is completely obscured. Here Theodor Seuss Geisel — Seuss is his mother’s family name — is considered a paragon of propriety. He is a director of the town council, and a trustee of the neighboring San Diego Fine Arts Gallery. His hair is cut regularly, his shoes are always shined, and he gives up his chair when ladies are standing... The first impression of conservatism is emphasized

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<sup>247</sup> As of 2017, the *Publishers Weekly* online paper reported that *The Cat in the Hat* had sold more than 16-million copies and translated into 18 languages:

Sales for Seuss’s books have only grown with time. “We sell more Dr. Seuss books today than we did when he was alive,” Goldsmith stated. “The books stand the test of time.” To date, Random House has sold more than 16 million copies of *The Cat in the Hat* in multiple editions; annual sales average 500,000 copies. The book has been translated into Spanish, French, German, Dutch, Italian, Portuguese, Latin, Chinese, Japanese, Icelandic, Norwegian, Russian, Polish, Yiddish, Hebrew, Estonian, Serbian, and Greek. (Kantor, Emma)

<sup>248</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creativeness: originality and inventiveness of Theodor’s imagination brings forth to life a “modern mythology of bizarre creatures.” Reality mixed with fantasy creates in the mind of the inventor (artist and writer) a wonderful world.

<sup>249</sup> Theodor Geisel with Dr. Seuss have created books which have infiltrated and saturated children’s literature. The two are distinct yet one. According to Cahn, Dr. Seuss has provided protection for the shy Theodor Geisel, who is now considered an apostle of joyous nonsense, his life mission D-1; Theodor trusted Dr. Seuss deeply and discovered through him his vocation and calling.

by his polite attentiveness... He is as sharp-eyed as a bird, with a long aquiline nose and a wide mouth which has a habit of twisting into puckish grins. And he speaks in the terse hesitancies of the painfully shy man... But beneath this outer austerity beats a wildly impulsive heart. Even with the most serious intentions, the mind of Ted Geisel is so fanciful that he has never been able completely to subdue it.<sup>250</sup> And he depends at all times on the levelheadedness of his wife, Helen, to pull him out of entanglements in which he has become errantly involved. (Cahn)

As Dr. Seuss was noted for his fanciful imagination, Theodor was given even greater acclaim for his work as a citizen in the town council. Cahn continued:

In La Jolla, Ted Geisel, citizen, far outranks Dr. Seuss, artist and writer. In addition to his work on the town council and with the San Diego Fine Arts Gallery, he has a special interest. This is to protect La Jolla from Creeping Urbanization... While he could not stop the tourist invasion or the jet planes, Geisel has been the prime mover in a campaign to ban commercial billboards and objectionable signs in La Jolla. He even enlisted Dr. Seuss to do an illustrated booklet.

Theodor's sensitivity to the environment and his surroundings were a growing concern within, yet to be dealt in the coming years as a book.

A little less than a year after *The Cat and The Hat* was published, February 1958, Theodor wrote an article in *Education* magazine,<sup>251</sup> titled: "My Hassle with the First Grade Language", expressing his experience writing the book and how his nephew, Norval, had inspired him:

Awhile back there was a tremendous ruckus going on about the reading problems of American school kids. And I, who knew nothing about primary education, got flung into

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<sup>250</sup> Theodor's fanciful mind created fanciful creatures and fanciful worlds creating for Dr. Seuss and his readers a fanciful and wonderful world to escape into. Out of his mind he touched and created new realities: Seussian words, best-selling books, children and parents enjoying reading, movies, businesses... all out of his imagination. To subdue his mind would have killed Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss.

<sup>251</sup> Originally published November 17, 1957, in the *Chicago Tribune*.

the mixer quite by accident.<sup>252</sup> Somebody... John Hersey... casually suggested in an article in *Life* that I was the type of writer who should write a first grade reader.<sup>253</sup>

So, with innocent conceit, I said, “Why not?” All I needed to do, I figured, was find a whale of an exciting subject. This would make the average 6-year-old want to read the crazy. None of the old dull stuff. Like Dick has a ball. Dick likes the ball. The ball is red, red, red.

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Within an hour I found hot subjects. I merely watched my nephew Norval, who was visiting us, watch television. I discovered that Norval was fascinated by ‘most everything we adults are... murders, nautch dancers, beer commercials, the home life of the ant, jungle tigers... submarines. But the thing that thrilled the eyes practically out of his head was a chiller-diller expedition scaling Mt. Everest.

So, bright and early the very next morning, I informed a distinguished schoolbook publisher that his worries about kids reading were over forever. I would give first graders the adventures they craved, take them scaling the peaks of Everest at 60 degrees below zero.<sup>254</sup>

“Truly exciting,” said the publisher rather sadly. “But you can’t use the word scaling. You can’t use the word peaks. You can’t use Everest. You can’t use 60. You can’t use degrees. You can’t...”

“Now look here!” I bristled. “You’re talking old fashioned. Why, on television that story thrilled the pants off Norval.”

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<sup>252</sup> Accident or providence? Theodor seemed to have met with accidents often and these accidents had a changing effect on him as well as the world around him.

<sup>253</sup> A challenge was set before Theodor; a challenge was always attractive to him; both parents were competitive, his father a marksman and his mother a diving champion; it was in Theodor’s blood to not back down, therefore, another step toward SA was taken.

<sup>254</sup> Awareness: B-3 Peak experience: Theodor was preparing to write mountain top experiences for his readers. He had a vision of what was needed – adventures.



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“Of course,” sighed the publisher. “On television he understood it all. But he was looking at pictures and listening to *spoken* words. He wasn’t reading *printed* words. All he knows of printed words are the pitiful few that his teacher has struggled to make him recognize.<sup>255</sup> At his age he couldn’t tell the printed word Everest from pineapple-upside-down cake.”

I mulled this over. “Would you buy a book about a jungle tiger?” I asked limply.

“Certainly,” said the publisher. “With two minor changes. Change the tiger into a cat. Change the jungle into a house.”

Then, as gently as he could, he dropped a ton of bricks all over me.<sup>256</sup> He handed me a tiny little list of words. “These are the words that a first grade Norval *can* recognize.”

I stared. I could have engraved the whole list, personally, on the head of a pin. They were thrillers...like *am, is but, if, in, into, no, yes*. Words full of great adventure...like *lump* and *bun* and *string*. I saw the word *sick* and that’s how I felt very.

“Now you take this list,” I heard the publisher saying. “Take it home. Cut loose! Create a rollicking carefree story. Pack it with action. Make it tingle with suspense! Embellish it

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<sup>255</sup> “Struggled,” that word in itself makes learning to read sound heavy. Lightness opens up the mind to allow for the ability to accept new ideas, new concepts, new words; liken it to a dark room where there is the unknown, the mind is cautious; whereas a room full of light gives way to open eyes that are curious, able to see, able to accept the unknown or to identify with something familiar to bring one to something deeper. Theodor himself sought after lighthearted learning, joyous learning, learning filled with laughter.

<sup>256</sup> With these “ton of bricks” Theodor constructed a house for a Cat in the Hat to enter which would become a house for all children to enter through and have fun in the process of learning. Trust: D-1 Mission in life: this was one of Theodor’s vocation, what he was made for: to help children enjoy reading and discovering through books and in his philosophy, learn to be individuals hungry for adventure, laughter, imagination and respect for mankind and the environment .

with gay brilliant rhymes and bubbling rhythms. And one more thing. Repeat the words. Repeat! Repeat! Taking care, of course, not to be boring!”<sup>257</sup>

The next thing I knew, it was six months later. I was home, staring red-eyed at the list, trying to find some useable words besides *cat* and *hat* that rhymed. The list had a *daddy*. But it didn't have a *caddy*. I found myself snarling, “faddy, maddy, saddy, waddy.”

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It had words like thank. But no blank, crank, frank or stank. There was the word something. But something only rhymes with numb-thing. And even if numb-thing were on the list, which it wasn't, how in blazes can you use something like numb-thing in a story?

And what was my story anyhow? At one point I spent three excruciatingly painful weeks grinding out a yarn about a King Cat and a Queen Cat. Then I called in Norval as an expert consultant to read it. When he came to the word King, he read it just fine. But when he came to the word Queen, he just stood there blowing bubbles.

In a real cold sweat, I rechecked my list thoroughly. The poor queen, not being registered, died a horribly swift death. And the king died of sheer loneliness shortly thereafter.

Norval, feeling sorry for me because I wasn't bright enough to write for him, was now dropping in occasionally after school to offer help. “Why don't you have your cat run a Quiz show?” was one of his suggestions. Nervously, I fine-tooth combed the list for quiz. I got a shock that threw me into terrible confusion. “Q” had evidently been dropped right out of the alphabet completely.

This appalling discovery so unnerved me that for two solid weeks the only subjects I could think of at all were Q ones. Like “Quarrying for Quartz.” And “the Quitter in the Quicksand.” “Quilting Bees and Quails.” And “A First Grade Biography of John Quincy Adams.”

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<sup>257</sup> This is exactly what Theodor created: books packed with a rollicking carefree story, action and suspense, embellished with brilliant rhymes and bubbling rhythms, repetition throughout, and last but not least, not one of his stories were “boring!”

Then after I'd mastered that psychosis, I happened to notice that Z had been banished as a letter also! And for weeks all I could think of were zealous Zulu zebras zipping from New Zealand to the Zuider Zee.

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By this time, my first grade nephew, Norval, mysteriously stopped dropping in and I had to bungle along entirely on my own. How I ever managed to manipulate that maddening jigsaw puzzle of itsy-bitsy-witsy wordies into any kind of story at all, I don't know.

All I know is that when the story was finally finished, I was dealt the most painful blow of all. I took it around to Norval to see how he liked it.

Norval looked down his nose at the manuscript. "Don't bother me with that kid stuff," he snorted. "I've long since graduated from the first grade. I'm already learning calculus." (Seuss "My Hassle")

"After his book *The Cat in the Hat* burst on the scene in 1957 Dr. Seuss became a household name deeply ingrained in our collective experience" ("Dr. Seuss." Exhibit). The Society for Recognition of Famous People stated that *The Cat in the Hat* was Theodor's "magnum opus".<sup>258</sup>

'*The Cat in the Hat*' was the magnum opus of his works, which garnered positive response and critical acclaim from the time of its release. The book was named one of the 'Top 100 Picture Books' of all time in a 2012 poll by School Library Journal. Furthermore, the National Education Association named it 'Teachers' Top 100 Books for Children.' (Thefamouspeople.com)

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<sup>258</sup> *The Cat in the Hat* is considered by some as Theodor's masterpiece; it started with a challenge and hit the bullseye right at the center in helping children to begin to read and like it; he threw *Dick and Jane* out the door and with it illiteracy. Just as Sally and her brother were looking out the window, waiting and looking for something to happen, so were children across the world, waiting for someone to come in and treat them as equals, with respect and dignity, to write up to their intelligence; to write books that would speak to their child's mind filled with curiosity, wonder, and possibility. As the Cat in the Hat walked through the door, so Dr. Seuss walked through the door and into the world of children's literature. He found his life mission D-1.

Right after *The Cat in the Hat* was published, in April, 1957, Helen went back into Scripps Clinic; she had had a small stroke. Leaving Scripps after three days, Theodor noted Helen's condition in a letter he wrote to Louise Bonino, his friend and editor at Random House, stating she was "foggy, with lapses of memory... and very depressed"; still Helen was Theodor's best editor (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 157).

#### 1957 - *How The Grinch Stole Christmas* – & Suddenly a Celebrity & a Challenge

At the same time that *The Cat in The Hat* and Beginner Books was taking off, Theodor was working on a big book, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, to "protest the commercialization of Christmas" (157). His main character was the Grinch. He explained in a *Redbook* interview in 1957 how the idea of the Grinch came to him: "I was brushing my teeth on the morning of the 26th of last December when I noted a very Grinchish countenance in the mirror. It was Seuss! Something had gone wrong with Christmas, I realized, or more likely with me. So I wrote the story about my sour friend, the Grinch, to see if I could rediscover something about Christmas that obviously I'd lost"<sup>259</sup> (Witter).



Fig. 4 Seuss. "How the Grinch Stole Christmas." The character - the Grinch.

Helen expected this book to be a "second Dr. Seuss blockbuster of 1957" (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 158) and Theodor was happy with the book for when he mailed the proof to Louise Bonino in the cover note he wrote: "Hope you like it. I'm sorta happy about the drawing" (158). Years later, 1974, in an interview with *Esquire*, Theodor spoke of how important it is writing for children, of the time it took to finish the last page and with a little humor of the resemblance of the Grinch and a close friend: "A kid...is a very sophisticated market... I spent three months on the last page of 'The Grinch.' It kept turning into a religious

<sup>259</sup> Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: Theodor had clear eyes to see himself in the mirror; he himself could not be fooled by what he saw reflecting back to him in the mirror. 3-B Self to be actualized; Theodor realized he could not stop and let his reflection become a lasting reality. 4-B When in doubt, he preferred to be honest and then actualizing his potential, using his intelligence (6-B) wrote a story to discover again the real meaning of Christmas in *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*.

tract.” And he confided with a grin, “The Grinch looks a little like Bennett Cerf” (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 60).

The fall of 1957, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* was published and it was, as Helen predicted, an instantaneous hit! Having *The Cat in The Hat* preceding in record sales, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* was welcomed with great enthusiasm and anticipation. Random House expected this, as the first printing was more than fifty thousand copies (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 160). That Christmas, 1957, Random House became the largest publishing company of children’s books in America and Theodor Geisel was Random House’s top selling author: “20 years after his first book for children, Theodor Geisel became Random House’s best-selling author” (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 5 of 9).

With a foretelling in the air, the librarians and book stores took note; Theodor was invited to book signing events all along the California coast, as well the Annual Librarian conference date was changed to match the day when Dr. Seuss would be in San Francisco attending a book signing event (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 160). “*The Cat in the Hat* phenomena forced a private man into the public eye. Ted Geisel, who hated crowds, cameras and interviews had one more challenge to face – children”<sup>260</sup> (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 5 of 9). The shy Theodor Geisel put on his suit and was welcomed with open arms and excitement – Dr. Seuss was a celebrity! Even a local bookshop owner was taking books to the “Tower” for Theodor to autograph (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 160). Yet, Theodor was not so comfortable with his audience (children): Julie Olfe – Geisel’s secretary from 1964 to 1971 commented: “He had had almost no experience with them so he didn't know how to act around them. He was a naturally shy person even around adults. But with children that shyness was magnified tremendously”<sup>261</sup> (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 5 of 9).

With the success of *The Cat in the Hat* and *The Grinch*, Robert L. Bernstein, newly hired sales manager for Random House, had hopes of creating a marketing craze with the characters of the books: toys, clothing, greeting cards and coloring books; “a property develops like a snowball rolling down a mountain... I’ve worked myself into an absolute frenzy thinking about

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<sup>260</sup> This challenge Theodor did not embrace thoroughly as he was shy of crowds, especially children.

<sup>261</sup> C-1 Detachment: Theodor had a need for privacy, to be left undisturbed and unruffled. Theodor believed that children could see through phoniness and was afraid he would not match up to their expectations. He did not want to disappoint the children.

merchandising Dr. Seuss,” but Theodor was hesitant; “He was wary of anything – product franchising, most of all – that might cheapen the Dr. Seuss image”<sup>262</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 161).

In 1958, before Christmas, Theodor, accompanied by Helen, went on a “ten-day autograph blitz” starting from Boston to Chicago and ending in Cleveland, due to the innovative and marketing mind of Bernstein. Many events were organized:

Random House provided tens of thousands of buttons of the Cat, librarians and teachers organized Dr. Seuss events, there were press luncheons, and Ted appeared on the Fran Allison television show. In Rochester, school teachers bargained for a visit from Ted by declaring a Dr. Seuss day and busing pupils from outlying schools. In Washington, Woodward and Lothrop hosted officials from the Washington Zoo to inspect the animals of Dr. Seuss. At Marshall Field’s in Chicago, five uniform ushers patrolled a labyrinthine line of children (the one on which Chief White cloud had intruded to sign his own name in Dr. Seuss books), and a thousand Dr. Seuss books were sold in ninety minutes, with another four hundred whisked away at a branch store. In Madison, Wisconsin, Ted spoke to teachers and received a Lewis Carroll award from the University of Wisconsin. Touring J. L. Hudson branches in Detroit, Ted stepped out of the helicopter, still a novel form of transport, to be surrounded by children “as if I were Santa Claus.” In Cleveland at Higbee’s, where the author had faced his first autograph party twenty years earlier, Yertlebergers and *Cat in a Hat* parfaits were served and two thousand books were sold.<sup>263</sup> (161)

#### 1957 – 1960 - Birth of Beginner Books

Phyllis Cerf, wife of Bennett Cerf, when seeing the book, *The Cat in The Hat*, said: “We read Dr. Seuss's books to the children; there was a nice lovely rhythm to what he wrote, but

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<sup>262</sup> 10-V Simplicity: Theodor valued the essential skeletal structure, not wanting to change his image. 4-B Doubt, when in doubt he preferred honesty over making a mistake. Theodor guarded his reputation; honesty was important to him; A-2 Social interest: his identification with his fellow mankind as a whole was important; his character was more important than financial gain.

<sup>263</sup> There was a void, a hunger in the hearts and minds of children. Theodor was in tune with his life mission D-1; giving children what they hungered for – laughter and joy in learning how to read.

when Random House published *The Cat in the Hat*, I flipped!”<sup>264</sup> (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 5 of 9). She suggested to her husband that they start a publishing house specializing in beginner reading books. Inviting Theodor out for lunch she explained the need for more books to make a series and with more books to follow there would be financial success – “a big payoff” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 156). Phyllis wanted to call it Beginner Books with Theodor being the president and herself the partner. He listened to her idea, agreed with the condition that Helen would be the third partner in this enterprise. It was also agreed that these books for Beginner Books would be called the “small readers” and the other books would stay separate and became known as the “big books” (157).

Phyllis researching and reading all the primers at the time as well as going to educational conferences and interviewing teachers and scholars, created a format for the Beginner Book enterprise: the books came from a compiled list of 379 words as the basic vocabulary for young readers; of these the writers could choose 200 for their books, along with another twenty easy-to-pronounce slightly harder "emergency" words (158). Christopher Cerf, son of Phyllis and Bennett Cerf in a history documentary recalled:

“Basically what my Mom and Ted and Helen did when the Beginner Books started was to use a *Dick and Jane* formula, to take the exact vocabulary the books used, in the same way of introducing a few words at a time and only put a few words on a page. And just say, this is going to be crazy! Instead of look at this and see that. The books sold in a way that nothing Ted had written before.” (Dr Seuss' - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary, Part 5 of 9)

In 1959, in *The Springfield Union*, the newspaper referred to a leading national magazine which had a picture and article about Theodor, calling him “the cartoonist and children’s story book author, better known as ‘Dr. Seuss’” (“Local Boy Who Made Good”). It went on to explain his work and its importance: “The famed artist and writer, credited with bringing a new

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<sup>264</sup> Phyllis recognized the mission and calling in Theodor: she pushed and encouraged him in the right direction, toward realizing and actualizing his talents and abilities. Luck, coincidence or providence was bringing the right people into Theodor’s life; to encourage him and aid him in taking the steps forward. These steps were not self-supporting but reached out to countless number of children, parents, and mankind.

and effective approach to the production of youngster's reading material.”<sup>265</sup>

*The Cat in The Hat* was the first book for Beginner Books. A year later in 1958, six books were published by Beginner Books, the first two by Dr. Seuss: *The Cat in The Hat*, *The Cat in The Hat Comes Back*, *A Fly Went By*, *The Big Jump and Other Stories*, *A Big Ball of String*, and *Sam and The Firefly* (Zielinski).

In 1960, Beginner Books was bought by Random House and became a division of the company, though Theodor, Phyllis, and Helen still ran it; the three being stockholders, were given twenty-five thousand shares in Random House (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 167). In 1960, income was a million dollars from Beginner Books and “Random House was the largest publisher of children's books in America” (“Beginner Books”). Theodor Geisel was becoming the top children's book author in America and money was pouring in. He was considered fresh, funny and an author with an eccentric talent<sup>266</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 162). “The money came in so fast from the start,” Phyllis Cerf said. “It was instant, a flood of income.” ... “Whoopee!” Helen wrote. “We're in the black after four months!” (162).

“His Book royalties were a mere \$5000 the year before he took *The Cat in the Hat* challenge.”<sup>267</sup> In 1959 they totaled \$200,000. Dr. Seuss was hailed the savior of children's literacy”<sup>268</sup> (“Dr. Seuss' - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 5 of 9). Yet, “Ted remained bored by money. He spent little and chose to spoof even his own financial advisers and attorneys

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<sup>265</sup> Trust: D-1 Life Mission: this was one of his most important contributions in Theodor's life, helping children learn how to read with joy and fun. What seemed like a ton of bricks became a foundation for his life's success, his mission, a new division in Random House: Beginner Books and eventually Seuss Enterprise. Theodor learned to trust himself in the voice he heard within and those closest to him. He said at the end of his life that his contribution to children's literacy was what he was proudest of:

“I think I had something to do with kicking Dick and Jane out of the school system. I think I proved to a number of million kids that reading is not a disagreeable task. And without talking about teaching, I think I have helped kids laugh in schools as well as at home. That's about enough, isn't it?” “hmmph?” (Harper)

<sup>266</sup> Theodor and Dr. Seuss were working now very well together; a team, a dichotomy with unity. D-1 Life Mission: greater than oneself, taking most of one's energy; as this calling came forth, so did the rewards.

<sup>267</sup> The public recognized that Theodor excelled and rose to challenges.

<sup>268</sup> “Savior of children's literacy” – a strong statement to say; the public recognized the importance of Theodor's work, life mission D-1. Destiny called for this savior and Theodor responded 100% as did Horton, in *Horton Hatches and Egg* and he says, he would be faithful 100%.



because he basically distrusted them” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 167). His book contracts were drawn up after he delivered a book manuscript, not before. Theodor did not like the pressure of a deadline in a contract. From the advice of his tax specialist, the contracts for his books had “deferral of royalty incomes in excess of five thousand dollars a year”<sup>269</sup> (162).

The success of Beginner Books was not without conflict; Theodor and Phyllis were often at odds ranging from word placement, where to put a comma or whether or not to publish another author’s book in the Beginner Book series. Theodor began to paint each day to calm himself<sup>270</sup> (180). Christopher Cerf, recounted his memory of the tension between his mother and Theodor: “They’d spend three days talking about the placement of the word on the page. Both Ted and my mother and Helen were stubborn... Ted was incredibly rigorous about getting the books the way he wanted... Neither one of them ever gave in... my mother would sit on the phone for hours at home [with Ted in California] arguing over placement of a comma”<sup>271</sup> (167).

The tedious day-to-day telephone conferences about Beginner Books, Ted was squandering his energy. He loathed his confrontations with Phyllis and grew tense and withdrawn.<sup>272</sup> Helen persuaded him to stay off the phone, consider himself retired from Beginner Books and let her arbitrate... Ted’s agent, Phyllis Jackson, warned Bob Bernstein, ... that he had “better do something” or he would lose Geisel. (179)

Phyllis eventually stopped working in Beginner Books and continued at Random House in a different department. It was important to keep Theodor happy according to a reflection of Phyllis years later<sup>273</sup> (179).

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<sup>269</sup> Freedom: C-1 Detachment: Theodor needed and wanted freedom from the responsibility that riches can bring. He wanted no demands pressuring him, the demands of a contract during his creative process, thus the contracts were made after delivery. 8-B Theodor knew what worked for himself; what he liked, what he didn’t like; others close to him also understood what made Theodor happy.

<sup>270</sup> 6-B Theodor learned how to find a calm; this was part of the behavior of actualizing himself, his potential.

<sup>271</sup> 7-V Perfection: nothing lacking, everything in its right place, even a comma.

<sup>272</sup> Withdrawn as his perfectionist style and personality over his work found conflict with Phyllis; Theodor’s freedom and creativity – C-2 were being thwarted.

<sup>273</sup> A person creating brings a sense of awe, a B-3 Peak experience: at the top of a mountain there is the feeling and vision of limitless horizons; these horizons bring a feeling of endless possibilities to creation. Theodor by those around him was protected – he was kept “happy”.

“Perfectionism was his creed”<sup>274</sup> (Kahn). Theodor and Helen were very particular in the style: the illustrations, the words, and the way these elements worked together; they wanted to keep the high quality and fun reputation of Beginner Books; boring and dull were not an option. Beginner Books attracted high profile authors such as Nat Benchley and Truman Capote; who attempted to write for the series but they could not adhere to their limitations and expectations (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 159, 165). It is interesting that these writers found the limitations limiting, yet when Theodor was given limitations, example, to write a book with less than 250 words, his first Beginner Book, *The Cat in the Hat*, or even less than 50 words, he excelled.<sup>275</sup> *Green Eggs and Ham* became his best seller. Authors were turned away and more often than not, their books were rejected because of the high standards Theodor and Helen had. Michael Frith, former managing editor of Beginner Books recounted the success of Beginner Books: "You really do have to tear up 99% of the ideas simply because they do not adhere to vocabulary. They do not fit within the format of the book; they can't be illustrated. All of these things, that's why the really great Beginner Books are unique" (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 6 of 9). In an interview on May 12, 1978, with Judith Frutig for *The Christian Science Monitor*, Theodor gave a reason for why his writing worked: “For a 60-page book, I’ll probably write 500 pages... I think that’s why it works. I winnow out”<sup>276</sup> (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 79). Theodor so particular, his books needed no further editing once they were delivered to Random House. “Ted made such obsessive demands on himself that they exceeded any quality controls ever demanded by an editor”<sup>277</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 170). In the same interview with Frutig, Theodor referring to Beginner Books, said he did not write with children in mind: “I write for myself, ... and for the pleasure of saying, ‘Audrey [his

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<sup>274</sup> 7-V “Perfection is his creed”; Theodor sought after this B-Value of perfection and was realized and recognized by the public in this characteristic.

<sup>275</sup> Theodor excelled because this was exactly his life mission D-1, to write and illustrate for children. This exactness, ability to be concise which children thrive on, was a defining characteristic of Theodor himself; every word mattered, the colors were important, even Theodor’s working space needed to be correct. His life needed order and creativity. He found his identity when writing for children and thus, since it was in him, it came forth powerfully.

<sup>276</sup> 7-V Perfection: nothing superfluous, nothing lacking, everything in its right place, nothing beyond.

<sup>277</sup> Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: Theodor had a sharper acuity to writing, to color, to perfection, his sense of what was needed was precise: 7-V perfection.

wife<sup>278</sup>], don't you think this is funny?' For Beginner Books all I do is to strike out the complex sentence structure, throw out the unnecessary long words, and simplify." Yet, further in the same article referring to his "big books", "he called them novels – he usually tried them first on children. 'There are several levels,... most are satires on satires. I also have the parents in mind'"<sup>279</sup> (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 79).

#### 1958 – *Yertle the Turtle & Other Stories*

In 1958 Theodor wrote two books, *Yertle the Turtle* and *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back*. He used *Yertle the Turtle* to express his opinions of Hitler and totalitarianism<sup>280</sup> (Stofflet). "Mack's revolutionary burp topples the dictator Yertle and frees all the turtles" (Seuss *Yertle the Turtle*). Phil Nel in 2010 said: "It's no coincidence that the boy picked on for his ethnicity and his (presumed) religion would grow up to create cartoons that attack prejudice. After the war, he brought his political message to his children's books."<sup>281</sup>

#### 1959 – *Happy Birthday to You!*

In 1959, *Happy Birthday to You!* was published; "a fanciful celebration with the Great Birthday Bird of Katroo" (Random House) celebrating you! "Today is your birthday! Today you are you!"<sup>282</sup> (Seuss *Happy Birthday*). E. J. Kahn, Jr., in *The New Yorker*, December 17, 1960,

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<sup>278</sup> Audrey would be Theodor's second wife in 1968 after Helen's death.

<sup>279</sup> Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: Theodor had a good natured sense of humor, laughing at the human condition without hurting someone; writing satires on satires. When he wrote his books, he was aware that his audience was not only children; parents would be reading these books to their children at night. It was the side door into getting his message to adults.

<sup>280</sup> Totalitarianism – defined by Merriam-Webster as: "the political concept that the citizen should be totally subject to an absolute state authority"; this would be going against everything that Theodor stood for, freedom of self.

<sup>281</sup> As Theodor spent time illustrating and writing his convictions into books, perhaps his pain found its way out of his life as he understood from an adult's point of view what he experienced as a child and hoped to deliver this message, of anti-prejudice to younger generations, to prevent hurt and to help in the development of each individual's life, as he said he also kept in mind adults as he wrote.

<sup>282</sup> Celebration of individuality was one of Theodor's great themes. He stressed this over and over in his books; *Horton Hears a Who*, written in 1954 celebrated each person, no matter how small: "Should I put this speck down? ..." Horton thought with alarm. / "I can't put it down. And I won't! After all /A person's a person. No matter how small." Awareness: Theodor was attuned to the need for individuality, that each person had special significance; B-1 Efficient perception of reality: living in the real world of nature as opposed to the manmade mass of concepts,

noted the growing success and popularity of Dr. Seuss's books: "Random House now orders a first printing of a hundred thousand copies of any book that he writes. Even this figure proved inadequate for *Happy Birthday to You!* which was issued in October, 1959, within a few weeks, stocks of the book were exhausted, and fifty thousand additional copies were run off" (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 16-17).

#### 1960 – 1966 Brat Books

*Green Eggs and Ham*, published on August the twelfth, 1960, came about from a bet of fifty dollars from Bennett Cerf to Theodor that he could not write a book for Beginner Books using only fifty words. "It began as a boast... A friend said, 'I'll bet you can't write a book in just 100 words.' I said I'll bet I can do it in 50"<sup>283</sup> (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 81). Not only did Theodor win the bet, this book became Dr. Seuss's best-selling book, selling tens of millions of copies and became the fourth-best selling English-language children's hardcover book of all time (Ballard). As tradition had it, Theodor read each book to the publishing staff at Random House before it went to print.

"When I worked with Ted, he would come to New York City in person to deliver a book," Goldsmith recalls. "We knew that if Ted was coming, it often meant he was bringing us something new." Geisel never shared what he was working on until it was close to finished, when he would arrive at the office and call everyone into a room. He would read the book, text-only first, before sharing the pictures. "It was an amazing, special kind of moment."<sup>284</sup> (K. R.)

He did the same with this book at a small dinner party hosted by Cerf: "You are invited to stop in my office on April 19<sup>th</sup> at 11 o'clock when the great Dr. Seuss will give the first reading of his fall Beginner Book, *Green Eggs and Ham*"... Helen asked Cerf to not say: "'the great Dr. Seuss, in person' That makes him feel he has got to have something extra, like horns or three ears..." (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 169). According to Theodor's memory, the fifty-dollar bet

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abstracts beliefs and stereotypes that most people confuse with the world or in this case, what a person should be other than "you."

<sup>283</sup> Trust in himself. D-2 Autonomy: Theodor had an inner directedness, he knew his potential and abilities at this point; he made up his mind to do it and he did; it became his best seller: *Green Eggs and Ham*, 1960.

<sup>284</sup> Awareness: B-3 Peak experience: experiencing this sharing of a new book was a magic moment for the author, Dr. Seuss, as well as for the audience.

was never settled. Years to come, Theodor was often invited to breakfasts where he was served green eggs and ham. In an interview with *The Christian Monitor*, May 12, 1978, he recalled one specific time and with humor: “Deplorable stuff,” ... “The worst time was on a yacht in six-foot seas” (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 78).

The Morgan’s explain the strength and momentum behind Dr. Seuss’s books:

But Ted’s books were beyond control; in the public mind Dr. Seuss had become a force that defied packaging.<sup>285</sup> In May, *The New York Times* listed the best-selling books of 1960. Five of the top sixteen were Ted’s; booksellers could not remember when a single author had so dominated the market. The quirky *Green Eggs and Ham* was about to join the list and go on to sell tens of millions of copies, becoming the most popular of all Dr. Seuss books. (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 170)

“...Dr. Seuss had become a force that defied packaging.” A strong statement about a person; and it was Theodor who was particular about how and what could be packaged. In 1958, the *Revell* toy company in Venice California, persuaded Theodor to let them create a line of products from his books and characters. It was a challenging endeavor as he was very particular about the products reflecting the likeness of his characters; yet it was productive. “The first Dr. Seuss toys went on the market in September, 1959, and before the year was out they had achieved retail sales of a million and a half dollars” (Kahn).

With the popularity and success Theodor was having through Dr. Seuss,<sup>286</sup> the media was paying attention and putting the spotlight on this quickly becoming famous but not so very new author. Clifton Fadiman, American intellectual, author, editor, radio and television personality, wrote an essay in *Holiday*, contrasting Theodor to Kenneth Grahame, author of *The Wind in the Willows*. In the Morgan’s book, Fadiman was quoted speaking of Dr. Seuss: “He is not using his

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<sup>285</sup> How can one package a force? Can a life mission be packaged? Theodor’s life mission D-1 of humor A-1, social interest A-2, and obliteration of ego A-3 was from an awareness of what was going on within himself and without. He had an efficient perception of reality B-1, a born perception to see through phonies, a sharper vision, sharper acuity through befuddlement; constantly he was creating a freshness of appreciation B-2 through his books, keeping the wonderment of seeing through a child’s eyes with wonder and appreciation, avoiding the rules of adulthood in order to never become an obsolete child: “You’d really grown up. You’d become adults... adults, which is a word that means obsolete children” (Seuss. “But for Grown-ups).

<sup>286</sup> Theodor Seuss Geisel through Dr. Seuss was self-actualized: “the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 46).

books for any purpose beyond entertaining himself and his readers... I believe Dr. Seuss has not only added to the general store of happiness but... is himself a happy man.”<sup>287</sup> The Morgan’s added: “Ted offered no rebuttal; he seemed charmed and startled, like a man found out” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 171). This was a great honor to Theodor.

In the *Los Angeles Times*, November 1960, Dr. Seuss wrote the following article, “Brat Books on the March,” explaining his decision to write for children:

Some twenty-three years ago I made a move that most of my writer friends acclaimed as the height of stupidity.<sup>288</sup>

I walked out on a fairly successful career as a writer who wrote for great big Grown-Up-Adults and began to write for the Kiddie-Kar and Bubble-Gum set.

This, in the Thirties in the writing profession, was not a sign of going forward. This was a step down. A loss of face. At that time, the attitude of most of this country’s top writers was: Writing for Children is Literary Slumming. With a few notable exceptions, they wanted no part of scribbling for little girls who played with dollies and for little boys who have never yet shaved.

And, to a certain degree, these authors were right. In those days, an appalling percentage of books for children were concocted out of inept, condescending, nature-faking treacle. They insulted the intelligence not only of a child, but also of the people who wrote them. They were batted out, hippity-hoppity, by amateurs and semi-pros with little or no experience and very tough-to-learn craft of writing. And, so, most good writers who had learned their craft stayed upstairs with the adults and pretended there were no children.<sup>289</sup>

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<sup>287</sup> Clifton Fadiman realized the self-actualization of Dr. Seuss aka Theodor Geisel: a happy man.

<sup>288</sup> Honesty: Theodor was honest with himself and the thoughts of his friends toward him. He used humor A-1 to address the ideas of those around him and in himself. This honesty brought him freedom to be detached C-1, undisturbed, and in this a creativity to be original and inventive. Trust in his life mission D-1, grew to a place where he discovered his vocation and calling.

<sup>289</sup> “Pretended there were no children” - children had been overlooked and written down to, thus there was a demand and a hunger for children’s literature where the child was respected and given respect.

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The funny part... and the happy part... of this brief historical essay is this:

Those same top professional writers who, a few years back, wouldn't be caught dead with their name on a Brat Book, are today writing enthusiastically in the juvenile field. More and more of them every year.

If you are cynical, you might possibly say they are writing for the money. For, since the war which produced so many G.I. Babies, the junior book business has blossomed into the greatest booming market the publishing industry has ever seen.<sup>290</sup>

But I just don't think that just money is the reason.

I think something much bigger has happened.

I think that writers have finally realized that Children's Reading and Children's Thinking are the rock bottom base upon which the future of this country will rise. Or not rise.<sup>291</sup>

In these days of tension and confusion, writers are beginning to realize that Books for Children have a greater potential for good, or evil, than any other form of literature on earth.

They realize that the new generation must grow up to be more intelligent than ours. They realize that if the boy doesn't learn about good reading before he can shave, the chances are he will grow up to find himself shaving an empty head.

The writer is beginning to see the challenge of the field... and its awful responsibilities.

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<sup>290</sup> Theodor was called for a time as this; it was his life mission D-1.

<sup>291</sup> Honesty to social interest A-2: Theodor in his drawings and writings from early on displayed a deep feeling of identification, sympathy for mankind. He detested phoniness and hypocrisy; in World War II, drawing for the *PM*, he opposed fascism and discrimination against Jews and against African Americans. Of this he later defended his belief: They were "the only angry pictures I ever did in my life," he said years later. "And I'm not proud of their overstatement but I still believe in what I was saying" (Sullivan 29). Dr. Seuss's books: *Yertle the Turtle*, *Horton Hears a Who*, and in 1961, *The Sneetches*, revealed his sense of belief for equality and mankind.

He can help children to think clearly. Or he can stuff their heads with mush.

He can inspire children with the fire for learning. Or he can discourage them from reading and contribute to their illiteracy and, often, to their delinquency.

He can help them to love. Or he can help them to hate.

He can steer children upwards, downwards or sideways... and build in them basic attitudes toward living that will influence their patterns of thought and action throughout every year of their lives.<sup>292</sup>

It is the awareness of this tremendous responsibility that is now bringing so many fine top writers into the once-despised Juvenile Field. To be sure, the field is still full of the Dispensers of Mush, still hippity-hopping around their maypoles and still ladling out their luke warm treacle.

But the children are absorbing treacle in ever lessening doses. For the proportion of fine books vs. junk is growing steadily. And the children are eagerly welcoming the good writers who talk, not down to them as kiddies, but talk to them clearly and honestly as equals.<sup>293</sup>

(Dr. Seuss, beyond being a writer and illustrator for children, is the editor and president of the Beginner Book division of Random House. [This was written on the paper.])

Theodor then went on to talk about the pleasures of writing for children in the Brat Book industry:

Letters from Kids are probably the greatest sources of pleasure in a Brat Book author's life.

Sometimes, also, the greatest source of headache.

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<sup>292</sup> Theodor spoke like a prophet; his mission D-1, convictions and beliefs burned within him: B-4 ethical awareness.

<sup>293</sup> Trust: D-1 the mission of Theodor's life became writing for children - with above all respect to his audience: giving to children the joy of learning to read and to use reading as a tool of discovery for good; to help them grow up and become better citizens - to do more, to love more.



Most of them are really wonderful. It's not only flattering to hear that the kids like your writing, but also tremendously helpful. Kids, unlike adult fans, write you in great detail...telling you exactly what pages, and even sentences they like the best, and why they like them.

The headache part comes from a minority of kids who want things...such as book-jackets, original drawings, photographs of your dog, and help on their homework. The older kids are the worst on this. This country is populated with hundreds of teen age students whose term paper about you is due next Monday and if you don't furnish all the facts by return mail, you're a stinker.

As much as these irritate the author's problem is to keep from making enemies. So the pests have to be handled as cordially as the friends.

My method of handling mail is far from perfect, but it's as good as I can do. It starts with a winnowing-out process at Random House. The especially wonderful letters are sent to me and I, or usually my wife answer these personally. ...

[...]

But all the questions can't be anticipated...such as "My Aunt Ethel says you used to eat paste in Kindergarten. Is that so?" Or "My sisters and I are going to be in your town all next summer. What day can we come and play with your paints?"

These take special handling, and they drive you nuts. But if you didn't get any mail, you'd go nuts in a different way.<sup>294</sup> (Seuss. "Brat Books on the March")

*The New Yorker*, on December 17, 1960, authored by E. J. Kahn, published a twenty-three-page article about Dr. Seuss, titled "Children's Friend." Beginning this way:

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<sup>294</sup> These letters were important to Theodor; his audience, who were really children, in their letters were responding to him; if there were no letters, it simply meant they were not interested. He wanted them interested and not bored!

The face of Theodor Seuss Geisel – an arresting one, with soft eyes and a long, beaky nose – is not nearly as familiar as that of Santa Claus, yet its owner is an equally formidable contender for the adulation of many children. Santa Claus brings them presents. Geisel makes them laugh, and, what is more, he’s real.<sup>295</sup>

Since 1936, under the alias of Dr. Seuss, Geisel, a plain and gentle man who is now fifty-six, has written and illustrated

nineteen humorous books for children, all but three in galloping verse. Being shy, tense, and serious-minded, he tries to avoid the popping eyes and clutching hands of his disciples, but on the rare occasions when he is harried into making a personal appearance at an autographing bee, he attracts crowds that would cause a Western television hero to sway in the saddle with envy.<sup>296</sup>

Theodor recalled the article and said: “I don’t want you even to read that,’ he told friends years later. ‘It got butchered. It was going to be two parts instead of one and they cut it. They took out all the funny stuff’”<sup>297</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 173).



Fig. 5 Lora, Loris. “Children’s Friend.” Illustration from *The New Yorker*, December 17, 1960, [www.newyorker.com/magazine/1960/12/17/childrens-friend](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1960/12/17/childrens-friend).

<sup>295</sup> Theodor made children laugh and still does through his books; D-1 his life mission to make people, especially children - laugh. And to say he was real, more in that he truly cared about the children; he was genuine in his writing to his audience. Kahn expressed his own honesty regarding Theodor’s social interest A-2, being the opposite of phony – real, a person doing something out of unselfish ambition with an identification with the human species, specifically children, breaking through barriers and the cast system of adults versus children.

<sup>296</sup> He attracted crowds out of his writing; people felt the heart of Theodor in his writing, that he honestly cared; A-3 interpersonal relations: through his books, gave him an identification with humanity, a greater love, even though he was shy and avoided crowds.

<sup>297</sup> Theodor did not take himself too seriously; A-1 humor was his strength and protection; he used this in his books constantly. One of his famous quotes: “Fantasy is a necessary ingredient in living, it’s a way of looking at life through the wrong end of a telescope, and that enables you to laugh at life’s realities.” With his fantasy and humor, Theodor could laugh at the realities of life, which his experiences especially as a young child and teenager had taught him, could be quite difficult.

1961 – 1964 *The Sneetches & Other Stories*

In 1961, Dr. Seuss was not yet known in London. Beginner Books went to meet a London publisher, Billy Collins, to speak about the possibility of introducing Dr. Seuss and his characters to the British people. The English responded by saying he was “too vulgar for words” and “too jokey” for the schools (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 175). Yet, after visiting America, and seeing the affect and response *The Cat in the Hat* was having there, Collins purchased the rights from Hutchinson to bring *The Cat in the Hat* and Dr. Seuss books to England and sales began to flourish abroad.

Theodor with a voice worth reckoning, wrote a book to speak on the importance of equality and tolerance:<sup>298</sup> *The Sneetches and Other Stories* was published in 1961. It spoke about the Star bellied Sneetches who had stars on their bellies and how they would not play or interact with the Sneetches who had no stars on their bellies. Charles Cohen summed up the book as such: “Ted’s long maturation process helped him surmount the attitudes of his day to become a pioneer in the fight for equality, so that children would grow up already knowing what it took him several decades to recognize”<sup>299</sup> (Cohen 221).

In 1962, *The Sleep Book*, was his next book to be published. It embraced the beauty of sleep and all that can happen when one sleeps. Theodor returned to the alphabet theme for a third and final time with his next book, *Dr. Seuss’s ABC*. Also published this year, 1963, was a book for the very young readers: *Hop on Pop*, which became a favorite for the preschoolers; the subtitle on the front cover reads: “The Simplest Seuss for Youngest Use” (Seuss *Hop on Pop*).

During this time period, after enormous success with *The Cat in the Hat* and the Beginner Book department at Random House, the Geisel’s reached a mountain top financially, yet many more mountains were left to climb. In 1963, “the Geisel’s financial success, long assumed, became a matter of public record... *Business Week* estimated Dr. Seuss’s annual book royalties

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<sup>298</sup> A-2 Social interest: Theodor as a young child during World War I was ostracized for his family having German origins; forty some years later he wrote with honesty and awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: even as a child, he saw clearly and could not be fooled by the world around him; B-4 Ethical awareness: using the *Sneetches* he defined moral standards of what is right and wrong; he was fixed on the end, that of learning to live with each other even with differences.

<sup>299</sup> Cohen reiterated the self-actualization of Theodor – “to become a pioneer in the fight for equality”; stating it took several decades to occur, to realize. Maslow said he used older subjects in his studies: “The people I selected for my investigation were older people, people who had lived much of their lives out and were visibly successful” (Maslow *The Farther Reaches* 42).

in excess of two-hundred thousand dollars, a quite conservative figure” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 182). The Geisel’s were becoming active in the community of La Jolla, meeting and entertaining influential individuals; many a dinner parties were had at the Geisel’s with a select group of friends.

1965 – “What am I doing here?”

With fame and good fortune of success, the public was getting more and more curious about Theodor, better known to them as Dr. Seuss; he was gracing the covers of the books they were reading to their children every night, or their children were reading to themselves and with great enthusiasm. *The Saturday Evening Post* had another interview with the author of these zany characters to unlock the mystery of this Dr. Seuss and his co-partner, less known, Theodor Geisel. It seemed everyone, including Theodor was asking the question he had asked himself as a child when he was on stage with President Roosevelt: “What am I doing here?” The headline read: “October 23, 1965 — A painfully shy former screenwriter and unsuccessful novelist named Geisel has become America’s best-known children’s writer — and he still can’t quite believe it” (Jennings). In the article an eight-year-old boy was mentioned: he had written Dr. Seuss a letter asking him “Who thank *you* up Dr. Seuss???”<sup>300</sup> Theodor thought this was a great question from one of his fans. Jennings went on to describe how Theodor was a plain looking man who was concerned about living up to his own creation and not wanting to be considered a fraud. He especially seemed concerned about the children’s opinion of him: “Kids come to my door and say, ‘I want to meet Dr. Seuss.’ I say, ‘I am Dr. Seuss,’ and they simply refuse to believe me... If your nose doesn’t light up and you don’t look like a baggy-pants comedian, or at least have a bifurcated beard and horns, they are disappointed”<sup>301</sup> Theodor went on to describe the question that was on his mind that started as a child and followed him to his present age of sixty-one: “There I was with Mr. Roosevelt asking, ‘What is this little boy doing here?’ and hundreds of

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<sup>300</sup> B-2 Freshness of appreciation: Theodor kept his appreciation for the basic goods of life with awe and wonder; even though he was now well known, successful and very rich, Theodor did not become familiarized with this fame, his fame. He remained innocent in many ways, keeping an awe for each new book.

<sup>301</sup> Disappointed: Theodor did not want to disappoint his fans; he was a man of perfection, like his father, a perfect marksman; being a fraud would have meant missing the mark. Freedom: C-3 Spontaneity: marked by simplicity, lack of artificiality; Theodor when with children or in public was not in a posture of ease; he did not like to show off and felt uncomfortable, fearing he would seem artificial or a “fraud.”

people staring at me. I can still hear them whispering, ‘There’s little Teddy Geisel, he tried to get a medal.’ And to this day I keep asking myself, ‘What *am* I doing here?’”<sup>302</sup> This incident has been cited often to explain his “almost pathological fear of audiences.” Jennings went on to describe exactly “what” Dr. Seuss was doing:

But while Geisel regularly turns down requests to appear in public, the works of Dr. Seuss turn up everywhere in America, his harum-scarum menagerie of golliwog-eyed animals forming a sort of mythology all their own. In cheerful colors they romp boundlessly through wise, simple, and amusing misadventures looking, says Geisel, “a little drunk,” and never once saying “Run, Spot, run.”<sup>303</sup>

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The phenomenal appeal of Dr. Seuss lies partly in his fresh melding of the logical with the ludicrous... For they start with the premise that children readily accept the ridiculous if, once stated, it is pursued with unremitting logic. “If I start out with the concept of a two-headed animal,” says Geisel, “I must put two hats on his head and two toothbrushes in the bathroom. A child will accept a tuttle-tuttle tree [the “T” in *Dr. Seuss’s ABC*] as a fact and a non-fact simultaneously. He knows you’re kidding, but he goes along with it.” It’s all what Geisel calls “logical insanity.”<sup>304</sup> (Jennings)

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<sup>302</sup> Freedom, the ability to be spontaneous, to withdraw if this is what you wish, to create, to be whatever one is the moment, to trust one’s self; Theodor in his success needed to trust himself and his creation, yet when taking moments to reflect on the momentum and success of his creations, it befuddled him, seemed to overwhelm him; like an innocent child wondering why everyone was giving him attention. Kahn, when interviewing Theodor for *The New Yorker*, in 1960, stated that Theodor was “staggered and a bit frightened by his opulence” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 173). C-1 Detachment: the need for solitude and privacy; this was taken away when interviewed as Theodor Geisel; behind his books and with Dr. Seuss there was freedom to create.

<sup>303</sup> “Run, Spot, run” referring to the Dick and Jane primers used to teach reading, Theodor would never be the ordinary or the usual writer for children as he saw his audience as his equal and for whom he wrote with great respect. “[A] little drunk,” to put him off the edge a bit, as if he needed an excuse to be different, to write his misadventures by looking through the wrong end of the telescope as he often said.

<sup>304</sup> 4a-V Dichotomy: a transformation of oppositions into unities, mutually enhancing each other: logic and insanity. Theodor used logic to explain the insanity and used insanity to make sense of logic; they were partners in crime, the good and the bad, good cop, bad cop, black and white. His person was like this, Theodor Geisel, the shy man, and Dr. Seuss, the writer who knew no boundaries, no shyness.

Dr. Seuss's success was growing into a phenomenon; it was logical yet ludicrous. His work habits and perfectionism drove him into the wee hours of the morning. The respect he had for his readers was evident in his books and clearly when he spoke about his audience:

Not surprisingly, Geisel is a highly disciplined craftsman. While he has severe, self-imposed rules, he writes to no set formula: "A formula is usually tantamount to writing down to children, which is something a child spots instantly. I try to treat the child as an equal and go on the assumption a child can understand anything that is read to him if the writer takes care to state it *clearly* and *simply* enough."<sup>305</sup>

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Geisel is dismayed at the "contempt for this market that most juvenile authors have. They think they can put down a lot of slop-twaddle and dismiss it as 'just for kids,'" he says. "They don't realize that every sentence is as important as a chapter in a novel, every word is really a page. You can't just knock them out over the weekend; you have to sweat them out."

A 60-page book, for which he produces some 500 illustrations and up to 1,000 pages of text, represents from 12 to 18 months of the most meticulous work. "I realize they look as if they've been put together in 23 seconds," he says, "but 99 percent of what I do ends up in the scrap basket."

If both writing and drawings are galloping along nicely, Geisel is apt to work all night, eventually seeing the sun come up on his pink-stucco hacienda. If not, he will sit and stare at the Pacific in controlled fury or throw himself on the nearest divan and groan.

When a Seuss book finally gets into the Random House mill in New York, Geisel spends far more time in the production department than any other author, "trying to perfect details right down to press time." He once spent five hours in publisher Bennett Cerf's office working over a single line of verse until he had removed an extra beat that bothered his ear; on another occasion he fussed over two pages for a full week in his Manhattan hotel room. After 100,000 copies of *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back* were

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<sup>305</sup> Respect was the base that Theodor used in his writing; it was clear and simple in his mind and to his readers. His readers were children – and to these he gave respect.

already sold, he ordered a new jacket made up because he felt one line was too black.<sup>306</sup>

Still, for all of the anguish, Geisel wouldn't trade places with anyone, not even a Bipp-no-Bungus from the wilds of Hipp-no-Hungus or a tizzle-topped Tufted Mazurka from the Isle of Yerka. "Childhood is the one time in an average person's life when he can laugh just for the straight fun of laughing — that's the main reason I write for kids."<sup>307</sup> As one grows older his humor gets all tied up and stifled by social, economic, and political rules that we learn from our elders, and before long our laughter gets all mixed up with sneers and leers. Kids react spontaneously to something ludicrous, so I have more freedom writing for them.<sup>308</sup> They laugh at silly things their parents would feel embarrassed to be caught smiling at. I have a secret following among adults, but they have to read me when no one is watching." (Jennings)

Not only was the public asking what he was doing here but where he would be going next; he responded as only Dr. Seuss could respond, with a little insanity and humor:

"I've done everything but prenatal books," says Dr. Seuss. "Now I'm trying to figure out a good alphabet soup for expectant mothers, where the child is born saying 'Cat in the Hat.' If that doesn't work, I may become a gardener, and in my spare time study the heartbeat of whales." (Jennings)

In this year, 1965, he published two more books: *Fox in Socks*, Seuss's first book of tongue twisters, and *I Had Trouble in Getting to Solla Sollew*.

With success came a desire in Theodor, to express himself in new and different ways;<sup>309</sup>

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<sup>306</sup> Perfection: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: Theodor had sharper vision, could see differences in a stroke of a line, could hear when the metre was off; his sense of perception with his creations/books drove him to perfection.

<sup>307</sup> Sharing laughter – a reason to write and give purpose; this was essential and gave meaning to Theodor; he understood the necessity to laugh, for this he wrote.

<sup>308</sup> Freedom: the ability to be spontaneous, to be whatever one is at the moment; C-3 Spontaneity: marked by a naturalness, lack of pretention; Theodor knew himself well and understood the need for laughter and freedom in life; this drove him to success and realizing his full potential.

<sup>309</sup> Theodor had a constant hunger for growth, to meet challenges head on and to be successful. It was the potential within him that pushed him to new adventures, new books, new creativity, new steps; D-1 this life mission excites fascinates, creates happiness; without these, one gets restless, hungry.

he had this chance when Chuck Jones, well-known cartoonist, telephoned Theodor asking if he would like to adapt one of his books for television; at first Theodor was not interested because of his experience with *The 5000 Fingers of Dr. T.*, a disaster. Yet, Jones confident, did not relent; Helen became interested and soon Theodor was on board. It was early in the year, 1966, they decided to pick *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* so that it could be released on television at Christmas time. It made its debut with the same name as on the book and became a great success (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 189). *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* would go on to become a Christmas classic equal to Charles Schulz's, *Charlie Brown's Christmas*, and Charles Dicken's, *A Christmas Carol* and the *Scrooge*, an adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*. Theodor wrote the songs for the film, most famous: "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch" (Biography). This gave Theodor another avenue of creativity.

#### 1967 – 1991 Later Years

##### 1967 - Turmoil in the Household

Helen, with lessening health, sleeping in separate rooms, realizing another woman was taking her place, committed suicide on October 23, 1967. While Ted was sleeping in his bedroom, the housekeeper found Helen dead from a drug overdose and beside her a letter written:

Dear Ted,

What has happened to us?

I don't know.

I feel myself in a spiral, going down, down, down, into a black hole from which there is no escape, no brightness. And loud in my ears from every side I hear, "failure, failure, failure..."

I love you so much... I am too old and enmeshed in everything you do and are, that I cannot conceive of life without you... My going will leave quite a rumor but you can say I was overworked and overwrought. Your reputation with your friends and fans will not be harmed... Sometimes, think of the fun we had all through the years... (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 195 – 196)

Helen signed it Grimalkin, Drouberhannus, Knalbner and Fepp; this was the code name of their



make-belief law firm (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 196). It was said that: “Palmer committed suicide, tired of her illness and the emotional turmoil caused by Geisel’s extra marital affair with Audrey Stone Dimond” (Editors, TheFamousPeople.com). The Geisel’s neighbor, Stanley Willis said: "She was getting blind but she was cheerful right up until the time she realized someone was moving into her marital territory" (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 7 of 9). Peggy, niece of the Geisel’s, said it was done out of “absolute love for Ted” (Harris, Colin). Judith Morgan, author of *Dr. Seuss* and friend of the Geisel’s said in an interview:

“Looking back to people who had seen her in the last twenty-four to forty-nine hours said she looked very sad but there was simply no hint or no clue. It was a terrible shock. The suicide of Helen Geisel brought much finger-pointing and gossip, especially in Theodor’s hometown of La Jolla. He was at the time 63.” (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 7 of 9)

Theodor’s response to Helen’s death was: “I didn’t know whether to kill myself, burn the house down, or just go away and get lost”<sup>310</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 195). In the same year as Helen’s death, *The Cat in The Hat SongBook* was published, but it went out of print because of the low sales. It was republished 50 years later in limited copies.

#### 1968 – New Beginnings

In 1968, after Helen’s death, Theodor published *The Foot Book*, a Beginner Book all about feet. Theodor not only published *The Foot Book*, but his steps led him to marry Audrey Stone Dimond, on August 5, 1968; she was eighteen years his junior. Chuck Jones, producer of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* and a close friend of Theodor and Helen for many years, explained the situation as he saw it: “Audrey came along and she was vital and pretty and young and had a wonderful charm about her. As one side went to the gray the other side came into the

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<sup>310</sup> Helen had created for Theodor a world where he could be free to be creative, detached from reality by shielding “him from the real world” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 150); in her death, Theodor’s world was turned upside down; reality was facing him and he didn’t know what to do with it. Ellen Revelle, in the Morgan’s book, 1995, is quoted as saying that Helen “never wanted to be a burden” (151).

sunlight”<sup>311</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 202).

In May of this year, 1968, Theodor had written a letter to Donald Bartlett and his wife; Donald had been his roommate while attending Oxford; the letter spoke of his intentions:

... I’ve written you kids at least 10 times about my future plans. And, every time, torn up letters up. The letters get so involved, so unbelievable. So let me put it out, flat on the line, without any comment or begging for understanding.

On 21<sup>st</sup> of June, Audrey Dimond is going to Reno to divorce Grey Dimond... Audrey and I are going to be married about the first week in August. I am acquiring two daughters, aged nine and fourteen. I’m rebuilding the house to take care of the influx. I am 64 years old. I am marrying a woman eighteen years younger... I have not flipped my lid. This is not a sudden nutty decision... This is an inevitable, inescapable conclusion to five years of four peoples’ frustration.<sup>312</sup> All I can ask you is to try to believe in me. (201)

Audrey said in an interview years later: "We were very good friends. I was something else again that he hadn't happened to come up against. And he fell in love. I have to feel in the big picture, it was meant to happen" ("Dr. Seuss' - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary", Part 7 of 9). The two stepdaughters were fourteen-year-old Lark and nine-year-old Lea. Dr. Seuss had no children until he married Audrey when the two girls became part of his family. People often asked Dr. Seuss how he, a childless person, could write so well for children. His standard response was: "You make 'em. I'll amuse 'em"<sup>313</sup> (Biography).

With the marriage to Audrey, Theodor found new vigor and a bounce to his step. Colin Harris in his *Dr. Seuss Timeline*, in *The New York Times*, 2000, quoted Random House and Audrey:

Random House told Audrey that “his juices were getting diluted and he needed

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<sup>311</sup> 4a-V Dichotomy: opposites of light and darkness, life and death; like two collaborating partners; Helen left and Audrey came.

<sup>312</sup> Honesty, awareness, freedom and trust, the four main areas in the characteristics of self-actualization; Theodor was revealing his deepest humanity, his soul, in hopes that his friend would understand.

<sup>313</sup> 7-B Transient moment of knowing what one is not good at and 8-B what one is good at; Theodor accepted the fact that he was better at writing for children than raising children; or, it was something he had come to grips with as he and Helen could not have children.

something to start him again.” She also says she improved his appearance. “His head was mine,” she says, “I created the beard. He had a nose that was looking for that beard all his life. I chose clothes for him.”

Judith Morgan in an interview said of Theodor: "He never cared what he was wearing before. Now he was wearing color coordinated pants and shirts and his hair was more often combed and he looked a lot younger; one year after Audrey came on the scene" (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 7 of 9). Julie Olfé, Geisel’s secretary from 1964 – 1974, spoke about Audrey and the new union: “Everything changed after the marriage; he was growing older and wanted to do new things. Audrey was so energetic that gave him a big boost”<sup>314</sup> (Part 7 of 9). Along with the boost she learned how to deal with his varying temperament:

Audrey learned to deal with both the despair that could overcome Ted in his studio and his occasional elation. “Sometimes he would bounce into the room in great excitement and say, ‘Something’s happening!’ I learned never to ask what it was because his answer was always the same: ‘I can’t tell you until it’s altogether.’”<sup>315</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 205)

It was a year of many changes: a year of new beginnings – a new wife and new books, a year of sadness – his father, Theodor Robert Geisel, passed away December 9, and a year of recognition – Theodor was awarded an honorary doctorate from the American International College<sup>316</sup> (“Honorary Degree from American”).

1969 – 1970 – *My Book About Me & I Can Lick 30 Tigers Today! And Other Stories...*

In 1969 through 1970, four more books were published: *My Book About Me* (1969), *I Can Lick 30 Tigers Today! And Other Stories* (1969), *I Can Draw It Myself* (1970), and *Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You?* (1970). In the fall of 1969, while working on his books, Theodor and his new bride, Audrey, took a seven week trip around the world. The Morgan’s said, “he

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<sup>314</sup> 13-V Playfulness: fun, joy, amusement, gaiety, exuberance; Theodor was finding new strength and creativity from his union with Audrey.

<sup>315</sup> Honesty to trust one’s feelings, anger, love or a moment of a peak experience B-3; Theodor and his new wife had to deal with the movement of emotions; creativity and spontaneity are dependent on sensing truly what is happening within a person, even if it is not always pleasant.

<sup>316</sup> The world realized and gave honor to Theodor Geisel, whom he himself had realized the calling years earlier.

often hungered for travel, and used it to refurbish his creative imagery”<sup>317</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 207). Returning home for the trip, Theodor got busy on his two books, *I Can Draw It Myself* and *Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You?*; while working on these books, Theodor began to be concerned with helping the world by fighting greed and waste (209).

On May 29, 1970, Theodor was presented a gold plaque with the following text: Presenting Theodor Seuss Geisel – By – The International Forum – For – Neurological Organization – May 29, 1970<sup>318</sup> (“The International Forum”).

### 1971 – *The Lorax*

September 12, 1971, in *The Springfield Republican* newspaper, a headline read: “ENVIRONMENT PLEA BY ‘DR. SEUSS’ Children’s Book Has Message” (Vils). It was during a trip in 1970, to Kenya with Audrey, while staying at the Mount Kenya Safari Club, that most of the story, *The Lorax*, was written; inspiration coming from a group of passing elephants: “I hadn’t thought of the Lorax for three weeks,” ... “And a herd of elephants came across the hill – about a half mile away – one of those lucky things, that never happened since.”<sup>319</sup> And I picked up a laundry pad and wrote the whole book that afternoon on a laundry pad” (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 88). Audrey, recalled, “He wrote on the backs of everything... on laundry lists... It came in a rush”<sup>320</sup> (80). *The Lorax* focuses on the environment: “Clean up the environment before it’s too late” (Vils). Theodor said in an interview with *The Christian Science* in 1978, “I was angry about

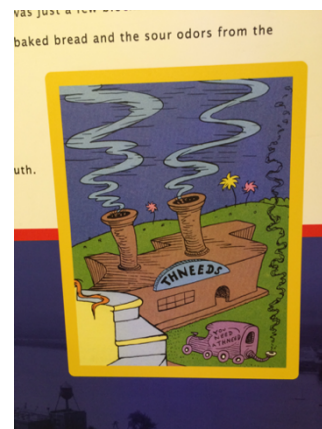


Fig. 6 Seuss. “Dr. Seuss’s illustration of the factory in *The Lorax*.” Photo Coralee Friesen, *Springfield Museum*, 2016.

<sup>317</sup> Travel allows for new experiences, new views of the world, providing a creative person new imagery; B-2 Freshness of appreciation: Theodor often traveled to enjoy again the miracles in life, as Maslow wrote, a sunset, a flower, to prevent familiarization; travel was used to guard and feed Theodor’s creativity and curiosity.

<sup>318</sup> Neurological Organization gave Theodor a plaque of recognition is interesting in that the following year, *The Lorax* was published; a book with the theme of the protecting the environment against greed and pollution.

<sup>319</sup> Awareness: Theodor was aware of his world; it was a peak experience B-3, the writing of *The Lorax*.

<sup>320</sup> B-3 Peak experience: Audrey living with Theodor recognized these peak moments. Maslow said many things can trigger these moments; for Theodor, this day, it was a group of elephants passing by.

the ecology problems”<sup>321</sup> (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 80). Theodor referenced a factory in the book which looks much like a factory where he grew up: “His memory of the gasworks resurfaced. Notice how the Thneed’s polluting factory looks very similar to the gasworks of Ted’s youth” (“Dr. Seuss.” Springfield Museum).

*The Springfield Republican* newspaper, quoted Theodor saying: “It well may be an adult book... The children will let us know. But maybe the way to get the message to the parents is through a children’s book”<sup>322</sup> (Vils). Former President Lyndon Baines Johnson was quoted: “I know my grandchildren will enjoy it...but no more than we will” (Vils). People were use to Dr. Seuss writing more fanciful books, not so controversial. Michael Frith, Seuss’s editor and close friend said the book disturbed the readers of Dr. Seuss: “The idea of doing a book for kids with a message that’s this dramatic, and almost dogmatic, propagandistic if you will, really kind of disturbed some people”<sup>323</sup> (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 7 of 9). Others called it a morality tale and to this Theodor responded: “It’s impossible to tell a story without a moral – either the good guys win or the bad guys win” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 211).

Sales were down until a decade later. “*The Lorax* was ahead of its time and its popularity began to soar only a decade later when the environmental movement exploded.<sup>324</sup> Ted himself began to talk of it as his favorite book” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 211). Theodor donated the original drawings of *The Lorax* to the inauguration of the LBJ Presidential Library (“Exhibit of 10 original drawings from *The Lorax* book”). The Morgan’s reference a letter President Johnson wrote, thanking Theodor for the donation and quoted a part of the letter: “If anyone had been conducting a popularity poll in Austin the weekend of May 22, you would have

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<sup>321</sup> B-4 Ethical awareness: this anger needed to be expressed; it was a righteous indignation, a social awareness of what was wrong and a need for change.

<sup>322</sup> Being intelligent and looking through the wrong end of the telescope, Theodor knew that the best way to get a message to the adults was through a child’s book; parents who read bedtime stories to their children were at the same time being given a message.

<sup>323</sup> Honesty: Theodor trusted his feelings; he was honest with them, whether they be loving or with a good kind of anger; he was true to himself and his audience. He was compelled and had the freedom to write what was going on inside him; this cause for the environment, which began outside himself, paradoxically became a defining characteristic of Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss’s books.

<sup>324</sup> Theodor was a visionary; this was not the first time he delivered a book to the public foretelling of events or issues to arise. He trusted his life mission D-1; it was a part of his constitution to warn the public, hoping for change, hoping to create change in a positive way.

won it hands down” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 212). This letter prompted Theodor to write a letter to the above mentioned, editor, artist, and friend, Mike Frith, in which he wrote: “Really makes me feel sort of good” (212).

In the same article, “Environment Plea By ‘Dr. Seuss’ Children’s Book Has Message,” from *The Springfield Republican* newspaper, September 12, 1971, Theodor had interesting things to say about his life:

“Everything in my life has been an accident... I want to write an opera. About what? I don’t know; that’s why I haven’t done it. But I’ve done so much lyric writing in putting the television things together that I’d like to do an opera... There’s a ballet I designed that’s running around now unfulfilled...<sup>325</sup> But I do not want to write for adults, even though writing for children is harder... adult humor today in this country is based on superiority, contempt, even meanness.”<sup>326</sup> (Vils)

Ursula Vils, author of the article lastly asked Theodor where his creatures came from; his response was: “It’s probably the sign of a limited mind...But take the Lorax: I drew the Lorax and he was obviously a Lorax... Doesn’t he look like a Lorax to you?”<sup>327</sup>

In this same year, 1971, Theodor was awarded the Peabody Award for his television specials:

Dr. Seuss’ *Horton Hears a Who!* is a superb example of how an inspired children’s book can be translated into an equally entrancing television show — if the author is allowed to work on the script himself and pick the right people to help him with the job. In this case, Dr. Seuss, who is Theodor Geisel in private life, enlisted the services of an old side-kick, animator Chuck Jones, with whom he had previously collaborated in 1966 on a production of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* Their joint efforts on these and other animated specials — including *The Cat in the Hat* — make crystal clear why Dr. Seuss

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<sup>325</sup> Ideas were running around in Theodor’s mind but he knew exactly what he wanted to do and must do – write for children. It was his calling D-1.

<sup>326</sup> Superiority, contempt and meanness were the exact opposite traits Theodor embraced; A-2 Social interest was close to his heart, disliking phoniness, hypocrisy, pomposity. He had already written many books addressing the importance of individuality and acceptance of differences.

<sup>327</sup> Trust: D-2 Autonomy: Theodor was dependent upon his life mission to guide him; he had an inner directedness leading him, first by doodling and after his characters would come to life and give direction to his work; the Lorax was this sort of character.

is, by all odds, the most popular author for juveniles in America.<sup>328</sup> ("The Peabody Awards")

#### 1971 - An Author Duly Noted

In Selma G. Lanes' book, *Down the Rabbit Hole*, published this year as well, 1971, an entire chapter was dedicated to Dr. Seuss: *Seuss for the Goose Is Seuss for the Gander*. Seuss was compared to Wilhelm Reich and his orgone box: "to provide his young disciples with a literary release no so far removed from orgasm"<sup>329</sup> (80). He also held "a firm place beside Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll as one of the inspired creators of nonsense in the English language"<sup>330</sup> (80). Lanes said Seuss was a varnisher of truth,<sup>331</sup> like that of his character Marco, in his first book, *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*. His formula for writing books: "The anxiety in Seuss's books always arises from the flouting of authority, parental or societal. It is central to the Seuss formula that the action of all his books with children as protagonists takes place either (1) in the absence of grownups, or (2) in the imagination"<sup>332</sup> (Lanes 81).

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<sup>328</sup> Further proof that Theodor Geisel was on the right path for his vocation, his calling; the public eye was awarding Theodor with very prestigious awards. His steps were precise and leading in the right direction.

<sup>329</sup> A release to experience the greatness of reading, exploring the possibilities of fantasy, to open one's mind up to great imagination and endless possibilities; Theodor gave this to his readers.

<sup>330</sup> Nonsense in the English language – the ability and freedom to play with words, rules – an artistic freedom, C-1 creativity: turned into true inventiveness.

<sup>331</sup> Theodor cherished truth in his life and in his writing: wanting never to seem like a fraud to his audience, in World War II when the Americans wanted to stay safe in their homes but needed to help; the importance of the environment, the need for children to enjoy reading; he was not shy in writing what he felt to be truth; he trusted himself as it was his calling to draw and write his convictions, his truth. For himself as well, he faced the truth when he left Oxford to discover the world he wanted to create in his own way. And he did create his own world, a world of Seussian.

<sup>332</sup> Theodor often quoted that "adults are just obsolete children and to hell with them." In his letter to *The New York Times*, November 16, 1952, it is here where this quote seems to have begun. Writing for adults he asks this question:

"Have you ever stopped to consider what has happened to your sense of humor?... When you were a kid named Willy or Mary the one thing you did better than anything else was laugh. The one thing you got more fun out of than anything was laughing... Your juices were juicing. Your lava was seething. Your humor was spritzing. You really were living. At that age you saw life through very clear windows. Small windows, of course. But very bright windows. And, then, what happened? You know what happened. The grown-ups began to equip you with shutters... Your imagination, they told you, was getting a little bit out of hand. Your young unfettered mind, they told you,

Theodor was given acknowledgement from Lanes for his sense of order and opposing sense of chaos:<sup>333</sup> “The greatest pleasure in Seuss is derived from the sense of having a season pass to utter chaos with no personal responsibility for any of it. Seuss has a perfect understanding of grownups’ love of order and the rule of their laws – and of the enormous anxiety burden this places on small children everywhere<sup>334</sup> (Lanes 83). To lighten this burden of order, the chaos brings relief, yet, the morals within his books bring a meeting of the minds, from both parents and children alike: “For all his exaggerated zaniness (and subversive alliance with the child’s free spirit against all forms of authoritarianism), the ultimate moral Seuss presents is always sane and mature, one to which adults as well as children can subscribe”<sup>335</sup> (86).

Seuss was said to have had a directness in his language that “children instinctively understand and appreciate for its honesty. It is the way people talk to one another”<sup>336</sup> (87). From

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was taking you on too many wild flights of fancy. It was time your imagination got its feet down on the ground. It was time your version of humor was given a practical, realistic base. They began to teach you *their* versions of humor. And the process of destroying your spontaneous laughter was under way... This conditioned laughter the grown-ups taught you depended entirely on their conditions... Your laughs were beginning to sound a little tinny... You still laughed for fun, but the fun was getting hemmed in by a world of regulations. You were laughing at subjects according to their listing in the ledger. Every year, as you grew older, the laughs that used to split your sides diminished... And by the time you had added that accomplishment to your repertoire, you know what happened to you, Willy or Mary? Your capacity for healthy, silly, friendly laughter was smothered. You’d really grown up. You’d become adults... adults, which is a word that means obsolete children.” (Seuss. “But for Grown-ups”)

Theodor purposefully wrote with the absence of adults and or in the imagination, for as written above, it is fun, you are really living and the windows of one’s mind are bright and clear.

<sup>333</sup> 4a-V Dichotomy: of order and chaos, creating an inner conflict within the story; opposite poles playing against each other, just as in life, good and evil, cold and warm, keeps the interest up and the energy moving. Theodor was brilliant at this as Lanes suggested. It also revealed the two personalities: Theodor Geisel following order and Dr. Seuss opposing with a sense of chaos.

<sup>334</sup> Anxiety cripples one’s true self. Theodor was hell bent on keeping the joy and laughter in life. His famous quote, as stated before in this writing: “Fantasy is necessary in living, it’s a way of looking at life through the wrong end of the telescope, and that enables you to laugh at life’s realities.”

<sup>335</sup> Seuss’s books after going out into chaos and wild imagination, always bring the reader back to reality; his first book, *And to Think That I Saw it On Mulberry Street*, Marco, after his great imagination, responds to his father’s question as to what he has seen: “Nothing,” I said, growing red as a beet, “But a plain horse and wagon on Mulberry Street.”

<sup>336</sup> Theodor wrote with respect to his audience, children; he always stressed how important it is to never write down to children: “And the children are eagerly welcoming the good writers who



this appreciation of everyday language, yet zany, chaotic, and inventive, Lanes realized the “infinite possibilities it offers a lively imagination”<sup>337</sup> (Lanes 88). Seuss’s books were compared to other picture books of the day:

At a time when the great majority of picture books are a spare 32 pages – occasionally a lengthy 48 – his go on and on for 64 wild pages. Seuss’s guaranteed audience, of mass-market proportions, keeps production costs down and the price of his books reasonable. We not only get our money’s worth, but are left with a reservoir of sane thoughts and an appetite for his next outlandish invention. Long live Theodor Seuss Geisel, physician to the psyche of the beleaguered modern child! (89)

#### 1972 - Visionary - Political Book with Message to the Public

1972, the beginning of the Watergate scandal in America, Theodor feeling the wind blowing, published on August 12, 1972, a political message in the form of a child’s book: *Marvin K. Mooney Will You Please Go Now!* Two years later, Theodor sent a copy of the two-year-old book to Art Buchwald, a political humorist and dear friend; inside, Marvin K. Mooney’s name was changed to Richard M. Nixon; it was then published in *The Washington Post* by Art Buchwald on July 30, 1974 with the title: *Richard M. Nixon Will You Please Go Now!*; President Nixon resigned ten days later on August 9, 1974. Buchwald wrote:

My good friend Dr. Seuss wrote a book a few years ago titled "Marvin K. Mooney Will You Please Go Now!" He sent me a copy the other day and crossed out "Marvin K. Mooney" and replaced it with "Richard M. Nixon." It sounded like fun so I asked him if I could reprint it. Please read it aloud.

"Richard M. Nixon will you please go now!

The time has come.

The time has come.

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talk, not down to them as kiddies, but talk to them clearly and honestly as equals” (Seuss. “But for Grown-ups laughing isn’t any fun.”). People understand and know when they are given respect and with this, they are able to appreciate the honesty within and open their minds to the message given.

<sup>337</sup> “Infinite possibilities” are exactly what Dr. Seuss’s books put forth; he added on to the alphabet in *Dr. Seuss’s ABC*, imagined a river so great in *McElligot’s Pool*, recipes and tastes grand in *Scrambled Egg Super!* and on and on, never limiting the imagination.

The time is now.

Just go.

Go.

Go!

I don't care how.

You can go by foot.

You can go by cow.

Richard M. Nixon will you please go now!

You can go on skates.

You can go on skis.

You can go in a hat.

But

Please go.

Please!

I don't care.

You can go

By bike.

You can go

On a Zike-Bike

If you like.

If you like

You can go

In an old blue shoe.

Just go, go, GO!

Please do, do, do, DO!

Richard M. Nixon

I don't care how.

Richard M. Nixon

Will you please

GO NOW!

You can go on stilts.

You can go by fish.  
You can go in a Crunk-Car  
If you wish.  
If you wish  
You may go  
By lion's tale.  
Or stamp yourself  
And go by mail.  
Richard M. Nixon  
Don't you know  
The time has come  
To go, go, GO!  
Get on your way!  
Please Richard M.!  
You might like going in a Zumble-Zay.  
You can go by balloon . . .  
Or broomstick.  
Or  
You can go by camel  
In a bureau drawer.  
You can go by bumble-boat  
. . . or jet.  
I don't care how you go.  
Just get!  
Richard M. Nixon!  
I don't care how.  
Richard M. Nixon  
Will you please  
GO NOW!  
I said  
GO

And

GO

I meant . . .

The time had come

So . . .

Richard WENT."<sup>338</sup> (Buchwald)

#### 1973 – 1974 – More Books & Different Names

Theodor not only wrote more books with his counter partner Dr. Seuss: *The Shape of Me and Other Stuff* (1973) *Did I Ever Tell You How Lucky You Are?* (1973), *Great Day for Up* (1974), and *There's a Wocket in My Pocket!* (1974), he also wrote under the pseudo names of Theo LeSieg, Geisel spelt backwards, and Rosetta Stone, Stone being Audrey's maiden name. Theodor wrote the books and had other artists illustrate them; "I don't like to draw people very well. I can draw animals better. Every year I get ideas for a couple of books that call for a different kind of illustration, maybe more realistic"<sup>339</sup> (Lesem).

With LeSieg, the books published were: *Ten Apples Up on Top!*, (1961) illustrated by Roy McKie; *I Wish That I Had Duck Feet*, (1965) illustrated by B. Tobey; *Come over to My House*, (1966) illustrated by Richard Erdoes; *The Eye Book*, (1968) illustrated by Roy McKie and in 1999, new illustrations by Joe Mathieu; *I Can Write! A Book by Me, Myself*, (1971) illustrated by Roy McKie; *In a People House*, (1972) illustrated by Roy McKie; *Wacky Wednesday*, (1974) illustrated by George Booth; *The Many Mice of Mr. Brice*, (1974) illustrated by Roy McKie; *Would You Rather Be a Bullfrog?*, (1975) illustrated by Roy McKie; *Hooper Humperdink...? Not Him!*, (1976) illustrated by Charles E. Martin, and in 2006 new illustrations by Scott Nash; *Please Try to Remember the First of October!*, (1977) illustrated by Art Cummings; *Maybe You Should Fly a Jet! Maybe You Should Be a Vet!*, (1980) illustrated by Michael J. Smollin; and *The Tooth Book*, (1981) illustrated by Roy McKie, and in 2000 new

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<sup>338</sup> Theodor, visionary and truth teller, had seen this coming two years earlier. Though he wrote for children; there were strong adult messages within. Maslow wrote of the B-values self-actualized people seek: truth, justice, order and necessity, it must be done; Theodor wrote with these convictions. From these guarded values, Theodor wrote with honesty, awareness, freedom and trust.

<sup>339</sup> 7-B Breaking off of illusions; Theodor knew what he was good at and what he was not good at.

illustrations by Joe Mathieu.

With Rosetta Stone he wrote the book: *Because a Little Bug went Ka-Chooooo!* (1975) illustrated by Michael Frith; Theodor spoke of this book in an interview with George Kane, on February 15, 1976, writing for *The Rocky Mountain News*: “In fact,” he said seriously, “an author failed us this year, so I wrote the book in one day. It was *Because the Small Bug Went Ka-chooooo*. The author’s name we selected for the book was Rosetta Stone”<sup>340</sup> (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 59).

### 1975 - Cloudy with a Chance of Rain

In 1975 Theodor began to have serious eye problems; “an affliction that put his livelihood in jeopardy; his eyesight began to fail, making working impossible. Three years of surgery followed before his vision improved (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 8 of 9). The overall treatment of Theodor’s eyes lasted over a five-year period with “cataract surgery, lens implants and treatments for glaucoma, leaving Ted alternately hopeful and despondent” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 227).

David Worthen, chief of ophthalmology at the University of California, San Diego, cared for Theodor and often went to Theodor’s studio to apply eye drops for several hours. Theodor “fuming at the humblings of age” concluded that: “with or without eye drops, writing and drawing is an unpleasant experience which I find myself avoiding. I’m thinking of taking up paper-hanging or mushroom farming as a new profession” (228). Audrey, previously a nurse and with credentials up to date, now “served Ted as eyes and driver” (228). Theodor having good and bad days began to write on his work specific words: “with eye drops” and “without eye drops”<sup>341</sup> (228). Art going to Random House before was book-size with “magnificently clean black lines”; but now they were “larger drawings with thicker lines, which the art director Grace Clark reduced to page size” (228). Kind words did not fail Theodor to his wife; in a drawing for Audrey he drew “a morose and droopy-eyed Cat [riding on] the shoulders of a small person who staggered down a path marked CLINICK”; and on this he wrote: “Merry Christmas, much love and Great Gratitude to my Lovely Blond Ass’t. Cat who patiently and selflessly lugs me to and

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<sup>340</sup> Theodor gave thought to every detail: Rosetta Stone, Stone being Audrey’s maiden name.

<sup>341</sup> Awareness, even in the difficult times, Theodor was conscientious about what he sent to Random House; it was important to him; it was who he was: from beginning to end, from detail to detail, stroke to stroke, letter to letter, word to word – genius. This heightened awareness weighed on his mind and revealed itself in Dr. Seuss’s books.

fro” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 228).

In this same year, 1975, *Oh, the Thinks You Can Think*, was published; in it a line read: “Think left and think right / and think low and think high. / Oh, the THINKS you can think up if only you try!” Theodor understood well how possibilities and opportunities could be brought on by thinking differently; the keys – determination and effort. Of late, it was not a pleasant task for him, writing and drawing. With the unpleasant experience with his eyes, lacking to see clearly, it affected his motivation – his “if only you try.” His eyes were connected to his voice within; they were one of the channels for his voice to speak; being the perfectionist he was, paying attention to every detail, every line, precise colors, placing text in the perfect location with the correct illustration, required his eyes to be sharp and accurate - for this was his voice. He wanted to be clear in his message.

This year was also that of recognition; it was Theodor’s fiftieth class reunion at Dartmouth. In the Baker Library, at Dartmouth College, a Dr. Seuss exhibition was being held: an exhibit of 17 cases holding Theodor’s life work was on display: “Ted’s lifework was on display” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 230). At the reception Theodor did not say anything. He was “charming” yes, but he had no words to say because at a previous appearance he resolved: “I stammered around so badly...that I [swore] then and there that *that* was my swan song” (230).

Dartmouth hailed Ted as its most influential author, the university’s interests extended beyond pride. For many years Orton Hicks, a former MGM executive who served as Dartmouth vice president, had predicted that “the Geisel’s genius might turn out to be the greatest benefaction in Dartmouth’s history,” and now it had become true. Royalty income from the Helen Geisel bequest had endowed a professorship in the humanities, and continuing royalties from Dr. Seuss books were establishing a multimillion-dollar endowment that rose beyond any other gift to Dartmouth and kept soaring.<sup>342</sup> (230)

Theodor, from the requests of friends and publishers, was making an effort at writing an autobiography but seemed to be stuck; “Ted’s old self-doubts proved overwhelming; in 1976 he began putting off further queries, pleading eye problems or gout or travel plans” (230). Edward Letham, Dean of Dartmouth’s libraries had been working with Theodor on his autobiography; a

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<sup>342</sup> Transcendence: that of helping others and going beyond SA.

part of it ended up written by Letham and found its way into the April, 1976 edition of the *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*, titled “Words and Pictures Married: The Beginnings of Dr. Seuss.” The other part, a collection of thoughts and memories were on pages and pages of paper but not put together for print. Years later, the pages were found and in Judith and Neal Morgan’s book, *Dr. Seuss & Mr. Geisel*; from the writings one can hear Theodor’s words of gratitude for people he was so thankful for: “There are hundreds of wonderful people who helped me, inspired me, encouraged me, bound up my wounds, and to the reader of the book they will mean nothing at all but I’d like to print them. To me they mean everything.”<sup>343</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 238). He went on to list the people who he specifically wanted to acknowledge:

Helen Palmer Geisel, Donald Bartlett, Saxe Commins, Jonathan Swift, Benfield Pressey, Joseph Sagmaster, Bennett Cerf, Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln Cleaves, Bill Griffin, Alexander Laing, Peggy Owens, Sir Oliver Onions, Sir William Collins, Lady Pierre Collins, Donald Klopfer, Ernest Martin Hopkins, Hugh Troy, Henry and Doris Dreyfuss, “Red” Smith, Chuck Jones, Zinny Vanderlip, Frank Capra, General Omar Bradley, Mark Twain, Keats Speed, Robert Haas, Duke Johnston, Robert Louis Stevenson, Bob Stevenson, Lt. Col. Robert Lord, Friz Freleng, Meredith Willson, Judith and Neil Morgan, Ralph Ingersoll, Geoffrey Chaucer, Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, Robert Lathrop Sharp, Ralph Boas, Norman Anthony, Dr. David Worthen, Bob Chandler, Sid Perelman, Ed Graham, Grace Clark, Bob Mosher, Robert Benchley, Dr. Solon Palmer, Russell Forester, Jack Rose, Joe Raposo, Hans Conried, Robert Bernstein, Bob Stewart, Elma Otto, Wm. Shakespeare,<sup>344</sup> J. M. Barrie, A. E. Housman, R. Kipling, Phyllis Jackson, Nevil Shute, and, of course, Audrey S. Geisel. (238)

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<sup>343</sup> Theodor knew full well that these people had helped him along his journey, personally and professionally. Listed are family members, dead writers, close friends and colleagues; people who inspired and encouraged him. A-3 Interpersonal relations were important to Theodor; he had clear admiration for those living and those who had passed.

<sup>344</sup> Honest with a sense of humor A-1; Theodor did not enjoy studying Shakespeare at Oxford but with time appreciated all who came and helped in his journey, footsteps; those long dead and those still living: living legacies who had touched and directed his steps - as he, Dr. Seuss and Theodor would also do.

1976 – Book Tours & Geisel, the Grinch Going Strong at 72

Book tours were set-up by Random House to aid in lifting Theodor's spirits as he was dealing with his eyesight. Off Theodor and Audrey went to Colorado, then to New Zealand where his friend, Sir Billy Collins, had leased a harbor ferry, hired a band to play and decorated the ferry with *Cat in the Hat* posters for the purpose of inviting fans onto the ferry for free cruises; Theodor went on the ferry two times and signed hundreds of books (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 232). Over a million and a half of Dr. Seuss's books were bought; at the time the population of New Zealand was three million (232).

In the *Christchurch Star* (New Zealand newspaper), May 6, 1976, an article titled "I can't draw – I just doodle claims Dr. Seuss in city", expressed Theodor's desire for children to learn how to read:

Children who read his books learn more than about animals. The main thing he is trying to do is to get children to read.

"My concern is to show them a word is not to be feared and that words don't bite you. Right now in the United States we have a nation of people who don't read much.

"My revolution is to try to supplant the Dick and Jane or Janet and John thing. Children don't want to read about hitting a ball with a stick."

Not least among Dr. Seuss fans are children with reading difficulties.

He has spoken to psychiatrists about this and now believes that children feel a sense of security in reading a quatrain [a stanza of four lines especially having alternate rhymes].

"They feel it is one part of the world neatly summed up."

And the following day in the same newspaper, titled: "Dr. Seuss Drops In", Theodor had become a hero through an accident: "And as Dr. Seuss he has become the most popular children's author and illustrator in history, creating the Cat and the Grinches... with millions of his books sold and every single title a bestseller, it seems ironic that Theodor Geisel refers to his Dr. Seuss role as 'a



pleasurable accident”<sup>345</sup> (“Dr. Seuss Drops In”).

Next they visited Australia; in *The West Australian* a major newspaper, on May 16, 1976, there was the headline: “The Wacky World of Dr. Seuss”, written by Neil Mercer, from Sydney, Australia; the article described the older yet energetic author and revealed the escape world Dr. Seuss had created for the children:

Sitting in a big Sydney retail store autographing his books for children Theodor Geisel looks more like a typecast university professor than an author.

Wearing a grey suit, with white shirt and big striped bow tie, his silver hair combed back, Mr. Geisel, or Dr. Seuss as he is better known, autographs probably 200 books in about 40 minutes, then leans back and sighs...

At 72, he is just slightly unsteady on his feet but none of the kids notice it as they jostle past, not quite knowing what to make of the man who draws the mad cap of characters of Seussland.<sup>346</sup>

“I haven’t done this sort of thing for about three years,” he says “but every once in a while I like to get out and meet the people who buy my books.”

Other than a friendly “thank you,” “is this your book?” and “hello” he says little to the children.

He explains: “I don’t talk to them a lot – I prefer to look into their eyes, personal contact you know. I can tell what they are thinking.”<sup>347</sup>

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<sup>345</sup> A series of “accidents” brought Theodor Geisel to Dr. Seuss: beginning at Dartmouth college or even younger with the inspiration of his parents and the city he grew up in. Nothing seemed to be by chance yet everything pointed to destiny, a calling. Theodor had often said that if he had not been walking “down the other side of Madison Avenue, I would be in the dry-cleaning business today” (Lathem 33). By observation his steps appear to have been orchestrated by something greater within, D-1 Life mission.

<sup>346</sup> Theodor had the freedom of creativity, C-2 to be inventive enough to create his own world called “Seussland.” He was truly inventive using what was in his imagination since a child.

<sup>347</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest, Theodor though he said he did not like being around children, at the same time could identify with what they were thinking, an identification with the human species, especially children. His obliteration of ego boundaries, A-3 Interpersonal relations, gave

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Strange wonderful creatures, they conduct themselves with what Mr. Geisel calls “logical insanity” and have been doing so since before the World War.

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“One thing I think is wrong with children’s books today is the way adults talk down to kids and give them all this bunny wunny stuff. I treat them as equals.”<sup>348</sup>

... Dr. Seuss explains the success of his writing.

“I think the rhyming verse is a big reason. It’s repetitious and easy to remember.

“Children are like adults. They have their own problems and I think my books are an escape world for them. They disappear into the crazy characters I draw.”

He explains that another 10 to 15 Seuss books are in the planning stage and that all he wants to do now is keep improving. And encourage children to read.<sup>349</sup>

For relaxing he goes back to the U.S., to California where one of his favorite pastimes is oil painting.

He reads a lot of nonfiction when he has time, history, books politics, biographies. Novels by Alan Moorhead (one of the finest writers of English) are devoured.<sup>350</sup>

And where do all the ideas come from? Usually from hundreds of drawings from which one small thread emerges and is built on.

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him a greater capacity for greater love, greater fusion, albeit, most would say not directly but through his books.

<sup>348</sup> Repeated again, treating his readers as equals, this gave the success and strength to his writing and to his world of imagination. Though the places in his books were zany, with crazy characters, the respect he gave to the readers, mostly children, was to no fault perfect and sound.

<sup>349</sup> Constant hunger for growth in himself and continual encouragement to children; the B-values represented: goodness, aliveness, full-functioning, richness and effortlessness in reading and learning. 6-B Actualizing one’s potential; becoming smarter, using one’s intelligence; Theodor believed and acted on these behaviors leading to on-going self-actualization.

<sup>350</sup> 1-B Experiencing fully, with full concentration and absorption, Theodor fed his mind continually.

“Most of the time I just sit down and say: ‘I hope to God I get an idea.’ Sometimes you do and sometimes you don’t.”<sup>351</sup> (Mercer)

Going home after touring the “Down Under” with great press releases, another adventure and celebration of Theodor’s life and passions were ready to go up on display. The paintings in his home were taken down for the purpose of going on the walls of a local art museum in La Jolla for a seven-week exhibit. Like his zany made up words and animals, the paintings had creative titles and funny, bizarre people in everyday situations with humor added,<sup>352</sup> for example: “My Petunia Can Lick Your Geranium”, “Joseph Katz and His Coat of Many Colors” and a woman in a coffin surrounded by daylilies, her eyes shut, on the telephone saying: “Oh, I’d love to go to the party but I’m absolutely dead” (Seuss *The Secret Art*). Where these paintings normally hung in the Geisel’s home, (but were taken down for the exhibition), in their place were replaced with “cardboard Cats holding small signs that read ‘A masterpiece is missing from this spot’”<sup>353</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 232).

“‘The Grinch’ Is Really Dr. Seuss,” title in *The Springfield Daily News*, dated December 21, 1976, warned curious fans that there was a little sign at the bottom of the hill with the words: “Beware of the cat.” Children marched up their way, “maybe 100 every Saturday,” to meet the maker of *The Cat in The Hat* and the Grinch; “They’re not afraid of the Cat in the Hat, which is stuffed, or even of Dr. Seuss, who calls himself a Grinch, but isn’t.” In the same article, Theodor said he was not a genius: “A genius? Absolutely not... My stuff is full of sweat. To get four

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<sup>351</sup> Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor with a difficult and often asked question: Theodor never had the same answer, but always used humor with all answers. As a child he decided to go for the laugh: “I began drawing pictures as a child – as I mentioned before – trying, let’s say, to get as close to a lion as possible; people would laugh, so I decided to go for the laugh” (Fensch, *Of Sneetches* 109); Theodor used this decision throughout his life and in his work: 6-B the process of actualizing one’s potential, becoming smarter, using one’ intelligence. He made conscientious steps, even as a young boy and until the day he died.

<sup>352</sup> Satire added to life’s situations makes it possible to face reality; as Theodor often said, he looked at life through the wrong end of the telescope.

<sup>353</sup> Trust: D-2 Autonomy: Theodor trusted himself in his paintings and at this point in his life, trusted his expressions in his paintings to be shared with others. He was not considered an artist but a children’s author, yet he followed his own star and was now confident to put his paintings up for display; he was revealing deeper parts of himself. His cats made him famous and these cats held the place to remind those seeing the barren places that the masterpieces would come home; later when Theodor died, truly a masterpiece of a man became missing, yet his life in paintings and books became masterpieces which live on to this day.

lines, I'll write 200."<sup>354</sup> He did however, admit to be the Grinch: "Geisel says he himself is a Grinch, 'this nasty, anti-Christmas character,' a creation that grew out of his disdain for Yuletide commercialism."<sup>355</sup> ... "Geisel, 72, said he turns out his books and animated cartoons for children – and for grownups who want to be kids"<sup>356</sup> ("The Grinch").

#### 1977 – Going Strong at 72

On March 1, 1977, *The Saturday Evening Post* published their last of three interviews with Theodor, which was titled: "Dr. Seuss at 72 – Going Like 60". Freeman wrote that Theodor was going strong at 72 with no plans of retiring, just going faster, as if he had to get all that was within him completed:<sup>357</sup>

The Who behind Who-ville is busier than ever, hurling papers and tossing drawings like a tormented Grinch, until he has wrought his next 50 pages of spellbinding magic.

With his crinkly-soft eyes, his grandly equine nose, and the loping mooselike walk, he looks for all the world as though he had sprung full-blown from his own drawing board. When you see Theodor S. Geisel plain, all that seems to be missing is his signature below, two words warmly familiar to millions of children the world over and their grateful parents. The two words are — Dr. Seuss.<sup>358</sup>

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<sup>354</sup> Theodor knew full well the effort he put into his work; this was no trifle job; he was aware: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: he himself would not fool himself or others of the long hours and work put into each book. It was his life mission D-1, and it demanded much of his energy.

<sup>355</sup> 1-V Truth: Theodor sought after the true meaning and with Christmas the meaning was adulterated by commercialism; the true essence of Christmas was lessened. 10-V Simplicity: the heart of the matter, only that which is necessary, nothing superfluous, the Grinch saw it differently, Christmas corrupted; yet in the end, Theodor discovered that Christmas rests in the heart of mankind and that giving is a part of loving and therefore Christmas.

<sup>356</sup> They say there is a kid in every one of us; Theodor never lost his childish appreciation for laughter and making fun of everyday situation. Being a grownup to Theodor seemed to mean that life was not to be funny, but serious. He always went for the laugh, even in serious situations to bring a point across.

<sup>357</sup> September, 12, 1971, in *The Springfield Republican* newspaper, Theodor said: "I want to write an opera. About what? I don't know; that's why I haven't done it. But I've done so much lyric writing in putting the television things together that I'd like to do an opera... There's a ballet I designed that's running around now unfulfilled..." (Vils). These ideas running around in his head kept him motivated right until death. They were alive and needed to be expressed.

<sup>358</sup> Theodor S. Geisel and Dr. Seuss were two in one; the public recognized this and stated it. D-1 Life mission: Theodor's search for his identity came through Dr. Seuss. Dr. Seuss was the means by which Theodor found excitement, fascination, and the cause outside himself which

They are, of course, one and the same — Ted Geisel of La Jolla, California, and Dr. Seuss, the pseudonym he has employed for over 40 years while writing and illustrating, very slowly and with the deepest pains of creation, his forty-odd children's books that have sold over 70 million copies. A number of the Seuss stories have been adapted by Geisel himself into animated television musicals, one having brought him the prestigious Peabody Award.<sup>359</sup>

“Counting Lewis Carroll and allowing for A.A. Milne,” an observer once noted, “Dr. Seuss has become the most important name ever pressed on a children's book jacket.” The late Bennett Cerf, Seuss's publisher at Random House, once declared: “I've published any number of great writers, from William Faulkner to John O'Hara, but there's only one genius on my authors' list. His name is Ted Geisel.”<sup>360</sup>

Geisel shrugs off the compliment, whipping a hand through his unkempt silver-gray hair. “If I were a genius,” he demands, logically, “why do I have to sweat so hard at my work? I know my stuff all looks like it was rattled off in 23 seconds, but every word is a struggle and every sentence is like the pangs of birth.” Geisel, in the jargon of the writer's trade, is a bleeder. Each of his illustrated books, none over 50 pages, requires a year or more of intense Seussian gestation.<sup>361</sup>

Unconcerned about his genius standing, Dr. Seuss's juvenile readers have responded through the years with their own brightly turned words of praise. “Dr. Seuss,” wrote one admiring child, “you have an imagination with a long tail!” (“Now there,” says Geisel, “is a kid who's going places!”) “This is the funniest book I ever read in nine years,” a nine-year-old wrote to Seuss. Another wrote about a Seuss book: “All would like it from age 6 to 44 — that's how old my mother is.” An eight-year-old wrote the letter that Geisel finds most perplexing: “Dear Dr. Seuss, you sure thunk up a lot of funny

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paradoxically became the defining characteristic of himself, but then, Theodor never did things in a usual way, paradoxes fit him well.

<sup>359</sup> The Peabody Award is given each year to “honor the most powerful, enlightening, and invigorating stories in television, radio, and online media” (Peabody.com).

<sup>360</sup> Theodor not only Dr. Seuss was duly recognized as a genius; his D-1 life mission: writing for children, this was accounted for by a dear friend and publisher of Random House, Bennett Cerf.

<sup>361</sup> Honesty, with a sense of humor A-1: Theodor knew himself well and shared this with the world. 1-B Experiencing fully, total absorption was required for this “genius” to appear. To Theodor it was not genius, but a year of conception and development in the mind and on paper; comparing it to birth pains.

books. You sure thunk up a million funny animals . . . Who thunk you up, Dr. Seuss?"

Geisel admits that he thunk up Dr. Seuss with relative ease... The "Dr." preceding Seuss still bestirs some confusion among those who are uncertain of his profession. Invited to a state dinner at the White House in 1970, Geisel *was* non-puzzled to see himself on the guest list as Dr. Theodor Seuss Geisel.<sup>362</sup>

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At 72, still coltish and youthful, Ted Geisel says that he has heightened his pace with age. A late riser, he usually puts in an eight-hour day at the desk and drawing board in his expansive studio, with illustrations for his current project lining the walls. If the work is going well, he may press on for 10 or 12 hours, slowly, meticulously, painfully, and usually into the night. "At night," he explains, "nobody calls you on the phone and tries to sell you insurance."

Geisel views himself essentially as a writer who draws. "I'm a writer who throws in the drawings for free," he says. "The drawing is fun, the writing is murder." When the words won't come, Geisel will stare morosely out at the Pacific. And if the creative well turns temporarily to dust, he may topple his lean, 6-foot frame on a nearby couch, groaning and thrashing the air. For every 60 pages of manuscript he deems usable, he hurls at least 500 pages into the wastebasket. Ninety-five percent of his drawings he tosses angrily on the floor. The efforts he would formerly throw away he now dispatches, at the university's request, to the UCLA library, which also contains the original drawings and manuscripts of most of Seuss's works.

He bristles at talk of retirement. "People of my age are all retiring," he says, "which is something I would never want for myself. I'm afraid the average guy enjoys his retirement because he never enjoyed his work. I've got more things I want to do now than ever."<sup>363</sup> (Freeman)

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<sup>362</sup> Theodor accepted the fact that Dr. Seuss and Geisel worked together and were one, even though they were quite opposites in reality; Theodor shy and timid, Dr. Seuss outspoken and rash: 4a-V Dichotomy: antagonists collaborating together to enhance each other.

<sup>363</sup> This life mission D-1, inside of Theodor was pushing its way out; needing to be expressed. Awareness: Theodor had the ability to know what was going on inside himself; he was aware of his world. Trust: his mission in life kept him moving; D-2 Autonomy: he was independent of

Change, if necessary, was good; if not, there would be no changing the script according to Dr. Seuss. Theodor had become the target of women's liberal groups; Freeman continued:

At once, he says, he began receiving almost identically phrased letters (“with the same words misspelled”) from 15 cities scattered across the country. All complained about a line in his book *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*, published in 1937. The story, a testimony to the power of a child's imagination, dwells on a young boy who walks along Mulberry Street and sees a car and a horse. He continues to imagine other improbable occurrences, but one flight of fantasy he dismisses as too pedestrian. Referring to his little sister, the boy says: “Even Jane could think of it.”

“Suddenly, after all these years, I'm deluged with protests over that one line,” says Geisel. “They say that line will cause boys to grow up feeling superior to their sisters. They demanded that I change the line. I wrote back saying that I agree with some of their goals and I know their request may be well-intentioned. But the boy in my story did feel that way about his sister and I wasn't about to change a word.”<sup>364</sup>

Another letter brought a similar feminist complaint. It seems that the works of Dr. Seuss had been put through a computer and it was concluded that 99 percent of the animal creatures he drew in them were male. “The woman who wrote to me said this was demeaning and why didn't I draw females?” says Geisel. “I wrote back that I was ashamed of my oversight but I've got this problem — I asked her, did you ever try to draw a female hippo-griff?”<sup>365</sup>

Geisel concedes that he has never had the knack of drawing females of any kind. In 1939, he wrote a humor book for adults called *The Seven Lady Godivas*. As he recalls, thumbing through the pages, “I tried to draw my Godivas as very sexy babes. But look at

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others around him retiring; he made up his own mind what needed to be done; what he himself wanted to yet do.

<sup>364</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: Theodor empathized with the intention of the group but would not change his script as it was exactly how the boy felt; he was secure in his writing; B-4 Ethical awareness: Theodor was not a writer to follow conventional means; he meant what he wrote, and he meant what he said. C-3 Spontaneity: the naturalness of this boy's response was with a lack of pretense, it was natural; Theodor would not be an actor to this audience; he guarded his freedom in creativity.

<sup>365</sup> Humor, honesty, freedom, awareness and trust - all wrapped in the satire of Dr. Seuss, all becoming of Theodor Seuss Geisel. It became who he was.

them here — they're neuter and sexless and they have no shape at all."<sup>366</sup> (Freeman)

In this same month as the published interview, March 1977, Phyllis Jackson, Theodor's agent of thirty years, died of a sudden heart attack; he was shocked and devastated. Theodor had dedicated the book, *Did I Ever Tell You How Lucky You Are?* to her in 1973. To deal with his grief and gratitude to Phyllis, he wrote a poem titled "How Long is Long" and the dedication read, "with all my love."<sup>367</sup>

"I'll be seein' ya," I said.  
 And I said, "So long!"  
 When you say So Long  
 it's not usually too long...  
 But sometimes  
 So Long  
 is forever.  
 So...  
 So Long,  
 Pal,  
 I guess I won't be seein' ya." (Rebor)

#### 1977 - Honorary Doctorate – Lake Forest College

In the Lake Forest Spectrum, on May 1977, the headline read: "Is it cat, Grinch or moose? No, by golly, it's Dr. Seuss!":

Theodor Seuss Geisel, the beloved "Dr. Seuss" who wrote *The Cat in the Hat*, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* and other children's classics, will deliver the commencement

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<sup>366</sup> Humor with himself allowed Theodor freedom to be creative, spontaneous and detached. 7-B Transient realization and actualization in knowing what he himself did well, and did not do well. Very early on, even as a child, he often said he could not draw animals correctly, getting their knees and elbows in the wrong places, so he decided to go for the laugh; 8-B Theodor found out what he could do and this directed him to his mission in life – illustrating and writing for children; 6-B the process of actualizing one's potential and using one's intelligence.

<sup>367</sup> Phyllis Jackson, started working with Theodor at the onset of his career as a child author, in the mid 40's. It was she who also saw his potential and drew it out, leading him and guiding him along a very successful career. It is said we become like our friends; Theodor made a wise choice in choosing Phyllis to represent him as his agent. She helped him find out who he would become 8-B – finding out who one is.



address at Lake Forest College on June 4. He also will receive an honorary doctor of humane letters degree.

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Geisel wrote scores of imaginative and funny verse-stories which have helped generations of children learn to read.<sup>368</sup> With the publication of his early books, *And to Think that I Saw It on Mulberry Street* (1937) and *Horton Hatches the Egg* (1940), the Dr. Seuss name became a household word. What child of the '50s and '60s doesn't remember fantasizing<sup>369</sup> with *If I Ran the Circus*, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, *Yertle the Turtle*, *Green Eggs and Ham*, *Hop on Pop*, and *The Cat in the Hat?* Geisel has produced academy award winning documentaries for movies and the academy award cartoon, Gerald McBoing Boing. His animated TV shows include *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* and *Horton Hears a Who*, both Peabody Award winners, and *The Lorax*, which won the Critic's award at the International Animated Festival in Zagreb, Yugoslavia. ("Is it cat")

On June 4, 1977, Theodor was honored with another degree, Doctor of Humane Letters, from Lake Forest College:

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<sup>368</sup> Helping generations of children to read was no small task; known for writing imaginative and funny verse-stories, perhaps this was and is a key in helping children to learn and to read – imagination and laughter.

<sup>369</sup> Fantasizing, allowing one's mind to dream big, to pretend, to build castles in one's mind. Beth Webb, for *The Guardian* wrote: "Fantasy is vital for the human mind. It begins as the psychological process by which a child learns to fill the gaps between knowledge, reality and experience, and becomes a vital adult coping mechanism." She ended with:

"Taking one step away from reality to that 'safe' place of pretend, prepares us to look the world's harsh realities in the face. From there we can name the horrors and celebrate the joys before going back, with a clearer perspective on situations that bother us." (Webb, Beth)

Theodor said: "I like nonsense, it wakes up the brain cells. Fantasy is a necessary ingredient in living; it's a way of looking at life through the wrong end of a telescope. Which is what I do, and that enables you to laugh at life's realities." Fantasy helps to connect the unknown with the known, both in childhood and adulthood. Self-actualization being an on-going process according to Maslow, demands detachment C-1, creativity C-2, and spontaneity C-3, in one's mind; this requires alone time to fantasize to find out what is within and where one is going. Theodor encouraged children in his books to fantasize, to dream, to go beyond the borders of what they were taught was right and wrong, what was possible to the impossible; to be a child, to learn, to experiment, even in one's mind.

THEODOR SEUSS GEISEL: Author, illustrator, humorist. As Dr. Seuss, you are known to all who sit before you, young and old, as the author of some forty books wherein floppy, nonsense characters romp around, encouraging and intensifying the reader's imagination,<sup>370</sup> and as the creator of TV specials, including one in which Christmas is actually stolen by a Grinch. You have been the recipient of praise and barbs from literary critics, and of love and idolatry by youth of all ages; it hardly matters whether the creature in the Hat is a cat, a chat, a gatto, or a neck. How did you earn that doctorate before your middle name? The Geisel home in Springfield, Massachusetts, was far removed indeed from today's Southern California haunts of Dr. Seuss' and I speak with experience that there is no magic to a Dartmouth education which could so transform you.<sup>371</sup> From the Hanover plain you headed to Oxford, to prepare yourself for a teaching career. Was it after student Geisel became an Oxford dropout that Dr. Seuss was conceived, when you travelled by motorcycle through France knowing only enough of the language to say "no fish today"? It was there you wooed your wife, and thus gained a literary collaborator and partner, after introducing yourself to her mother by offering her your calling card. Yes, there was a bit of the good doctor's whimsy in you then. Returning to the States half a century ago, you became a cartoonist, humorist, and advertising genius, and created the series so eagerly anticipated and warmly received by my generation, "Quick, Henry, the Flit." All this time, and during the war years, too, the Dr. Seuss we know today, first tested by all that you saw on Mulberry Street in 1937, was reaching maturity, and he earned his license to practice in the post-war years. And so you

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<sup>370</sup> Fantasy was used by Theodor to push the imagination in the readers: "encouraging and intensifying the reader's imagination" seemingly to push one to the limits, to excitement, to the border where the unknown is waiting, anticipating. Theodor was honest with his readers in his relationships, A-3 Interpersonal relationships, in that he wanted to take them further in their imagination; Theodor used his own awareness to develop peak experiences B-3, in his books with his "nonsense characters"; one experienced limitless horizons, endless possibilities.

<sup>371</sup> Theodor was noted as "transformed"; an on-going process of self-actualization, of making better choices, of being confident in one's self, of knowing what one is good at and what one is not good at, of experiencing fully, with full concentration and absorption – this is how Theodor became transformed. The speech goes over the life of Theodor and the transformation from Theodor Seuss Geisel to Dr. Theodor Seuss Geisel, not only Dr. Seuss.

became a teacher after all, not as Dr. Geisel but as Dr. Seuss.<sup>372</sup> The genre you have developed out of your zeal and your unremitting labors combines basic words with line illustrations in delightfully absurd stories in which kids win; its success has displaced, nay overwhelmed, poor Dick and Jane.<sup>373</sup> Your tales are happy ones, unlike those of the brothers Grimm; your stories are of children in a children's imaginary world, rather than in the adult fantasy world of Hans Christian Andersen. Like those for whom you write, you are also shy and reticent<sup>374</sup> in spite of the fame and funds your work has accorded you. Your honors are lengthy and include numerous books and television prizes, and three Academy Awards, two of which were presented for serious documentaries thus illustrating another, often unrecognized, side of Dr. Geisel, the Teacher. We welcome you to this platform, and with our hood we proclaim you not the "Cat in the Hat" but the "Seuss in the Noose" as we award you, Theodor Seuss Geisel,<sup>375</sup> our distinguished degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, honoris causa, and admit you to all the rights and privileges appertaining thereto. ("Honorary Degree from Lake Forest College")

Not only was Theodor given another honorary doctorate, he was the commencement speaker which he only discovered in the car on the way to the program; for this he wrote an eighteen-line speech, titled: "My Uncle Terwilliger on the Art of Eating Popovers"; it took seventy-five seconds to deliver<sup>376</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 234):

My uncle ordered popovers  
 from the restaurant's bill of fare.  
 And when they were served,  
 he regarded them

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<sup>372</sup> Theodor became a teacher through Dr. Seuss; 4a-V the dichotomy between the two mutually enhancing each other. Through Dr. Seuss, Theodor himself later, with time and 40 published books, gained yet another degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, thus becoming a renowned teacher known as Dr. Theodor Seuss Geisel.

<sup>373</sup> Lake Forest College acknowledged the D-1 Life mission of Theodor Seuss Geisel.

<sup>374</sup> The dichotomy of opposites is seen in this speech: Dr. Seuss's floppy and nonsense characters which encourage the imagination to intensity, compared to a man who is shy and reserved who prefers not the lime light or the audience of large groups.

<sup>375</sup> Through Dr. Seuss, Theodor Seuss Geisel found his freedom and was released to voice what was speaking deep within; the two dichotomies were acknowledged and honored.

<sup>376</sup> Like a bullet hitting the bull's eye, few word were needed; Theodor delivered the speech with clarity, precision and humor.

with a penetrating stare...  
 Then he's full of great Words of Wisdom  
 as he sat there on that chair:  
 "To eat these things,"  
 said my uncle,  
 "you must exercise great care.  
 You may swallow down what's solid...  
 BUT...  
 you *must* spit out the air!"  
 And...  
 As *you* partake of the world's bill of fare,  
 that's darned good advice to follow.  
 Do a lot of spitting out the hot air.  
 And be careful what you swallow.

After Theodor's speech the crowd went mad:

As Ted sat down, there was bedlam. Students shouted, cheered and flung their caps into the air. He was startled, for it was his first experience with the fervor with which many young Americans had begun to canonize Dr. Seuss. These graduates were of the generation most critical of the Vietnam war, and from their earliest memories of Dr. Seuss books they had assumed that he too must be skeptical of the establishment. Now they'd heard evidence from the master's lips.<sup>377</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 235)

In the same year, Theodor was awarded an Emmy for "Halloween Is Grinch Night" — Best Children's Special, 1977. 1977 was quite the year.

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<sup>377</sup> A father's hope of Theodor becoming a professor from his studies at Oxford were more than realized years later, yet in a greater way; Theodor was considered a "master" in the field of children's literature and in the philosophy of life. The classroom would have been too small for what was inside Theodor; as he grew in his life, the seed within him needed freedom and space, the ability to be spontaneous, to create and develop, to be outside the classroom of a university; and as he created he trusted more and more himself and what he needed to do, his life's work D-1.

## 1978 – Eyes Open for All

After many tours, awards, and speeches, in 1978, Theodor published a new book for the Beginner Book series called: *I Can Read with My Eyes Shut!* It was dedicated to his eye surgeon, David Worthen, E.G. (Eye Guy), in celebration of reading and seeing. Cathy Goldsmith came on board at Random House as the new art director and worked with Theodor on this book and remembered her first encounter with him: “a tall, imposing figure with a wicked sense of humor.”<sup>378</sup> ‘I had no idea what to call him when I first met him,’ Ms. Goldsmith said. ‘No one else called him Dr. Seuss.’ He finally noticed that she was awkwardly avoiding using his name, and told her to call him Ted” (Alter).

In *The San Diego Union* newspaper, dated Sunday, May 28, 1978, Dr. Seuss published a poem titled, “A Small Epic Poem”; this he had written the day before for the *American Booksellers Association* convention in Atlanta (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 235):

By Dr. Seuss

As everyone present undoubtedly knows...

Due to a prenatal defect in my nose...

(Which seems to get worse the longer it grows)

I am completely incapable of speaking in prose,

Especially so early in the morning.

Most all other great poets, such as Shelley and Keats,

had this identical problem when they stood on their feets

When they tried to speak prose, they invariably blew it.

Not even the great Geoffrey Chaucer could do it.

Especially so early in the morning.

There are so many things I might say at this time.

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<sup>378</sup> Humor A-1, Cathy noted this immediately.

But I can't.

Because not a damned one of them rhyme.

And how lucky you are that I have this defect.

Thank your stars I can't talk normal English correct.

If I could speak prose.

I've a real sneaky hunch that I'd stand up here  
gassing.

Til a quarter past lunch.

I'd start and sound off, using fine prosy clauses,  
explaining innumerable indigent flawses

Existent within the new copyright lawses.

And then I'd continue without any pauses, and take  
up the matter of hiff-alon hooks, which are used by  
the guys who stitch backbones on books.

I'd discuss Russian limericks and why they don't  
write 'em. And Eskimo children and how to delight  
'em.

And the fingernail problem and why not to bite  
'em. And then I'd go ud in-fin-it-ty-tum.

I'd discuss Norman Mailer and why not to fight 'im.

If I could speak prose,

You would be in a fix.

I'd harangue you poor people til quarter to six about  
Watergate memoirs and Richard the Nix. But I can't  
because Richard and poetry don't mix.

So...

Why am I here on this 27<sup>th</sup> of May...? that I can  
speak of.

I've come to convey

In a most humble way

The thanks of all authors to the ABA.

Were it not for our friends in the old ABA,

Every one of us authors, I vouch safe to say,

Would be engaged in the dry cleaning business  
today.

And I'd never have been here

This fine morning.<sup>379</sup> (Seuss. "A Small Epic Poem")

*Architectural Digest* was welcomed into the Geisel home that fall where they  
photographed the Tower and the home where Theodor found inspiration and where many special

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<sup>379</sup> Theodor as he was more and more comfortable with himself and the path he was on, shared his heart of gratitude. It was an act of realization of his self-actualization. His gratitude was given with humor and sincerity; his life was one of full concentration and absorption in all that he put his hand and mind to do. Looking back at his life, he trusted himself and the mission of writing and illustrating for children. He also knew where his strength lay, not in writing prose but in rhyme. He was not a man to blab on about endless chatter; he used words and images precisely, poignantly and with great affect and with this speech the entire point was to say thank you to the American Booksellers Association for their support.

guests had been welcomed, entertained, laughed and wore hats that came out of his secret closet. It was a rare look into the home of a very private yet famous man.<sup>380</sup>

#### 1979 – Theodor Geisel Turns 75!

The Morgan's described an account of Theodor's 75th birthday celebration. Jeanne Jones, a friend of the Geisel's invited to her home twenty couples to celebrate Theodor's birthday. Each couple was asked to contribute seventy-five dollars for a gift of golden Cat-in-the-Hat cufflinks; "Ted learned of the solicitation after the event and wrote chagrined thank-you notes to all guests, but thereafter wore the cufflinks with pride" (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 239). Fan mail increased with his seventy-fifth birthday, "about 1,300 a week during 1979" (241); Theodor responded with hand-lettered Cat-in-the-Hat notepaper to a selection of fans that Random House would send to his home in La Jolla. Interviews came from all over the country and in the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, Theodor responded to the question of why he wrote:

I tend basically to exaggerate in life, and in writing, it's fine to exaggerate. I really enjoy overstating for the purpose of getting a laugh. It's very flattering, that laugh,<sup>381</sup> and at the same time it gives pleasure to the audience and accomplishes more than writing very serious things. For another thing, writing is easier than digging ditches. Well, actually that's an exaggeration. It isn't. (240)

Requests came for Theodor to appear on National TV, including the *Today* show and Johnny Carson, which he denied (240). In this year, 1979, *Oh Say Can You Say?*, the second book of tongue twisters was published. In an interview for the *Washington Post*, May 21, 1979, before the book was published, Cynthia Gorney wrote about how Theodor was looking for the perfect color of green for the color of the parrot, which would grace the cover and be a companion throughout the book:

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<sup>380</sup> Theodor trusted himself enough to share his secret world, his private home with the world; it is here where his inspiration was put on paper, here where close friends were welcomed in to be entertained and laugh, here where the many hundreds of hats were worn for a good laugh and now here where the world could look in to see just a glimpse of a place where he called home.

<sup>381</sup> "That laugh" was very important to Theodor. [There is a need to do more research on the power of laughter.] Exaggeration used to create laughter is more powerful than writing on serious matters, according to Theodor; more can be accomplished.



In his new book, a volume of tongue twisters coming out in the fall, Geisel has drawn a green parrot. He has studied all the colors on the Random House art department printing chart – his usual procedure – looking for the printer’s ink shade that most closely matches his working drawings in colored pencil. There are 60 different shades of green on the chart, and Geisel cannot find the right one. This one is too yellow, that one is too red. He does not explain to the art department why each green is wrong – just not parrotty enough, or something.

They know better than to ask. They will have the printer make up the precise shade of green. (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 86)

Grace Clarke, executive art director at Random House junior books division remarked on Theodor’s sense of color: “His color sense, ... is the most sophisticated I’ve ever run into”<sup>382</sup> (Fensch *Of Sneetches* 86). This was during the time he had had one cataract removed from his right eye two years earlier, then forced to relearn color and was waiting to have another cataract removed from the other eye. The corrected eye saw brilliant color while “the other eye, which still has a small cataract, sees everything like Whistler’s Mother” (86). Once the cataract was removed, Theodor said, “they claim I’ll be as good as Picasso” (86).

1980 – Honorary Degree from Whittier College Doctor of Literature & Bright Colors Again!

On May 31, 1980, Theodor Geisel was given another Honorary Doctorate from Whittier College; the program read:

Whittier College

Upon the recommendation of the Faculty and by the authority of the Board of Trustees  
has admitted to the degree of

Doctor of Literature

Theodor Seuss Geisel

With all the rights and privileges thereunto pertaining

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<sup>382</sup> Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: Theodor had as Maslow wrote, sharper vision, could see color differences, a born perception of seeing clearly.

Given at Whittier, California, this thirty-first day of May, nineteen hundred eighty.  
 (“1980 – Honorary Degree”)

A letter with a gold seal and a purple and gold ribbon at the bottom under the seal had this to say about Theodor Geisel:

#### THEODOR SEUSS GEISEL

Dr. Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known to the literate world as Dr. Seuss, is the creator of a zany menagerie of golliwog-eyed creatures blessed with “logical insanity.” His artistic genius has produced half a hundred books which have sold more than ten million copies. He has written three Academy Award-winning documentary films. And he has changed the lives of millions of devoted readers and viewers across the face of earth. He writes for young people and their parents, whom he identified as “obsolete children.”<sup>383</sup>

Dr. Geisel is among those gifted with the ability to add joy to the lives of others, where often there is little to suggest a smile. His contributions to those learning to read are legion. As a literary emancipator, he has freed many who have been shackled by verbal tedium.<sup>384</sup>

*The Cat in the Hat* and other beginner books have enabled good teachers everywhere to bring new excitement to the skill of gaining meaning from the printed page. Many of our graduates today are among those who loved and memorized every line of *Yertle the Turtle*. Their parents well recall turning to Dr. Seuss when they heard that universal plea: read me a story.<sup>385</sup>

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<sup>383</sup> “Logical insanity” and “obsolete children” are related in their polarities; adults prefer logic and children tend toward insanity; these two phrases are related in that the two are brought together in Dr. Seuss’ books creating a bridge between the two worlds; children go into insanity to find relief and fantasy for their mind and at the end of the story return to the adult world of logic to keep the parents happy and stable.

<sup>384</sup> Theodor’s gifts were recognized as a writer who had freed a legion of children from learning to read through boredom to learning to read with joy, even for those who had little to smile about; he placed hope in their world. This was his life mission D-1.

<sup>385</sup> Theodor gave teachers the tool whereby excitement was placed back in the book, in the classroom. He also gave parents books to read to their children at night; books that didn’t put the parents to sleep while reading but which could be read time and time again, with no boredom.

It is only appropriate, that this distinguished artist and author become an official Poet, a member of the Whittier family. Therefore, President Mills, it is our pleasure to present Dr. Theodor Seuss Geisel...Dr. Seuss...for the Honorary Degree DOCTOR OF LITERATURE.<sup>386</sup>

Commencement 1980. (“1980 – Honorary Degree”)

In July of this same year, Theodor was given the “Laura Ingalls Wilder Award” by the American Library Association for his substantial and lasting contributions to children’s literature;<sup>387</sup> this was a very prestigious award.

In an interview with Jonathan Cott, who wrote, *Pipers at the Gates of Dawn, The Wisdom of Children’s Literature*, Theodor spoke of retirement: his love of what he does and the way he saw after surgery. Looking down at the Pacific Ocean with dozens of sailboats he said,

“Those are some of my retired friends down there, but retirement’s not for me! ... For me, success means doing work that you love, regardless of how much you make.<sup>388</sup> I go into my office almost every day and give it eight hours – though every day isn’t productive, of course. And just now,” he added, putting on a pair of glasses, “I’ve slowed down because of my second cataract operation. It was impossible for me to mix a pallet – I didn’t know which colors were which. With my cataract I had two color schemes - red became orange, blue became slightly greenish: my left eye was like Whistler and the right one was like Picasso – seeing things straight and clear in primitive colors.” (Cott 15)

1981 – 1982 Dr. Seuss’s Birthday Becomes a National Event & an Emmy Award

The following year, 1981, Governors of several states declared that Dr. Seuss’s 77th birthday was to become Dr. Seuss Day. Theodor finding motivation began working on a big book, *Hunches in Bunches*, the last big book had been nine years earlier; a year later on October 12, 1982, the book was published. This book was inspired as a result of his frustrations in the “disabled years” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 246). At the same time, he was working

<sup>386</sup> Verification of self-actualizing, an on-going process in the life of Theodor Seuss Geisel.

<sup>387</sup> Theodor’s footprints were leaving “substantial and lasting contributions” – stepping stones and dinosaur prints were in the making.

<sup>388</sup> 1-B Experiencing fully: vividly, with full concentration and absorption, Theodor continued to follow his life mission of writing and illustrating children’s books. He had a task outside himself which required much of his energy and attention.

on this book, Theodor had a minor heart attack; for years he had been a chain smoker, trying to give it up at times but found the most difficult part about stopping was that smoking helped him when talking to people on the phone “to ease the embarrassment of talking to someone” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 246). Humor seemed to creep into every aspect of Theodor’s life, even the act of trying to stop smoking:

Ted’s approach to abstinence was Seussian. Twenty years earlier, when he had last tried to quit smoking, he had chewed for days on a corncob pipe and diverted himself by planting strawberry seeds in it. He found his old pipe, filled it with peat moss and planted radish seeds. Audrey brought a medicine dropper to his bedside and another to his studio. Each time he wanted a cigarette, he watered his pipe and clenched it between his teeth.<sup>389</sup> (246)

On September 19, 1982, Theodor was awarded his second Emmy for: *The Grinch Grinches* and *The Cat in the Hat — Best Children’s Special* (“Accolades and Honors”).

### 1983 - Challenges of a Genius

In the beginning of 1983, Theodor was on the verge of signing a \$10-million-dollar contract with the manufacturer Coleco, to create a Dr. Seuss line of goods. At the same time, he was diagnosed with cancer under his tongue from decades of smoking (Dr Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary, Part 8 of 9). Deciding against radiation, an implant was put in. The deal with Coleco was put off until 1987; Theodor preferred to buy-out his contract because he never liked the face of the Coleco Cat; “it wasn’t his Cat in the Hat” and “his priorities never had much to do with money” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 259-260). Jed Mattes, Theodor’s agent from 1977 to 1989 said: “It kind of stabbed at the heart of the agent whose job is to get as much money for his client. Ted was not indifferent to money; he liked making money but it was never the primary objective”<sup>390</sup> (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 8 of 9).

After weeks of great pain, Audrey and Theodor were invited by Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip to come aboard the British royal yacht, *Britannia*; “she found his books charming” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 249). Yet Theodor’s health continued to not fare well; the

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<sup>389</sup> A-1 Sense of humor: this was only as Theodor would do, and it was considered Seussian.

<sup>390</sup> Theodor’s life calling was greater than himself; writing books for children, using humor to address social, environmental and political issues were his priority, leaving lasting footprints.

cancer had spread to a lymph node on his neck. On December 16, 1983, a part of his neck was removed to take out the cancer; pain remained for three months (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 253).

Theodor did not like to talk about his pain. Janet Schulman, Theodor's editor, would call to ask how he was doing: "When I would call him and ask how he's doing, he would just skip that question and go on to what's new in New York or Random House or something" ("Dr. Seuss' - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary", Part 8 of 9). Audrey, speaking about her husband's health said: "To me it was maintenance; it didn't matter what system had a problem, we'd get it going and it will be fine" (Part 8 of 9). Jed Mattes credited Audrey for giving extra life and vigor to Theodor: "I often said she was like a geisha; her job was taking care of Ted. Audrey added many constructive years to Ted's life. Unquestionably he went out with Audrey a lot and I think that also helped keep him alive and lively" (Part 8 of 9). Even in pain, being a prankster and enjoying a good laugh, Neil Morgan recounted a time when they were at a charity ball held at a La Jolla department store. Theodor was nowhere to be found; "He was in a department store with a marker and writing down, changing the prices of the shoes. He thought they were too expensive, Ferragamo shoes" ("Dr. Seuss' - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary", Part 8 of 9).

The general public loved and supported Dr. Seuss through this time. Being the private individual he was, most were not aware of what he was dealing with. On July 28, 1983, Theodor received a letter from Mary A. Ashe, a resident of his childhood hometown of Springfield, Massachusetts.

Dear Dr. Seuss:

Springfield natives never forget their initial environment, but just as reminder I feel I would like to share with you one of my memories I am sure you will enjoy:

At the X in Springfield, there is a family type restaurant, known as Jaycox. We in the business world, at the time in mention, had a social-business meeting place at noontime, where hamburgs [*sic*] never tasted so good and friends shared their open thinking during their short lunch period reprieve from the adversities of the morning hours. Your father was one of these people.

Each of our group chose to explain an approaching vacation time, lest it be thought we were ill or otherwise met up with unpleasantries. Your father's explanation was always

the same... "I'm going out to see my boy". On his return, one of the group would ask -- "How is he doing?" His answer to the question -- "He seems to be doing well". Knowing the celebrity his "boy" was, and knowing his feelings of pride for his "boy", we would chuckle affectionately at his modesty. He was truly a remarkable person, so kind and deep feeling for all.

With all the changes that are occurring in the present world, it is great to think back a bit on pleasant days gone by. We could never put this group back together, some like your father had passed on, others, like myself are enjoying retirement and some have left the area.... but memories will always remain.

Congratulations on your 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. Your many years of filling children with laughter must be most rewarding.

Many more years of health and happiness.

Best regards,  
Mary A. Ashe (Ashe)

Theodor responded with a line drawing of the Cat in the Hat and these words:

I wish I had met Mary Ashe at the X! (these words are in a cloud beside the Cat in the Hat).

And SO DO I!

Your letter, with its  
recollections of my father  
and the noontime meetings  
at Jaycox, was one of  
the most heartwarming  
letters I have ever  
received.

Thank you so much  
for the great pleasure  
of sharing those memories

with me.

Ted Geisel<sup>391</sup> (Ashe)

#### 1984 – *The Butter Battle Book*

At the same time, while dealing with his health, Theodor had within himself a message to deliver to the world dealing with the arms race between the Soviet Union and the United States, an anti-war book.<sup>392</sup> It is said the words came first for this book, *The Butter Battle Book*, then the pictures (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 250). The title as well as the book and the illustrations came under great scrutiny. “For the first time in memory, editors questioned a Dr. Seuss text... ‘a bit too terrifying’ and urged a new ending to reassure children that the Yooks and Zooks would not destroy each other – ‘an illusion that I think children are entitled to have’” (250). Several times, changes were tried to be made, but Theodor stood resilient on what he had created;<sup>393</sup> Audrey also stood beside her husband on the title, *The Butter Battle Book*; in the end, no changes were made and the book was published on Theodor’s eightieth birthday, March 2, 1984, and dedicated: For Audrey, with love. The critics came out, the newspapers were reporting with questions over the controversial topic and the not so childlike happy ending parents were writing letters for and against: “it was the first time in his career Ted Geisel received hate mail from his parents who accused him of scaring their children with a prospect of Armageddon” (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 8 of 9).

Yet after publishing the controversial book, Theodor won the Pulitzer Prize for children’s

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<sup>391</sup> Theodor was appreciative of the kindness people showed him; his interpersonal relationships A-3, were from a distance and held qualities of deep admiration. His father was one of his heroes, according to the book, *If I Ran the Circus*, for the dedication is written: “This book is for my Dad, Big Ted of Springfield / The Finest Man I’ll Ever know.”

<sup>392</sup> A-2 Social interest: was always on Theodor’s mind, feeling a sense of identification with the human species; from early on in his childhood to this point, he was familiar with war and the effects it had. His voice was always heard at these times.

<sup>393</sup> This book, *The Butter Battle Book*, was from Theodor, a clear view of reality, what he saw; B-1 Efficient perception of reality: he knew clearly what he wanted to say; he would not be conned into changing the title; B-4 Ethical awareness: in Theodor was absolute; his inner supreme court would not allow for discussion or changing of the title to create an illusion for the children.

literature.<sup>394</sup>

In the spring of 1984 an Associated Press reporter phoned to say that Ted had won a Pulitzer Prize—a special citation “for his contribution over nearly half a century to the education and enjoyment of America’s children and their parents.” Ted was flabbergasted: “It comes right out of left field, particularly after all these years.” One judge said the proposal to award a Pulitzer to Dr. Seuss, initiated by San Diego newspaper editors, had met with “as close to immediate unanimity” as any he recalled. After that first phone call, Ted said, “all hell broke loose.” Although he refused to allow television “to set up all that gear here in my studio,” the prize brought him a flurry of exposure on network television. (“Accolades and Honors”)

*The Springfield News*, dated April 17, 1984, had a photo of Theodor sitting in his home surrounded by the Cat in the Hat and another Seussian creature. The title read: “Special Pulitzer Citation, Another Happy Ending for Author Dr. Seuss”. Theodor talked about the prize and hoopla: “Oh, I like some of it” ... but all the fuss, he said, was making him “rather unprivate.” Dolores Barclay wrote:

Geisel – Seuss is his middle name – wasn’t chagrined in the least that it took him almost 50 years to be recognized with such a prestigious award for his accomplishments in children’s literature. “I think it’s amazing it came at all,” he said with a laugh. “It’s a little bit out of the field of journalism, and when I was a journalist, then they darn well should have given me one.”

On May 15, 1984, Audrey and Theodor attended a State dinner at the White House. The headline in *The Washington Post*, dated May 16, 1984 read: “Splitting Their Differences” (Radcliffe and Kaston). Much like the differences found in *The Butter Battle Book*, where “the Zook eats his bread with the butter side down!”, President Reagan and President de la Madrid of Mexico were looking to find a common goal of respect as neighbors and friends:

There were some serious moments, too, at the party that climaxed a day in which Reagan did some tough talking about the perceived communist threat in Central America. By

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<sup>394</sup> The trust he had in himself at this time in his life gave him autonomy D-2, to follow his own inner directedness; Theodor was independent of the culture around him telling him this book was too strong for children; he was following his “own star.”



nightfall, he had tempered it a little and while both he and de la Madrid acknowledged “differences,” the tone was studiously cordial.

After a dinner of lobster in jelly (port jelly, that is) and tournedos with truffle sauce, Reagan was asked by reporters if he and de la Madrid were really getting along since they had seemed to be talking a lot about their differences.

Reagan assured them that they were, even on El Salvador. “There may be some differences on how we arrive at it, but we both have the same idea: that the goal should be that all the way from the tip of Tierra del Fuego to the North Slope we should recognize we’re all Americans, all bound together as neighbors and friends.”

In his toast, de la Madrid delivered his own lecture on the nature of friendship and issued a veiled admonition on its obligations.

“We are not societies that are frozen and opposed to change,” he said. “We cannot freeze the human spirit. It is for this reason we are obliged to be tolerant.” (Radcliffe and Kaston)

Theodor again, was ahead of his time.<sup>395</sup> Theodor to Audrey after meeting the President said, “Now seven presidents have met me” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 256).

The wealth of Theodor was now in the millions of millions and Theodor was “forced to ponder his financial affairs, never his favorite use of time” (256). Theodor and Audrey continued to live simple lives in spite of their riches:

Still, little changed in the way they lived.<sup>396</sup> She drove their one car, a silver-colored Cadillac with license plates that read GRINCH. Their one assistant, Claudia Prescott, was a Random House employee, and there was a part-time housekeeper and part-time gardener. Ted resisted Audrey’s proposals to remodel their home because he dreaded the upheaval. He refused to “complicate” his life by having a word processor or fax machine

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<sup>395</sup> Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: Theodor seemed to have an inner voice which spoke out before events took place; he was a visionary. According to Maslow, self-actualized people can leap to right conclusions, have good judgement without sufficient evidence; they have a sharper acuity which in Theodor’s books seemed to prove true.

<sup>396</sup> 7a-V Necessity: not changing in the slightest, it is good and it is that way; Theodor did not need change; he had created his world to be a place where it “worked” for him, a place where he could be creative, detached, spontaneous, and autonomous; this he accepted and did not want it to change.

and he was not interested in an electric typewriter, calling it “too sophisticated.” He still answered his own telephone, and would have nothing to do with answering machines. Occasionally Audrey chose a new suit for him, but he never shopped; when they flew to New York, it was on American Airlines, not— as some of their La Jolla friends did - on a private jet.

But Ted did spend money in pursuit of privacy.<sup>397</sup> When any adjacent acreage became available, he was ready to invest a few hundred thousand dollars to add to the open space surrounding their mountaintop home; this land was the investment he trusted most...

The Geisel’s were known increasingly as philanthropist, but they declined to lend their name to any building.<sup>398</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 257)

#### 1985 – Honorary Doctorate – Princeton University

June 12, 1985, *The New York Times* reported that tradition reigned as Princeton University conferred degrees on 1599 graduates at the commencement program, all under the protective canopy of several shade trees, among these graduates was Theodor:

The loudest ovation of the day went to Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known to millions of readers as Dr. Seuss, whose fanciful tales crafted with improbable rhymes expanded the scope of children's literature.

The university awarded honorary degrees to Mr. Geisel and six other people. These were the recipients: MR. GEISEL; Doctor of Fine Arts, for showing children "the way to the adult world, as he shows adults the way to the child."<sup>399</sup> (Schmitt)

The students stood in ovation and with great enthusiasm yelled out, “I am Sam! Sam I am!” when Theodor came forward to receive another honorary doctorate; they then recited the book, *Green Eggs and Ham* (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 261).

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<sup>397</sup> Privacy equated to freedom to be himself, to be creative, to be detached enough to understand and listen to himself, and with this came success, books, and children reading with joy and laughter.

<sup>398</sup> In 1995, the UC San Diego library building was renamed the Geisel Library, after Theodor’s death.

<sup>399</sup> Theodor helped children learn to read with pleasure and joy, allowing children access to the adult world; at the same time, he revealed to adults that to a child’s world, it is through the doors of fantasy, imagination and good fun.

## 1986 – Strength to Go On &amp; Life Retrospective

With this again another achievement, Theodor began to write what would be his third to last book, *You're Only Old Once*, which was published on his eighty-second birthday, March 2, 1986, and dedicated “With Affection for and Afflictions with the Members of the Class of 1925.” The book takes a tour of a day at the Golden Years Clinic on Century Square, where the reader meets Quiz-Docs, Oglers, and a fish named Norval. This book was a reflection of his time spent in the doctors’ offices waiting and wondering what would come next and being bored. Peggy Owens, Theodor’s niece later said that he hated going to the doctors and the doctors said he was not an easy patient (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 8 of 9). Theodor was quoted about his thoughts on how he got the idea to write the book: “I began sketching what I thought was going to happen to me for the next hour and a half. I had no idea of doing a book. I just began drawing hospital machinery... In the interest of commerce, I wrote a happy ending. The other ending is unacceptable” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 261). Theodor was not only bored but afraid when in the waiting room. The book was:

...a protest against medical procedures that were unnecessary or overpriced: “I had a pinhead-sized cancer on the back of my tongue and they removed it, for which I was very grateful. They inserted some radium material to keep it clean and that impaired circulation in my jaw, and my teeth began to come loose, but they wouldn’t pull them out because they were concerned the gums wouldn’t heal. If I would go into an oxygen cylinder for several hours a day they would heal. But I couldn’t. For this I received a bill of \$75,000.”<sup>400</sup> (262)

The book’s title and its audience when brought to Random House were in a bit of a controversy: *You're Only Old Once!* (*Subtitle: A Book for Obsolete Children*). Theodor, known to be a children’s author, the title did not seem to be targeted for children and the audience was more that of adults, older adults, whom he referred to over and over as “obsolete children”, as noted in the subtitle of the book. Yet it held its weight: the first printing of two hundred thousand copies was sold out immediately and in a year over a million copies had been purchased (265); it went on *The New York Times Best Selling Book* as #1 (Best sellers: March 30, 1986) and

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<sup>400</sup> A-2 Social interest: against the medical costs; Theodor used the printed page to express his concerns, dislikes, and thoughts related to social issues, even if they were in children’s books. He often said that perhaps he needed to speak to the children so they would speak to their parents.

remained on the list for over 60 week's. *The Hawk Eye*, Burlington Iowa newspaper, on March 9, 1986 stated that Dr. Seuss was "aiming straight for the people who began buying his works back in 1957 with 'The Cat in the Hat'" and the question was asked: "Is this a stinging indictment of the health-care industry in America, couched in clever rhyme? Probably not. But just probably"<sup>401</sup> (Miller).

Headlines in early 1986 in the Springfield newspapers were highlighting Dr. Seuss: "Springfield pays tribute to 'Dr. Seuss', City celebrates native son by catching 'Seussamania'" (Cahill) and "Seuss on the Loose, the native son thrives on fun" (Osterman). In the "Seuss on the Loose", Elsie Osterman wrote: "Theodor Geisel believes in having fun, as anyone who's ever read even a page from one of his more than 40 books knows." Theodor was quoted: "Fun is the most important thing in a children's book" ... "fun and interest. If you're interested yourself, the children who read you will be interested" ... "I always do my own illustrations. I do what I do mostly to entertain and to have fun."<sup>402</sup>

In Theodor's town of Springfield, a four month "Seussamania" celebration was planned; presented by the Springfield City Library, Springfield Schools and the Springfield School Volunteers, it was defined as such:

Seussamania is a four-month celebration of the world of Springfield native Ted Geisel's oo-bleck-slinging, Christmas-stealing, mischief-making creations.<sup>403</sup> Mr. Geisel is, of course, Dr. Seuss. And if there were no Dr. Seuss, three generations of readers would have demanded that one be invented.

From January through April, teachers, librarians, and school volunteers will serve up a feast of films, performances, poetry, art, floats and parades aimed at encouraging independent reading and creative expression. Children will create their own Seuss style

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<sup>401</sup> A-2 Social interest: is being addressed, this time the health-care industry; and the response is no and yes, Seussian style, with satire.

<sup>402</sup> Fun is essential in life, at least according to Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss. Having successfully and positively impacted the educational system with his books and his style of learning to read in a momentous way, there must be something to this ideology of fun and interest: 13-V Playfulness: fun, joy, amusement - values sought after along the road to self-actualization.

<sup>403</sup> Seussamania defined as a celebration of Theodor Geisel's and Dr. Seuss's world of characters and creations; Seussamaniacs could be defined as all people who are maniacs, crazy, about Seuss.

stories, poems, and illustrations, and participate in an exhibit of their work in the library Art and Music room in April.

Unless otherwise specified, all programs listed herein are suitable for grades 1-6, and are free and open to all Seussamaniacs. (“Seussamania, A Calendar”)

Theodor was pleased:

The man who brought to life *Horton the Elephant*, *Yertle the Turtle*, *The Cat in the Hat* and *Whoville* filled with pin-sized Whos said he is happy to know he is being honored in his native Springfield.

“I hear there are a lot of goings-on back there,” ... “I haven’t heard from anybody about coming out there, but I would be delighted. It would be a great pleasure to be there.”<sup>404</sup>  
(Osterman “Seuss on the loose” W-1)

February 2, 1986, Theodor’s work went on exhibit in his hometown of Springfield, MA, at the *George Walter Vincent Smith Art Museum*; samples of his preliminary sketches, drawings from 14 books, five political cartoons and three advertisements were on display (W-1).

In California, Joe Hibben, Theodor’s neighbor, and Steven Brezzo, director of the San Diego Museum of Art decided it was time to put together a retrospective exhibit of Dr. Seuss’s life to be on display where for the past thirty-seven years Theodor had called home; it was titled: *Dr. Seuss from Then to Now*, (MacDonald, Robert). The *Los Angeles Times* spoke of Theodor’s work and his thoughts on how important luck is, imagination, talent, consistency of vision, and writing with tears, laughs, loves and thrills:

"The Cat in the Hat" is smiling over the roof of the San Diego Museum of Art in Balboa Park as the crowds begin to gather for what museum officials expect will be their biggest blockbuster since the "Muppets" exhibition some years ago.

.....

Responding to other creative impulses, he wrote *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*, which was rejected by 28 publishing houses because it was too different

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<sup>404</sup> Theodor seemed to be comfortable with the interpersonal relations A-3, at this time in his life. There was a freshness of appreciation B-2, for his hometown and the people who represented it.

from other children's books then on the market...<sup>405</sup> Recalling that encounter, the author says, "See, everything has to do with luck."

It also has to do with imagination and talent.<sup>406</sup>

The art museum exhibition, in effect a documentary history of Geisel's career using nearly 300 works, has been organized into three sections. The first includes early cartoons from Dartmouth days, magazines such as *Life*, and Geisel's career in advertising.

The second includes drawings from most of Geisel's books, such as *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, *Green Eggs and Ham* and *Yertle the Turtle*. It also includes original drawings from Geisel's animated television specials and a television projection of visuals with music, but without voice.

The third section focuses on Geisel's recently published book for adults,<sup>407</sup> *You're Only Old Once: A Book for Obsolete Children*, a satirical commentary about medical care for the physical disabilities that come with aging.

Between sections two and three is a kind of catch-all area labeled, "Along the way. In his spare moments the Doctor paints, scribbles, daubs and doodles."<sup>408</sup> That area features a variety of works, the most notable of which are a Paul Klee-like drawing, "Retired Thunderbird," and two landscapes that evince Geisel's talent for abstract design.

The consistency of Geisel's vision from his earliest works to the latest, spanning 60 years of creativity, is remarkable. It is intriguing to see his recent characters evolve

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<sup>405</sup> It, referring to Theodor's first book, *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*, was too different as Theodor was also too different compared to his contemporaries; but that is what made the difference; Theodor followed the voice within himself (D-2 Autonomy), the path unlike others (B-4 Ethical Awareness), creating his own world (C-2 Creativeness), his own success (self-actualization), and from this a new path for young minds where learning to read became fun and desirable (D-1 Life Mission).

<sup>406</sup> Imagination comes from within as does talent; all of the characteristics of self-actualized people: honesty, awareness, freedom and trust are needed to let imagination flow and talent be released. Like a river, imagination needs to flow, this can be a learned behavior, learning to let imagination and talent run free; Theodor, through a process of choices one after another, dared to be honest when in doubt, to be courageous rather than afraid, used his intelligence, knowing what he was not good at and what he was good at, found out who he was, where he was going and what his mission was: this allowed creativity and talent to bring forth great fruit.

<sup>407</sup> *You're Only Old Once* was Theodor's second adult book, next to *The Seven Lady Godivas*.

<sup>408</sup> 1-B Experiencing fully, total absorption, Theodor was consumed with drawing. It was who he was.

from his earliest works. He was indeed "lucky" to find an appropriate style for what he wanted to achieve, and he had the good sense to stick with it.<sup>409</sup>

During the press preview for the exhibition, Geisel made a brief statement in mock-Latin, which he translated into regular English as, "Anyone who draws pictures is a fool. Anyone who talks about the pictures he draws is a damned fool."<sup>410</sup> His work in its plenitude speaks for itself.

It also speaks for our society. Social mores, issues and concerns are amply, albeit inadvertently, illustrated in Geisel's works, which are a history of American humor in our time.<sup>411</sup>

Geisel's greatest influence has been on the instruction of children.<sup>412</sup> The author's wise advice is that books for children should include the same things that Shakespeare put into his plays, "tears, laughs, loves and thrills."<sup>413</sup> He has also commented, "When you write a kid's book, somebody's got to win." (MacDonald)

On May 17, 1986, as Theodor and Mary Stofflet, the curator, walked through the exhibit together, Mary recalled: "It seemed overwhelming for him. Seeing your own retrospective can be a shock. I've been involved in several when the artists died within months. Both of us were finally in tears, [but] he was very pleased" (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 266). Theodor was hoping for recognition as an artist but was disappointed with a review from Robert Pincus in *The San Diego Union*, where he said the exhibit was a survey of a great person, but an art museum was to display art (267). Yet, in the *Los Angeles Times*, the day of the opening a

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<sup>409</sup> Consistency brought on the evolution of the characters as well as the evolution of Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss. Finding his own style ensured steps that lead to tenacity and fortitude bringing achievement and good sense.

<sup>410</sup> Fool, could it be Theodor was referring to the fool as in someone, who according to Merriam-Webster is "one with a marked propensity or fondness for something"? Theodor had a great fondness indeed for drawing pictures; and the public had a marked propensity for talking about his drawings as was the case with the lifetime exhibition.

<sup>411</sup> Theodor used humor to address social cultures, issues and concerns; though inadvertently, that seems debatable.

<sup>412</sup> D-1 Life mission: this was Theodor's task to fulfill: "instruction of children"; instruction through the love of reading, through laughter and through fantasy; he understood what became the defining characteristic of himself, to laugh and to make other people laugh, namely children.

<sup>413</sup> "Tears, laughs, loves and thrills"- the emotions in life; to feel life, to experience it to the fullest; this is what Theodor valued and kept close to him his entire life; by learning to read, to learn to imagine the impossible, to allow fantasy into a child's mind, brought the possibility of a full life – to be able to cry, laugh, love and feel the thrill, the peak experiences.

headline read: “Art Review: Big Hopes For S.d. Dr. Seuss Exhibit” (MacDonald). In ten weeks over a quarter of a million visitors came to see the exhibit at the “art museum” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 267).

A few days later, May 21, 1986, the newspapers in the Eastern States had headlines celebrating Theodor’s life and welcoming him home: “After 60 Years, Dr. Seuss Goes Home” (Rohter), “Seuss takes in childhood memories, Author gets dad’s old sign” (Giannetti), “Dr. Seuss steals the show, author greeted by children during his return visit to Springfield” (Caldwell), “And to Think That They Saw Him on Mulberry Street! ‘Thanks for Green Eggs and Ham’” (Osterman), and “Young readers welcome ‘Dr. Seuss’ back home” (Giannetti). It was a frenzy of excitement from children to adults as Theodor made his way through the streets of Springfield; taking a moment to reflect on Mulberry Street when his first book titled: *And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street* was published almost fifty years earlier and which launched him into a career and journey unimaginable, “as the most successful author of children’s books in American history”<sup>414</sup> (Rohter). Emotions and gratitude were open and plentiful:

And there was applause, signs, toy replicas of the animals he created and made famous, hats of all kinds on young and old alike, and even tears in the eyes of a few adults who crushed forward to join the youngsters in shaking the hand that created Whos and Sneetches, the Cat in the Hat, and Horton the Elephant and the rest of the zany characters that have given readers pleasure and insight since the first of his 45 books was published in 1939 [1937].

.....  
 Finally, his hosts from City Library gently ushered the tall, grey-bearded author back into the bus, and a line of people about 20 yards long waved wildly and, using the titles of two of his books, began chanting, “Yes, we like your ‘Green Eggs and Ham,’ thank you, thank you, ‘Sam I am.’”

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<sup>414</sup> D-1 Life mission: a problem outside one’s self that requires much of their energy; it was exactly like this for Theodor; his life mission of writing and illustrating children’s books put him in the category of “the most successful author of children’s books in American history”; no small feat!



A loud “Wow” and a deep sigh came from deep in the throat of the 82-year-old author.<sup>415</sup>  
(Osterman)

A week earlier, Theodor had been given another honorary Doctor of Letters, from the University of Hartford, Connecticut (Rohter).

Fan mail grew and as Random House forwarded the letters to his home in La Jolla; Theodor would read them for hours, answered many on The Cat in the Hat letterhead, giving him reassurance and amusement (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 269). Audrey said of her husband: “The physical portion was saying ‘I’ve done a noble job for you and I’m growing weary’, but not the brain, it was right there”<sup>416</sup> (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 8 of 9).

1987 - *I am Not Going to Get Up Today!*

In the spring of 1987, Theodor received his eighth honorary doctorate from Brown University<sup>417</sup> (“Honorary Degrees: 1900”). The summer of 1987, Theodor was in great pain:

But for Ted it was a summer of agony. He rarely spoke of it, but Audrey and Ruth Grobstein saw that he was in pain. He was acutely embarrassed by his slurring speech. The ulcer under his tongue had healed, but after root canal surgery he developed mandibular osteonecrosis, leading to multiple infections and the erosion of his right jawbone. He resisted further surgery and doctors agreed on a “conservative approach.” He had seen more doctors than he wanted and gained a reputation as a difficult patient. (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 274, 275)

Yet, with the pain, Theodor wrote his second to last book, *I Am NOT Going to Get up Today!* It was published on October 12, 1987 by Random House; though Theodor wrote it, James Stevenson did the illustrations. It was the first Beginner Book in eight years.

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<sup>415</sup> B-3 Peak experience: a feeling of wonder and awe; at this moment, Theodor was on top of a mountain which he had created over years of hard work; it was a magic moment.

<sup>416</sup> The D-1 Life Mission was active in Theodor; he had two books yet to write; his mind was sharp; the calling continued to motivate him even while his body was aging and growing tired.

<sup>417</sup> Eight honorary doctorates given to Theodor over his life-time; he found his life mission D-1 and was recognized as Dr. Theodor Seuss Geisel, thanks to Dr. Seuss.

## 1988 – Random House Owns All Rights to Books

In 1988, Random House purchased all the rights from Vanguard for Theodor's first two books: *And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street*, 1937 and *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*, 1938 (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 275). With the fame of Theodor's books, quotes were being used to promote various agendas, political and moral. He was protective over his work and the characters he had imagined up and made come alive: "While Ted preferred to let his work speak for itself, he was more than vocal to protect his characters and stories from exploitation."<sup>418</sup> When an anti-abortion used a line from his book *Horton Hears a Who* ("A person's a person, no matter how small"), he demanded and received an immediate retraction" ("Dr. Seuss' - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary", Part 9 of 9). Also, at this time, Theodor was looking at his books to see if changes needed to be made according to "the times"; only two major changes were made;<sup>419</sup> one in his first book, *And To Think that I Saw it on Mulberry Street*: "I had a gentleman with a pigtail," he said. "I colored him yellow and called him a Chinaman. That's the way things were fifty years ago. In later editions I refer to him as a Chinese man. I have taken the color out of the gentleman and removed the pigtail and now he looks like an Irishman" (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 276). The second major change came in *The Lorax*, where in 1971, he removed a line with Lake Erie: "I hear things are just as bad up in Lake Erie"; Lake Erie had been cleaned up and a request had been sent to Theodor to change the line (276).

## 1990 - *Oh, The Places You'll Go!*

After the museum tour which traveled throughout America, his health worsened and Theodor would rarely go out in public. Returning to the privacy of his hilltop studio, the idea for a book emerged as he pinned up old sketches onto the cork wall of his studio; it would become his farewell message. *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* was published January 22, 1990, and immediately went to top of "The New York Times Best Seller List" for adults; it remained there for more than two years, selling about 1.5 million copies (283). *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* became the gift of choice for graduates. Theodor, happy to receive the acknowledgement in that

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<sup>418</sup> 7-V, Perfection: just-rightness, nothing beyond, nothing superfluous, Theodor would not let his characters be changed in any way; they were real characters who had brought life to him and millions of children around the world; they would be protected from exploitation.

<sup>419</sup> Two changes to be correct with the times; in Theodor's life, awareness and an efficient perception of reality B-1, served as his rudder through life, guiding him with a sharpness of acuity.

it was a book for adults exclaimed: “This proves it! I no longer write for children. I write for people!” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 283). Jed Mattes, Theodor’s agent said of the book: "He talks about the end of life's journey and then the journey we make beyond. It's a book very much about the passage from this life to the next. It really is Ted's valedictory... It was much more like a wise grandfather or father sitting down talking to a younger generation" (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 9 of 9).

With the success of *Oh, The Places You’ll Go!*, Theodor signed a contract with Tri-Star Productions to make a full-length feature film, but because of his failing health and the death of Jim Henson, creator of the Muppets, who was to work on the video adaptation, the film never was completed. Theodor had written lyrics to a song for the animated film:

Searching deep in darkened places,  
Reaching into vacant spaces,  
I touch only shadow faces...

Where are you?

Empty caves in endless mountains,  
Dusty, dry, deserted fountains...  
Pathways, groping, I move hoping

Where are you?

Past songless birds on leafless trees  
Cross waveless oceans, silent seas  
Through fumbling night that find no day,

I move and try to find my way...<sup>420</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 284)

### 1991 - Last Message

In December of 1990, when Theodor was beginning work with biographers and concerned about people understanding his speech; a computer was suggested and to this he replied: “I’ve been thinking about a computer...do you think I could learn?”<sup>421</sup> and Audrey

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<sup>420</sup> Theodor was headed to the unknown; even in this, he began searching for his steps, the way he would walk, the path, a new mission. Always looking forward, hungry to create, to find meaning in being; Theodor Seuss Geisel knew he was to “cross waveless oceans, silent seas...to find [his] my way.”

<sup>421</sup> D-1 Life mission: one is discovering, still wanting to learn, to find ways to express what was speaking within; Theodor lived completely absorbed in all that he did.

replied: “From a man who didn’t know to fix a toilet by jiggling the handle” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 285).

In June, 1991, a collection of Seuss’s best books was selected and made the Book-of-the-Month Club: *Six by Seuss: A Treasury of Dr. Seuss Classics*. The books in this group of six were: *Oh, To Think That I Saw it On Mulberry Street*, *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*, *Horton Hatches the Egg*, *Yertle the Turtle*, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* and *The Lorax*. It was the first time a children’s author made book of the month since *Bambi* in 1928 (286).

In the fall, the interviews and questions asked were less and less as Theodor’s health got worse. But one question remained: did something remain unsaid? Responding that he would think about it, days later he had a response which was written on yellow copy paper:

Any message or slogan? Whenever things go a bit sour in a job I’m doing, I always tell myself, “You can do better than this.”

The best slogan I can think of to leave with the kids of the U.S.A. would be: “We can... and we’ve got to... do better than this.” (287)

And then he crossed out three words, *the kids of*.

Wishing to remain where he worked for so many years, a bed was placed in his studio (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 9 of 9). Claudia Prescott, Theodor’s secretary starting in 1972, recalled his last month in September, 1991:

“He did not want anybody to see him in the condition that he felt he was in. Probably about three weeks before he died, he did not want to autograph anymore books and we didn't send out any more cat notes and I knew then that his life was going to be ending...he was totally self-contained he didn't need anyone to tell him who he was.”<sup>422</sup>  
(Part 9 of 9)

Theodor would ask Audrey, “Am I dead now?” Audrey would just shake her head (“Dr. Seuss’ - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary”, Part 9 of 9). Ruth Grobstein, Theodor’s doctor would

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<sup>422</sup> He knew himself that he had accomplished what he was sent to earth to do; to create laughter and fun for children; to help them learn to read and enjoy it; to encourage fantasy and imagination. D-2 Autonomy: Theodor was independent for his own development and the journey he had been on and where he was going; he followed his own star, stepping to his own beat.

check on Theodor each evening; she said, “He was in denial...he really believed in magic...”<sup>423</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 287). Lea Grey, Audrey’s daughter, Theodor’s surrogate daughter, came to help; Theodor gave her his longtime stuffed dog from childhood, Theophrastus, and asked, “You will take care of the dog, won’t you?”<sup>424</sup> (287).

1991 - September 24 - Theodor Seuss Geisel Dies

On September 24, at the age of 87, Theodor Geisel aka Dr. Seuss died in his sleep. Headlines all over the country mourned the death of a great man. The hometown paper of where Theodor grew-up wrote “Springfield’s Dr. Seuss Dies”:

“Dr. Seuss” is dead. Springfield’s most famous native son, Theodor Geisel, internationally known children’s author “Dr. Seuss”, whose magical creations have occupied a special place in the imaginations of young and old for more than 50 years, died Tuesday in La Jolla, Calif. He was 87. Geisel died quietly at 10 p.m. following a long series of illnesses, including a battle with cancer eight years ago. His wife, Audrey, was at his side. (Shea)

Theodor requested no funeral and his body was cremated (Pace).

1991 - Newspapers React

Jerry Harrison, who oversaw children’s books for Random House said in an interview: “We’ve lost the finest talent in the history of children’s books... and we’ll probably never see one like him again”<sup>425</sup> (E. P.).

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<sup>423</sup> He lived a life of magic, because he believed in magic; the power of imagination, of fantasy; the mind filling in the unknown with ideas and suggestions to make sense of the grey area, the unknown.

<sup>424</sup> A heart of love; essential for self-actualization; to love one’s self and then those around; A-3 Interpersonal relations: obliteration of the ego boundaries, able to love more, to love deeper.

<sup>425</sup> Never one like him again, Theodor Seuss Geisel, realized by the public; a self-actualized man, fulfilling his life mission D-1: a problem outside himself that required much of his energy. It was his vocation, his calling; it became the defining characteristic of himself. He found something that fascinated him his entire life, drawing and writing fantasy for the purpose of laughter and joy.

## Conclusion Chapter I

Theodor Seuss Geisel walked through life with steps of love, creativity, consistency, logical insanity, individuality, obscurity, humor, truth and much wonder. He came from German heritage, which during the time of World War I was significant. His family nurtured Theodor as a young boy to think independently and with a rhythm for life and thought. The energy surrounding him at home and in Springfield was exuberating creativity and invention, all adding up to a strong foundation. Theodor's steps were marked early on with words and images. To understand this person within, and where his steps led him is transparent in a quote of Theodor talking about his one and only art teacher: "That teacher wanted me to draw the world as it is," said Geisel, "and I wanted to draw things as I saw them" (Sullivan). He left art class after a day, and took his peculiar view to the school paper. Throughout his life, Theodor saw life through the wrong end of the telescope. It was his way and it worked. According to Maslow, he followed his own star, listened to his own voice, and found his unique path to walk on.

The major events Theodor encountered and the manner in which he walked through them played major roles in shaping and directing who he became. Early on in his life with World War I, a resounding voice began to call out within him against conformity and bullying. Prohibition delivered resources through circumstances within his family, an opportunity where he became well acquainted with zoo animals which were later used in his creations of zany creatures; as well, it was during this time period where Dr. Seuss, his alter ego, was birthed. The Great Depression, brought again the realization of the necessity for the basic needs to be fulfilled and a desire for more; Theodor realized he must illustrate and write, marry the two into his work to be successful. World War II, delivered the audience, the GI babies, an audience of children who were hungry to learn to read; and an audience of frustrated parents and teachers who found it impossible to give children what they needed; the need was presented to Theodor by way of a challenge. Through these life events, Theodor learned who he was, what was important to him, what was necessary to be able to heed the calling within; an awareness of the greater picture of society and man's needs were awakened and forced to be reckoned with.

As Theodor encountered life and grew into himself, a strong inner conviction became his vision as an author: children must grow up to be more intelligent, think clearly, be inspired with the fire for learning, to love more, to be steered upwards and to build in them basic attitudes

toward living that would influence their patterns of thought and action throughout every year of their lives. His fundamental guiding belief was that children must be treated as equals.

Theodor Geisel throughout his life became known as: artist, author, illustrator, genius, teacher, bridge between children and parents, St. George – standing between a generation of exhausted parents and the demon dragon of unexhausted children on a rainy day, literary emancipator, advocate, apostle of joyous nonsense, friend of children, father of modern mythology of bizarre creatures, father and grandfather of children’s literature and not one but eight honorary titles as Doctor Theodor Seuss Geisel. Theodor Geisel through Dr. Seuss discovered and became more and more of what he was capable of becoming; it took a lifetime to become actualized in the potential within.

Two quotes worth noting before going into chapter two; the first, spoken by Clifton Fadiman in 1937, speaking of Theodor’s first book, *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*; he said, “They say it’s for children, but better get a copy for yourself and marvel at the good Dr. Seuss’s impossible pictures and the moral tale of the little boy who exaggerated not wisely but too well.” Theodor could quote this until his death. “I remember that impressed me very much: If the great Kip Fadiman likes it, I’ll have to do another” (Lathem 34). The second quote, Theodor’s last message to the world, “We can... and we’ve *got* to... do better than this” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 287). To honor these words of doing better and moving mankind in a forward direction, it is necessary to understand the past, what Theodor aka Dr. Seuss wrote, to see what was important to him; it is a fact, history repeats itself. The needs of children today, the fundamental needs, are still the same; everyone needs love, respect, honor, dignity, individuality, laughter and joy. In chapter two, the books of Dr. Seuss will be looked at to understand what was in the heart of Theodor Geisel, the stones he left as a path for a better society, a future of hope for the children of tomorrow.

## CHAPTER II: BOOKS – STEPPING STONES

## Introduction Chapter II

Chapter two looks at the books of Dr. Seuss, considered stepping stones: what was on the mind of Theodor, what was essential to him, and their relation to self-actualization. The workspace where Theodor Geisel had inspiration and worked as a “highly disciplined craftsman” (Jennings), a “kid” (Harper), “an artist first, a writer second” (Frutig), “a high-principled man” (Kahn), “a perfectionist with every stroke of the pen” (Freeman), and a “genius” (Bennett Cerf) was very important; it was a place where he felt solitude, freedom and safety. From the time Theodor was a little boy, he was drawing. “Ted has always drawn,” ... “Mother used to say that he sat up in his crib and drew pictures”, said his sister, Marnie (“Gay Menagerie” 5G). As he grew up on 74 Fairfield Street, in a middle to upper-class neighborhood, he began the habit of putting his thoughts and ideas on the walls surrounding him. “In every room on the bare plaster was a cartoon done by Ted many years ago” (“Gay Menagerie” 5G).

At the “Tower” in La Jolla, which is referred to as the Geisel’s home, in “The Office” where Theodor wrote most of his books, there was positioned in the middle of the room a drafting desk which was covered with paper and colored pencils; behind, a reclining chair where Theodor could sit back and have a breathtaking 180-degree view of the Pacific Ocean. Audrey, his wife, once said, “I can’t imagine Ted really being productive without that view, and the way his seat knocks back and his feet go up and he gets a thought and slaps forward.” ... “That all is part of his creativity” (Hilliard Harper). A 1902 rifle target, its bullseye perforated by his father’s exacting shots, was always mounted on the wall wherever Theodor worked; he said in an interview: “it is to remind me of perfection” (Gorney). The walls were lined with cork where he put up his illustrations and writings to make sense of them, like a puzzle. Cynthia Gorney described it well: “When he is at work, the names, the verse, the story line, the colors, the shapes and sizes of his extraordinary characters all press upon him. He tapes the working drawings to the wall and stares at them, rearranging, reading aloud to himself, feeling the rhythm of the words.” The walls also had bookcases where he could find mysteries and biographies to be devoured during the late night hours when he could not find sleep or to give an escape to the energy and ideas that moved within him. This was the space Theodor could be honest and free,



with the pencils in his hands releasing zany creatures who spoke of stories needed to be told to endless generations of children.

In his own words, the reason Theodor created books for children was that “childhood is the one time in an average person’s life when he can laugh just for the straight fun of laughing – that’s the main reason I write for kids” (Jennings). “I tend basically to exaggerate in life, and in writing, it’s fine to exaggerate. I really enjoy overstating for the purpose of getting a laugh, and at the same time it gives pleasure to the audience and accomplishes more than writing very serious things” (*Los Angeles Time Book Review* 240). “I do what I do mostly to entertain and to have fun” (Osterman). Writing with exaggeration and to have fun fit Theodor’s way of living and his style of creating; it was him. Getting a laugh pleased himself; it filled a need in him and he understood it gave pleasure to others as well; in co-operation with this, he had a deeper and far reaching motive - he had compassion for mankind and had a need to contribute to society. Theodor had something to accomplish; working with exaggeration was his way of using humor to address a point; there was purpose in his stories.

Theodor reveals the essential elements in a child’s book: “Fun is the most important thing in a children’s book” ... And the second element is interest: “fun and interest. If you’re interested yourself, the children who read you will be interested” (Osterman). He gave delight in reading his books, both to the child and the parent, for it is often the parents who read to their children the same bed-time story over and over, night after night.

Specific to Dr. Seuss’s style of illustrating and writing, there are a number of characteristics found in each book, on each stone. In his illustrations, noteworthy is his drawing style, that of a child’s: cartoon like, using primary colors (later on in his books when Audrey came into his life, softer shades of colors, pastels were added); his use of exaggeration in illustrations bringing the subject to the forefront, out of the background, to make it clear (Jonathon Cott quoting Brian Sutton-Smith – professor of education and folklore at the University of Pennsylvania); on each page there is usually one major element to match the thought expressed in the text – a method for simplicity; drawing people as animals - dealing with the human follies and frailties as well as possibilities “I don’t draw animals” ... “I draw people” (Renthal).

Characteristics specific to his writing style: the majority of Dr. Seuss’s books are written using anapestic tetrameter (da da DUM da da DUM da da DUM da da DUM), creating

movement and swiftness with comic humor; there is a traditional plot, with a beginning, middle and end, no matter how absurd the story is (Warren T. Greenleaf quoted in Fensch, Thomas, *Of Sneetches* 92); using a theme-and-variations technique – the theme is usually that of searching for, discovering, or inventing something new (Cott); most stories have a moral, served up like a child’s medicine, in mild and palatable doses (Kahn). In both his drawings and texts, Theodor used the technique of blending logic with the ludicrous: something way out there mixed with an element of truth, thus, believable to the child, which Theodor often referred to as “logical insanity.” And, fancy is running free without equivocation or apology (Lurie).

As the page is turned, and the books of Dr. Seuss aka Theodor Geisel are looked at in synopsis form and then related to self-actualization according to Abraham Maslow, it is important to remember two key words: imagination and play. Jonathon Cott in his book, *The Good Dr. Seuss*, states that imagination and play are the cornerstones in the world of Dr. Seuss: Theodor was honest with his imagination and let it play; he was aware of his environment and how elements in his environment played on his imagination; he took the freedom to create with imagination and put play into his work; and he trusted his imagination and found his life mission in playing with the images in his mind and putting them onto paper. Connecting play to Theodor, Cott applied Nietzsche’s quote, “in any true man hides a child who wants to play” (34). To play, have fun and laugh - these suit him well. In the good doctor’s words: “For me, success means doing work that you love, regardless of how much you make” (15). Dr. Seuss’s books are framed with imagination and play for the sake of a laugh. Within the border lies the soul of Theodor: a voice having something to say, a need to accomplish something, laying stepping stones of distinct design leading to self-actualization personally and as a society.

1937 - *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*

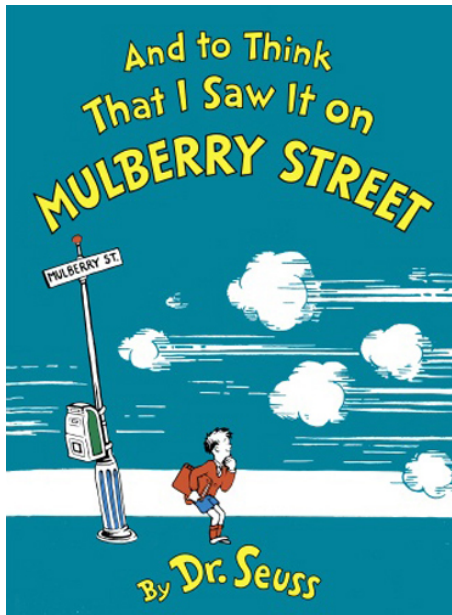


Fig. 7 Seuss. "Book cover." 1964, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*And to Think That I Saw It on MULBERRY STREET* was published in September, 1937 by Vanguard Press; in 1964 it was republished by Random House. This was the first book of Dr. Seuss and written in rhyme.

Opening the book, the reader is confronted with the main character of the book, Marco, a boy, going to school. He is standing by a street-sign, with the name of Mulberry Street written on it, a book under his arm, stopped, a smile on his face, looking ahead, one hand to his chin, thinking about what he has just observed: a whirl of clouds that is moving, referencing something has gone by him very quickly. Blue and white are the colors used for the introductory and ending pages, like the colors of the sky where imaginations fly free. The book was dedicated to

Helene McC. "Mother of the One and Original Marco"; Helene was the name of Marshall McClintock's wife (Lindemann 7); Marshall was a friend from Dartmouth who was responsible for publishing this first book. Marco, one could interpret as the author himself.

The story starts with a conflict between Marco and his dad:

When I leave home to walk to school,  
Dad always says to me,  
"Marco, keep your eyelids up  
and see what you can see."

But when I tell him where I've been  
and what I think I've seen,  
he looks at me and sternly says,  
"Your eyesight's much too keen.

"Stop telling such outlandish tales.  
Stop turning minnows into whales."

Immediately following is the greatest conflict in the story with Marco himself:

Now, what can I say  
when I get home today?

All the long way to school  
And all the way back,  
I've looked and I've looked  
And I've kept careful track,  
But all that I've noticed,  
except my own feet,  
Was a horse and a wagon  
on Mulberry Street.

That's nothing to tell of,  
that won't do, of course...  
Just a broken down wagon  
That's drawn by horse.

That *can't* be my story. That's only a *start*.  
I'll say that a ZEBRA was pulling that cart!  
And that is a story that no one can beat,  
When I say that I saw it on Mulberry Street.

Marco begins to use his imagination and elaborate on what he will tell his father: the horse is changed to a zebra, the broken down wagon becomes a chariot with a charioteer; the story gets grander and grandeur, moving back and forth from the animals to the object being pulled with the people inside. Opposites and contrary items, colors, and people are placed together to push the limits to the extreme, all for the purpose of thinking differently, imagining beyond:

Hmmmm...A reindeer and sleigh...  
Say – *anyone* could think of *that*,  
Jack or Fred or Joe or Nat -  
Say, even Jane could think of *that*.

But it isn't too late to make one little change.  
 A sleigh and an ELEPHANT! *There's* something strange!  
 I'll pick one with plenty of power and size,  
 A blue one with plenty of fun in his eyes.  
 And then, just to give him a little more tone,  
 Have a Rajah, with rubies, perched high on a throne.  
 Say! That makes a story that *no one* can beat,  
 When I say that I saw it on Mulberry Street.

Suddenly, with a large parade, Mulberry Street runs into Bliss Street, the climax:

But now what worries me is this...  
 Mulberry Street runs into Bliss,  
 Unless there's something I can fix up,  
 There'll be an *awful* traffic mix-up!

Will Marco stay on Mulberry Street or allow his imagination to take him to Bliss Street? Needing to be "fixed up" or there will be an "*awful* traffic mix-up!", the police are called with the Sergeant to lead. With this the imagination can "race at top speed"; Marco decides to push his imagination further: singles become multiples, a pair of zebras with an elephant at the lead, an entire brass band, the escort of police, the Mayor and the Aldermen are watching what has now become a parade with the repeated line:

And that is a story that NO ONE can beat  
 When I say that I saw it on Mulberry Street!

Soon there are planes flying overhead, confetti being poured in celebration, a happy old man at the end of the parade being pulled in a little house with a huge smile on his face, sidekicks join in, "A Chinese man who eats with sticks... A big Magician Doing tricks... A ten-footed beard that needs a comb..." But Marco is almost home.

Having imagined all this, there is a large smile on Marco's face and speed in his legs; with now the clouds going *behind* him as he mounts the steps to walk into his home to tell his father all he has seen:

I swung 'round the corner  
 And dashed through the gate,  
 I ran up the steps  
 And I felt simply GREAT!

FOR I HAD A STORY THAT NO ONE COULD BEAT!  
 AND TO THINK THAT I SAW IT ON MULBERRY STREET!

On an empty page, with no illustration, yet a visible place for a picture, are just these words:

But Dad said quite calmly,  
 "Just draw up your stool  
 And tell me the sights  
 On the way home from school."

There was so much to tell, I JUST COULDN'T BEGIN!  
 Dad looked at me sharply and pulled at his chin.  
 He frowned at me sternly from there in his seat,  
 "Was there nothing to look at...no people to greet?  
 Did nothing excite you or make your heart beat?"

The reader with the words being capitalized, still feels the excitement in Marco and then follows the response of his father looking at him and speaking in a paradox with a sharpness and sternness, yet with an expectation that Marco had met but did not have the courage to tell. Turning to the last page, Marco responds with the simple illustration of the man in the carriage being pulled by a horse:

"Nothing," I said, growing red as a beet,  
 "But a plain horse and wagon on Mulberry Street."

The resolution of the story is that Marco kept his great imagined story to himself. Yet on the last page, once again, the reader is left with the same little boy, blue and white colors, clouds rushing past with a look of anticipation and thoughtfulness on Marco's face.

The repeating sentence changes with a few words, the font size, capitalization, boldness of letters and the punctuation:

And that is a story that no one can beat,  
When I say that I saw it on Mulberry Street.

Say! That makes a story that *no one* can beat,  
When I say that I saw it on Mulberry Street.

And that is a story that NO ONE can beat  
When I say that I saw it on Mulberry Street.

FOR I HAD A STORY THAT NO ONE COULD BEAT!  
AND TO THINK THAT I SAW IT ON MULBERRY STREET!

Dr. Seuss, in his first book expressed the need to keep one's "eyelids up and see what you can see," use one's imagination, to look at the ordinary events in the day and make them exciting, to think beyond and to share them with only those who also think big,<sup>426</sup> not those who rebuke by saying: "Stop telling such outlandish tales. Stop turning minnows into whales." Self-actualization requires one to look inward to find greatness, to look around and to see possibilities, to go beyond the normal, to find the dream within and to share it with other believers, doers.<sup>427</sup> Theodor was prophetic in this first book, in that, his life coming from an ordinary place went to places he indeed did imagine and beyond. There was a dream inside him which others realized, he realized, and in time actualized; he needed to tell and live a life that no one could beat; it was inside him and he felt it, learned it and followed it. Theodor's homecoming parade, May 1986, was as great as the parade in Marco's mind; in *The Springfield*

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<sup>426</sup> B-2 Freshness of appreciation: appreciating over and over the basic goods of life with awe, wonder and even ecstasy. Freedom: C-2 Spontaneity: the ability to be spontaneous, to withdraw if this is what you wish, to create, to be whatever one is at the moment, no matter what that is, but to trust that self, to be freely oneself. Marco was spontaneous in what he wanted to tell his father, but did not in the end have the courage to repeat the story. Courage is needed to find self-actualization as it is an on-going process as Maslow stated.

<sup>427</sup> Steps needed to grow are that of looking within, to take an account of what one has, abilities, looking without to see possibilities, then putting the two together to create dreams; in the end it is for the purpose of sharing it with others; the ultimate purpose of self-actualization is to share for the greater good - *transcendence needs*.

*Morning Union*, Marisa Giannetti reported:

It happened again on Mulberry Street.

The years fell away from the tanned, gray-bearded face of 82-year-old Theodor “Dr. Seuss” Geisel Tuesday as he retraced his youth in the neighborhood he called home until 1925. Turning a corner onto the street he immortalized in his first book, “And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street,” Geisel leaned forward in his second-row seat aboard a vintage 1934 Yellow Coach bus that was touring the city.

He pointed to a green-and-white street sign in the Maple Hill section, and a shy, wistful smile touched his lips.

“We’re on Mulberry Street. I’m remembering now,” Geisel said.

Ahead, more than 100 children dressed as Grinches and Sneetches and Loraxes – characters from some of Geisel’s 45 children’s books, lined the sidewalk. They shouted and cheered and wrapped themselves around Geisel’s long legs as he got out of the bus to greet them.

The children welcomed Dr. Seuss home.

“I never expected to see this on Mulberry Street,” he said.

1938 - *The 500 HATS of Bartholomew Cubbins*



Fig. 8 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1965, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

Dr. Seuss’s second book, *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins* was first published in September, 1938, by Vanguard Press and renewed publication by Random House in 1965; dedicated to Chrysanthemum-Pearl (aged 89 months, going on 90), an imaginary daughter created by Helen and Theodore as they could not have children. This book was written in prose unlike most of his books which would be written in rhyme.

The story starts off with an illustration of a red hat and a yellow feather, nothing more, nothing less. The main character of the book is Bartholomew Cubbins, a young boy who lives in the Kingdom of Didd which is ruled by King Derwin.



IN THE BEGINNING, Bartholomew Cubbins didn't have 500 hats. He had only one hat. It was an old one that had belonged to his father and his father's father before him. It was probably the oldest and the plainest hat in the whole Kingdom of Didd, where Bartholomew Cubbins lived. But Bartholomew liked it – especially because of the feather that always pointed straight up in the air.

King Derwin looks across his lofty kingdom and feels mighty important while Bartholomew Cubbins looking in the “backward” direction of the King and is feeling mighty small. Bartholomew sets off to town with a basket of cranberries to sell to bring back money for his parents. Walking into the town gates he hears the noise of silver trumpets and men crying: “Clear the way! Clear the way! Make way for the King!” Everyone is expected to take off their hat for the king. The King notices Bartholomew and fixes his eyes directly on the boy. He approaches Bartholomew and asks why his hat is not off. Bartholomew says it is off but notices that there is something on his head, yet the red hat with the feather is in his hands. He takes off the second hat and another appears on his head. The King is angry with rage and has Bartholomew arrested and taken to the palace to the Throne Room. On the way Bartholomew feels terribly frightened but calms his own fears:

For a moment Bartholomew was terribly frightened. “Still,” he thought to himself, “the King can do nothing dreadful to punish me, because I really haven't done anything wrong. It would be cowardly to feel afraid.” Bartholomew threw back his shoulders and marched straight ahead into the palace.

In the King's Throne Room there is Sir Alaric, Keeper of the King's Records. He counts all the hats coming from Bartholomew's head. The King calls all sorts of experts to figure out the reason for the hats; the first is Sir Snipps, maker of hats for all the fine lords; when looking at Bartholomew's hat he sniffs in disgust and says:

“Your Majesty, I, Sir Snipps, am the maker of hats for all the fine lords. I make hats of cloth of gold, fine silks and gems and ostrich plumes. You ask me what I think of this hat? Pooh! It is the most ordinary hat I ever set eyes on.”

“In that case,” said the King, “it should be very simple for you to take it off.”

“Simple, indeed,” mumbled Sir Snipps haughtily, and standing on his tiptoes, he pushed his pudgy thumb at Bartholomew’s hat and knocked it to the floor. Immediately another appeared on Bartholomew’s head.

“Screebees!” screamed Sir Snipps, leaping in the air higher than he was tall. Then he turned and ran shrieking out of the Throne Room.

“Dear me!” said the King, looking very puzzled. “If Snipps can’t do it, this *must* be more than an ordinary hat.”

With this realization, the King calls his Wise Men; Nadd, the Wise Man, the father of Nadd, and lastly, the father of the father of Nadd; not one can give the answer. The King terrified asks: “Does this mean there is no one in my whole kingdom who can take off this boy’s hat?” A boy appears before the king: “there stood a boy with a big lace collar – a very proud little boy with his nose up in the air.” It was the Grand Duke Wilfred, nephew of the King. “You send him down here,” said the Grand Duke Wilfred. “*I’ll* fix him.”

The Grand Duke shoots arrows at the hat, but Bartholomew sees that they are only a child’s bow and arrow so he is not afraid and even says out loud that he can shoot with his father’s big bow. The Duke shoots and shoots but finally as each hat is replaced with another, and each arrow is shot, all the Duke’s arrows are gone; he throws down his bow, stamps on it and walks away saying it isn’t fair! The Yeoman of the Bowmen is called but to no avail. Now the hat is considered black magic. Magicians are called, chants are chanted, but nothing stops the hats. The Grand Duke suggests to cut off the head of Bartholomew, but once in the room with the executioner, the head cannot be cut off with a hat on it. Bartholomew says to the King: “I’m sorry, Your Majesty,” explains Bartholomew. “My head can’t come off with my hat on...It’s against the rules.” The Grand Duke comes with his final plan, to march Bartholomew up the highest turret and push him off to his death. On the way up the turret with the hat count at 451, the hats begin to change; the height of the story:

Suddenly Sir Alaric stopped. He looked. He took off his triangular spectacles and wiped them on his sleeve. And then he looked again. *The hats began to change!* Hat 451 hat, not one, but *two* feathers! Hat 452 had three...and 453 also had three and *a little red jewel!* Each new hat was fancier than the hat just before.

At the moment when the Grand Duke is about to push Bartholomew off the ledge and he is saying: “I can’t wait to push you off”, Bartholomew’s future changes for the unexpected, with the unbelievable:

But when Bartholomew stepped up on the wall they gasped in amazement. He was wearing the most beautiful hat that had ever been seen in the Kingdom of Didd. It had a ruby larger than any the King himself had ever owned. It had ostrich plumes, and cockatoo plumes, and mockingbird plumes, and paradise plumes. Besides *such* a hat even the King’s Crown seemed like nothing.

The Grand Duke full of jealousy and anger is eager to push Bartholomew off and Bartholomew thinks his end had come. But the King is quicker and shouts to his nephew saying, “Wait!” The King is now enthralled by the “magnificent hat” and cannot take his eyes off it:

“Wait!” shouted the King. He could not take his eyes off the magnificent hat. “I *won’t* wait,” the grand Duke talked back to the King. “I’m going to push him off now! The new big hat makes me madder than ever.” And he flung out his arms to push Bartholomew off.

The King stops the Duke from pushing Bartholomew to his death by quickly grabbing him by his “fine lace collar” and disciplines the Grand Duke: “This is to teach you...that Grand Dukes *never* talk back to their King” and gives him a spanking “right on the seat of his royal silk pants.”

Sir Alaric arrives at the top of the steps counting the last hat and says: “that makes exactly 500!” “Five Hundred!” exclaims the King. “Will you sell it for 500 pieces of gold?” “Anything you say, Sire,” answers Bartholomew. “You see...I’ve never sold one before.” Bartholomew takes the hat off and gives it to the King. A magnificent event happens:

Slowly, slowly, Bartholomew felt the weight of the great hat lifting from his head. He held his breath...Then suddenly he felt the cool evening breezes blow through his hair. His face broke into a happy smile. The head of Bartholomew Cubbins was bare! “Look, Your Majesty! *Look!*” he shouted to the King. “No! *You* look at *me*,” answered the King. And he put the great hat on right over his crown.

The King and Bartholomew walk arm in arm; Bartholomew is given 500 pieces of gold and the hats are placed in a crystal case by the side of the King's throne. The conclusion is that there was never an explanation of the hats, "the strange thing that happened. They only could say it just 'happened to happen' and was not likely to happen again."

The story reveals many themes: (1.) hierarchy in society - the noble and the ordinary, (2.) the perception of the rich always happily looking down at their kingdom and feeling important as compared to the poor looking at what others have and feeling small and inadequate, (3.) there is value and gifts in each person which can be shared and given to others, (4.) the jealousy within when feeling threatened by others, (5.) the humility of the lower ordinary class, (6.) the greatness within - even in ordinary people, (7.) the weight of carrying a gift on one's shoulders and the need to find a place to express and deliver this gift, (8.) the responsibility of taking care of one's family, (9.) the great can walk with the most humble of society and vice versa, (10.) some things cannot be explained, (11.) sometimes there seems to be a little magic in life, some call it luck, others call it destiny and (12). being at the right place at the right time with preparation in hand; Theodor called this sort of meeting an accident.

On the road to self-actualization, it is necessary first to learn to be happy with who one is; like Bartholomew and his hat, the key sentence in the story:

"In the beginning, Bartholomew Cubbins didn't have five hundred hats. He had only one hat...it was probably the oldest and the plainest hat...but Bartholomew liked it – especially because of the feather that always pointed straight up in the air."

Knowing one's self is the beginning of strength within,<sup>428</sup> to keep the feather pointing straight up in the air - confidence. Also, humbleness, yet with a belief in one's self, that sometimes cannot or need not be explained to others. People tend to be jealous when someone wears different hats, walks different paths than expected - the unusual or when not understood,<sup>429</sup> but the key lies in assessing the situation, knowing thyself, and like Bartholomew when he thought to himself: "the King can do nothing dreadful to punish me, because I really haven't done anything wrong. It would be cowardly to feel afraid," to remain strong, on course. Often at the height of despair, one's situation can change, one must reach for the very top, the turret to find the magic, the

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<sup>428</sup> 8-B Finding out who one is, what one is, what one likes.

<sup>429</sup> Freedom: the ability to be spontaneous, to withdraw if this is what you wish, to create, to be whatever one is at the moment, no matter what that is, but to trust that self, to be freely oneself.

moment of change.

Theodor wore two specific hats, was two different men: Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss. He came from an ordinary beginning; he liked who he was and put into practice daily the gift laid within him,<sup>430</sup> speaking to the world through art and words combined together with humor. He exchanged his hat of communication and humor and received strength and confidence in return. A question to ask: The weight of success, did it wear on Theodor? Or: How did his gifts of illustration, words, thoughts, and communication weigh him down until he began to share them with others?

1939 – *The Seven Lady Godivas*

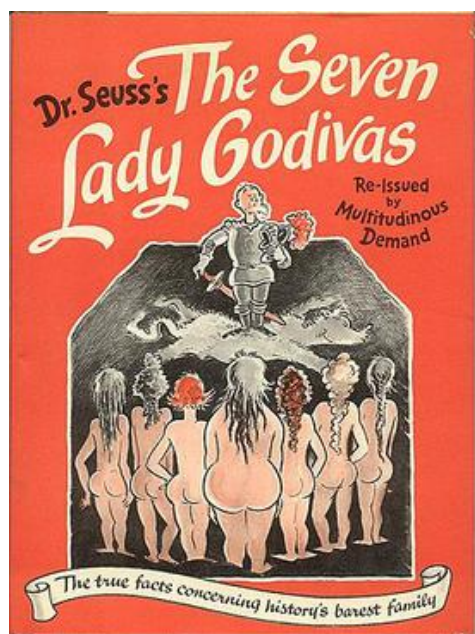


Fig. 9 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1967, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*The Seven Lady Godivas* was published by Random House in September, 1939, renewed in 1967 and again in 1987, written in prose and dedicated to the seven Godiva sisters:

To

Lady Clementina Godiva

Lady Dorcas J. Godiva

Lady Arabella Godiva

Lady Mitzi Godiva

Lady Lulu Godiva

Lady Gussie Godiva

Lady Hedwig Godiva

this historical document is

admiringly dedicated.

Unlike any of Dr. Seuss’s books, this book, except his third to last book, *You’re Only Old Once*, was written for adults. It begins with a Forward, about how Lady Godiva was misrepresented: there was not just one Lady Godiva, but seven; Peeping Tom was never really “Peeping”; it was just the family name, and “Tom and his six brothers bore it with pride.” The

<sup>430</sup> 6-B The process of actualizing one’s potential; becoming smarter, using one’s intelligence.

book is a fact fiction book, mostly fiction, based on the legend of Lady Godiva who died between 1066 and 1086; she rode naked on her horse through the streets of Coventry, with only her long red hair covering her body, asking her husband for remission of taxes which the people owed him. Everyone had been asked to stay indoors, shut the windows so not to see Lady Godiva; the only person who did see her was the tailor, to whom thereafter was known as “Peeping Tom.” The story begins giving an explanation of famous English sayings, all in the guiles of humor. Let us begin Dr. Seuss’s story.

On the fifteenth of May, 1066, Lord Godiva summons his seven daughters to the Great North Hall in the castle Godiva. The daughters arrive - naked, standing before their father who is prepared for war, wearing armor and holding a sword and a helmet; Lord Godiva is proud of his daughters; they have brains in their head and no time is ever wasted on fluffing and primping. He is headed off to war; the daughters are shocked, yet Lord Godiva, having studied horses, which at that time were “a mystery, unbroken in spirit, a contrary beast full of wiles and surprise”; encourages his daughters not to worry as he will go to battle on horseback. It is after all, the year 1066, a time to be considered not so old-fashioned.

Lord Godiva walks with confidence and a smile toward his horse, Nathan; he has a piece of sugar in hand just in case he needs it. Up on the horse he mounts. The daughters shouting: “Good luck!” and Lord Godiva responds: “To victory!” Suspense is held, for the next sentence reads: “But everyone must have shouted too loud.” Why? At the drawbridge the picture is made clear: Nathan rearing his back legs, Lord Godiva goes flying over the horse, sword in the air, with a look of surprise on his face. The daughters running to see their father, find him dead. Weeping for a moment and then straightening out their posture, decide they must study horses, to make them safe for posterity.

Turning the page, the seven daughters standing over their dead father, hands outright, make a pledge and swear together: “I swear...that I shall not wed until I have brought to light of this world some new and worthy Horse Truth, of benefit to man.” Each Lady Godiva is betrothed and in love; this could take some time, no one really knew how long.

That evening as the seven Peeping Brothers: Peeping Tom, Peeping Dick, Peeping Harry, Peeping Jack, Peeping Drexel, Peeping Sylvester, and Peeping Frelinghuysen, come to the castle to give their flowers to each sister, they read the oath which is nailed to every door which is closed; they drop their bouquets and go home to wait.

The seven Lady Godivas, each individually, longing to be with their betrothed, through various life encounters with horses, discover the following truths and are then free to wed:

1. "Don't ever look a gift horse in the mouth!"
2. "Don't put the cart before the horse."
3. "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink."
4. "Never change horses in the middle of the stream."
5. "Horseshoes are lucky."
6. "That is a horse of another color!"
7. "Don't lock the barn door after the horse has been stolen!"

The story reveals the power of determination and in looking for truth, lessons will be found. Self-actualization is not an easy journey, but there are lessons to be learnt before one can go to the next step, for some it takes longer than others to learn life's lessons.

Theodor, in writing this book early on in his career, realized writing for adults was not his forte.<sup>431</sup> He decided immediately that he would focus on writing for children: as writing for adults in *The New York Times*, November 16, 1952, he adamantly stated: "That is a horse of another color!" Theodor wrote that "adults are just obsolete children" (Seuss. "But for Grown-ups"). On the death of Theodor Geisel, *The New York Times* noted this book, *The Seven Lady Godivas*:

Mr. Geisel began using his middle name as a pen name for his cartoons because he hoped to use his surname as a novelist one day. But when he got around to doing a grown-up book -- "The Seven Lady Godivas" in 1939 -- the grown-ups did not seem to want to buy his humor, and he went back to writing for children, becoming famous and wealthy. "I'd rather write for kids," he later explained. "They're more appreciative; adults are obsolete children, and the hell with them." (Pace "Dr. Seuss")

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<sup>431</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: that which suits best for the self; Theodor was better suited in writing for children; he learned this early on, 6-B the process of actualizing one's potential; becoming smarter, using one's intelligence.

1939 - *The King's Stilts*

Fig. 10 Seuss. "Book cover."  
1967, digital image photo:  
Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*The King's Stilts* was published by Random House in October, 1939 and renewed in 1967; dedicated to Alison Margaret Budd and Deirdre Clodagh Budd, children of British friends and written in prose.

The reader is introduced visually to the story with a simple picture: a tapestry with the royal crest of the king is hanging above a closet door that is open and inside is one red pair of stilts. King Birtram, the protagonist, "naturally...*never* wore his stilts during business hours." In the Kingdom of Binn, there was much work to be done. The King rose early at five to begin his work; it began in a bathtub with his right hand signing hundreds and hundreds of important documents each day, while in his left hand, he held a royal bath brush to wash

his body. But, the "Big Work commenced – the most difficult and important work in the Whole Kingdom of Binn," began at seven sharp: the Dike Trees that surrounded the kingdom on three sides kept the sea at bay; they had heavy knotted roots with a spicy taste; these knotty roots held back the water but were also desirable to the Nizzards, a giant blackbird with sharp and pointed beaks:

These Nizzards were always flying about over the Dike Trees, waiting for a chance to swoop down and peck. If nobody stopped them, the roots would soon give way. Then the sea would pour in with a terrible roar, and every last soul in the Kingdom would drown.

King Birtram had a thousand of the largest and smartest cats in the world to chase away these Nizzards; they were called Patrol Cats and wore badges; five hundred by day and five hundred by night. The cats kept the Nizzards away and the Dike Trees kept the sea off the land. Everything and everyone had a role to play in the Kingdom of Binn.

King Birtram's Big Work was to daily watch the changing of the Cat Guard at seven: to be sure the cats were given the best food of the land, had tidy and clean places to sleep, were each brushed and had their whiskers trimmed just right. In the afternoon, the King would inspect "every root of every Dike Tree...by the edge of the sea."



At five o'clock, having finished the great task, it was time to play, the moment the King lived for. The key sentence in the story arrives: "When he worked, he really worked... but when he played, he really PLAYED!" Eric, the King's page boy is summoned and together the two run to the castle to get the stilts: "Down the slope from the Dike Trees, away from all troubles, the King and Eric would race like two boys – straight to the tall stilt closet in the castle's front hallway." The troubles are left behind and it is time to play. The King races around his castle, through the garden while the "townsfolk looked on from the walls and just loved it"; it is noted that it "*does* look rather strange. But it's hard work being King, and he does his work well. If he wants to have a bit of fun...sure!... let him have it!"

Arrives the antagonist, Lord Droon; a man who does not like laughing and believes the corners of one's mouth should go down. Watching the King he says: "*Such carryings on!... Look at his crown!... Look at his beard!... Look at him laughing!*" He decides to take the stilts away, "it took only a second"; after almost being caught, he gives the stilts to Eric, the page boy, and tells him to bury them by the sea. Eric is bothered by this demand but is threatened and follows through.

The next day, the King finds the stilts gone and calls Lord Droon: "'Droon!... Droon!... They're gone! *They're gone!*' The King stood groping in the empty stilt closet, hopelessly, searching for what wasn't there." Droon lies saying: the townspeople have taken the stilts; they expect him to act as a King; there is a plot against the King and the people are saying: "a King...should never walk on stilts!" The King must learn to live without the stilts. He agrees to try but cannot:

Day after day he grew sadder and sadder. For long hours he'd just sit, idly drumming with his fingers on the arms of his throne. He couldn't keep his mind on his work his commands to the patrol cats sounded feeble and faint. The cats seemed to know it and wouldn't obey.

Day by day they grew lazier and lazier... as chasers of Nizzards they weren't worth a thing.

Day by day the Nizzards grew bolder and bolder. They cackled and fluttered over the Dike Trees... and almost seemed to sneer at the lazy, sleeping cats.

The townsfolk began to feel frightened. Housewives couldn't keep their minds on their housework... Bootmakers couldn't keep their minds on their boots. Goldsmith couldn't keep their minds on their gold.

Cart drivers couldn't keep their minds on where they were going.

Eric knowing what was wrong could not sleep night after night until finally he decides to get the stilts, regardless of Droon. Eric is intercepted by Droon and is sent to an old deserted house where two guards are placed in front of the door and a note over the door is posted saying he has the measles. Eric devises a plan and gets out, runs through the city streets where water is beginning to trickle in, has an encounter with the Nizzards but fights them off, finds the stilts and digs them up. On the way back to the King, Eric hears Droon; he stops at a tailor shop, finds clothes to make his disguise – “out of the shop strode a strange tall man.” Droon looks at the tall man's eyes which seem familiar and with a dry mouth and hoarse voice the tall man says the boy went in the direction of the sea.

A crucial point arrives, Eric says: “No time to shrink down to a boy again...I'll have to stay a tall man.” With the stilts under his disguise, he dashes through the fields to find the King, passing Patrol Cats who are “useless and limp, fast asleep on haystacks, dozing in the trees”; finally finding the King: “his robe wasn't pressed; his crown wasn't shined; and he had deep sad circles under both of his eyes.” The King not recognizing Eric, asks who he is. Eric drops the disguise and the red stilts appear. The King happy “drew a great Kingly breath – the first one in weeks. His head shot up high; his chest broadened wide. Birtram of Binn was sturdy, straight and strong again, and every inch a King.”

The King gives the loudest command ever: “PATROL CATS!” The cats hearing the command arrive: “they fell in step; they marched ahead a thousand strong,” the King on his stilts, and Eric beside the King; facing the Nizzards, he gives the command to “Charge!” The Dike Trees begin to shake as the sea's surface is swirling behind.

The fur flew fast but the feathers flew faster! It took only ten minutes. The Kingdom was saved! The townsfolk stopped trembling indoors behind their window shades. They rushed out from their houses and filled the air with cheers.

Droon is locked in the deserted house with two guard cats in front; he is fed Nizzard prepared in a variety of ways, three times a day. Eric is given a set of his own stilts and everyday at five the two, the King and Eric, race together.

And when they played they really PLAYED. And when they worked they really WORKED. And the cats kept Nizzards away from the Dike Trees. And the Dike Trees kept the water back out of the land.

This last sentence is the main theme for this book: to play hard and to work hard; to keep a balance in life. To know and apply one's work and passion is necessary for a person to do their best work and keep their mind focused. It doesn't matter what others think or seem to think; the townspeople watching the King, just loved to see him happy. Another important theme is that of each person and element playing their part in keeping the environment in check and working together; there are roles to be played which keep equilibrium: as likened to the chain in the environment—*The Lorax* - 1971.

In self-actualization, Theodor found his balance in work and play.<sup>432</sup> His passions were in his work, drawing and writing, playing in the garden with his rock garden and entertaining small groups of friends wearing silly hats and making people laugh. In all he did, he worked hard and played hard.<sup>433</sup>

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<sup>432</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: to trust oneself deeply, the mission in life; to trust others and nature; Theodor trusted his work and his play; he found balance which gave him confidence and strength.

<sup>433</sup> Maslow wrote:

“They are devoted, working at something, something which is very precious to them - some calling or vocation in the old sense, the priestly sense. They are working at something which fate has called them to somehow and which they work at and which they love, so that the work-joy dichotomy in them disappears.” (Maslow *The Farther Reaches* 42)

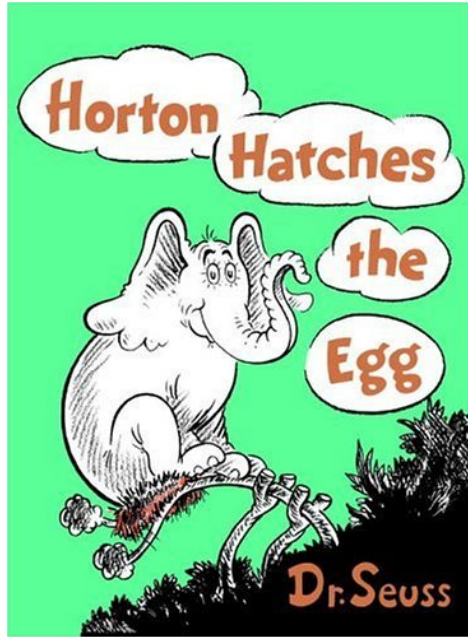
1940 - *Horton Hatches the Egg*

Fig. 11 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1968, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*Horton Hatches the Egg* was published by Random House in October, 1940, renewed in 1968, and written in rhyme; it became one of the most popular books Seuss would ever write and illustrate.

Horton is an elephant that happened to be walking past Mayzie, a bird who has an egg to hatch but wants to play rather than work; she wants to go on a vacation and find someone to stay on her nest:

“I’m tired and I’m bored  
 And I’ve kinks in my leg  
 From sitting, just sitting here day after day.  
 It’s *work!* How I hate it!  
 I’d *much* rather play!  
 I’d take a vacation, fly off for a rest  
 If I could find *someone* to stay on my nest!  
 If I could find *someone*, I’d fly away – free...”

Mayzie convinces Horton to sit and watch her egg and promises to come back shortly, but she flies off to Palm Beach where she decides to stay forever. Horton props up the tree to make it stronger and carefully, tenderly and gently climbs up the tree to sit on the sleeping egg. He sits through the seasons: autumn, winter and spring, with the cold, snow, rain, and storms. He says to himself:

“I’ll *stay* on this egg and I *won’t* let it freeze.  
 I meant what I said  
 And I said what I meant...  
 An elephant’s faithful  
 One hundred per cent!”

Horton is then taunted by his friends saying he has lost his mind thinking he is a bird. To encourage himself, he repeats his conviction of keeping his word. Next, three hunters come to

shoot Horton right in his heart. His troubles have gotten worse! But Horton now becoming protective and convinced by his belief finds courage:

HORTON STAYED ON THAT NEST,  
 He held his head high  
 And he threw out his chest  
 And he looked at the hunters  
 As much to say:  
 “Shoot if you must  
 But I *won't* run away!  
 I meant what I said  
 And I said what I meant...  
 An elephant's faithful  
 One hundred per cent!”

The hunters surprised by Horton sitting up on a tree, find it strange, amazing, and wonderfully new; they have a more lucrative idea – to bring him back to America and sell him to a circus for more money. Horton, the tree and the egg are transported in a large wagon through the jungle, over the mountains, down to the sea, and over the rolling, tossing and splashing sea. Arriving in New York, Horton is sold to a circus and travels week after week to cities all over USA. Throughout the travels, Horton in the hot tent, sitting on the egg continues to say:

“I'm meant what I said, and I said what I meant...  
 An elephant's faithful– one hundred per cent!”

Then comes the climax of the story: the circus stops in Palm Beach. Mayzie, the mother of the egg, is flying over, sees the circus and decides she wants some fun. The moment she sees Horton, and Horton sees Mayzie, the egg begins to crack.

There rang out the noisiest ear-splitting squeaks  
 From the egg that he'd sat on for fifty-one weeks!  
 A thumping! A bumping! A wild alive scratching!  
 “*My egg!*” Shouted Horton. “My EGG! WHY, IT'S HATCHING!”

“But it’s MINE!” screamed the bird, when she heard the egg crack.

(The work was all done. Now she wanted it back.)

“It’s MY egg!” She sputtered. “You stole it from me!

*Get off of my nest and get out of my tree!”*

Poor Horton backed down

With a sad, heavy heart....

But at that very instant, the egg burst apart!

And out of the pieces of red and white shell,

From the egg that he’d sat on so long and so well,

*Horton the elephant saw something whizz!*

IT HAD EARS

AND A TAIL

AND A TRUNK JUST LIKE HIS!

The audience cheered as they had never seen anything like this, an elephant-bird; they all agreed it should be like this:

“Because Horton was faithful! He sat and he sat!

He meant what he said

And he said what he meant...”

...And they sent him home

Happy,

One hundred per cent!

Realizing a situation for what it is, accepting the challenge, finding the stability to work through it with conviction and resources, a day will come when the hard work will pay off in unexpected ways. Horton met an unusual challenge presented to him on an ordinary day and with his conviction, through adverse times and conditions, was gifted with a surprising reward.

Theodor in his life was presented with unusual challenges: to not complete Oxford, but to

travel Europe, go back to America and become a cartoon artist and writer. He propped himself up with people who believed in him while others scorned him. In one of his letters he described how being in the children's book industry was not that common for the time, but later it proved worthy and brought him happiness.

Some twenty-three years ago I made a move that most of my writer friends acclaimed as the height of stupidity. [Just as Horton was mocked by his friends.]

I walked out on a fairly successful career as a writer who wrote for great big Grown-up-Adults and began to write for the Kiddie-Kar and Bubble-Gum set.

This, in the thirties in the writing profession, was not a sign of going forward. This was a step down. A loss of face. [Much like Horton, an elephant to sit on an egg, up in a tree, loss of face, identity.] At that time, the attitude of most of this country's top riders was: Writing for Children is Literary Slumming. With a few notable exceptions, they wanted no part of scribbling for little girls who played with dollies and for little boys who have never yet shaved.

And, to a certain degree, these authors were right. In those days, an appalling percentage of books for children were concocted out of inept, condescending, nature-faking treacle. They insulted the intelligence not only of a child, but also of the people who wrote them. They were batted out, hippity-hoppity, by amateurs and semi-pros with little or no experience and very tough-to-learn craft of writing. And, so, most good writers who had learned their craft stayed upstairs with the adults and pretended there were no children.<sup>434</sup>

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<sup>434</sup> An incredibly brave and strong statement: "pretended there were no children." A-2 Social interest: Theodor had a deep feeling of identification and affection for his audience - children; he had a sort of you could say, as Maslow wrote, feeling of identification with the human species, particularly children. Theodor had no cast system in his mind, higher or lower, older or younger; though, he seemed to prefer the younger and held children up in high esteem being careful *never* to write down to them or give them "treacle", corn syrup: something sweet but nothing more, only to appease their appetite, giving the children nothing to think about or challenge them. B-1 Efficient perception of reality: Theodor could see through the phoniness of the writers who tried to write for children, yet in their writing it was condescending and phony.

The funny part... and the happy part... of this brief historical essay is this:

Those same top professional writers who, a few years back, wouldn't be caught dead with their name on a Brat Book, are today writing enthusiastically in the juvenile field. More and more of them every year. (Seuss. "Brat Books")

To be self-actualized, it is a matter of conviction; once one realizes their work,<sup>435</sup> especially if it is not normal and unexpected, requires tenacity, conviction, a belief in one's heart, and encouragement from self to see the result, to stick it out through thick and thin and thereby delivering happiness and realization of self.

### 1947 - *McElligot's Pool*

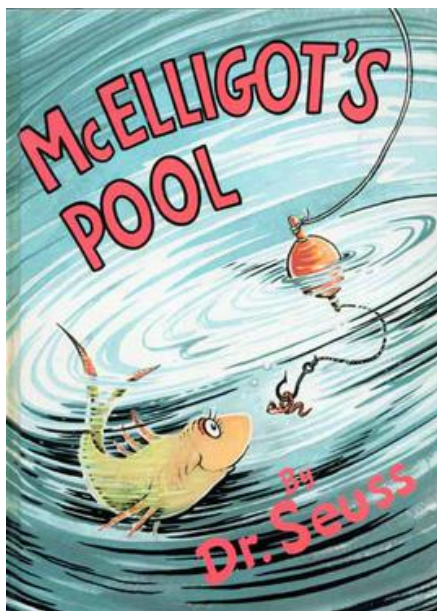


Fig. 12 Seuss. "Book cover." 1974, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*McElligot's Pool* was published in September, 1947 by Random House and renewed publication in 1974; dedicated to Theodor's father: This book is dedicated to T. R. Geisel of Springfield Mass., the world's greatest authority of Blackfish, Fiddler Crabs and Deegel Trout. This book won a Randolph Caldecott Honor Award from the American Library Association. Like most of the books to come, this book was written in rhyme.

Marco, a little boy, is the main character, the same Marco from Seuss's first book, *And to Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street*. The antagonist in this story is a farmer who

challenges Marco saying:

"Young man," laughed the farmer,

"You're sort of a fool!

You'll never catch fish

In McElligot's Pool!"

<sup>435</sup> Trust: D-1 Life Mission: Theodor realized his work and in spite of the quiet expectations of his father and the normal path his colleagues chose to travel, he trusted what was inside him. In the end was surprised and delighted with what he "hatched."



“The pool is too small.  
 And, you might as well know it,  
 When people have junk  
 Here’s the place that they throw it.”

The farmer lists all the things that can be caught except fish. Marco reflects for a moment that he has been there for three hours and has not even had a bite; but then with reflection he finds hope:

“...But, again,”  
 Well, there *might!*”  
 “ ‘Cause you never can tell  
 What goes on down below!

This pool *might* be bigger  
 Than you or I know!”

With this the story has Marco imagining where the stream can take him from an underground source to a land far away: under the pastures, through the town, under mountains, to a river and eventually to the sea. With the sea, the possibilities of fish begin:

I might catch a thin fish,

I might catch a stout fish.

I might catch a short

or

a

long,

long

drawn-out fish!

Any kind! Any shape! Any color or size!

I *might* catch some fish that would open your eyes!

The types of fish are absurd as any child's imagination can make them: there are Dog Fish, Cat Fish, fish with funny body parts, and all along there is the word *might*. From the sea, the reader is taken all over the world: to the tropics, to the north, to Hudson Bay and beyond, with all sorts of fish heading toward McElligot's Pool. There is always the hope of catching something interesting, something unexpected:

If I wait long enough, if I'm patient and cool,  
Who knows *what* I'll catch in McElligot's Pool!

The fish imagined are the ridiculous and funny, strange and bizarre, and as Marco imagines, his confidence grows: "I *might* and I *may* that's really no joke!" The end is that Marco has found the patience and willingness to wait for his wish - to catch a fish.

Oh, the sea is so full of the number of fish,  
If a fellow is patient, he *might* get his wish!  
And that's what I think  
That I'm not such a fool  
When I sit here and fish  
In McElligot's Pool!

The word *might* is used 47 times in the story. The possibilities keep Marco hoping against the odds the farmer has placed in his mind. McElligot's Pool reaches beyond the small pond the farmer can see; Marco sees endless possibilities beyond, with all sorts of fish created in his imagination. The story is of hope, possibilities and the power of dreaming. In realizing one's self, when the nay-sayers come, people who tell you to look at reality, it takes belief inside to look beyond. Theodor found the strength to look beyond - to endless possibilities. He was a man who loved to travel all over the world, seeing the funny in situations, seeing the bizarre in animals while at his father's zoo, imagining the unimaginable. He lived his life with the power of *might*.<sup>436</sup>

There is also the subtle message of anti-pollution:

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<sup>436</sup> Trust: D-1 Life Mission: Theodor's vocation was deep inside from an early age; as if the calling to write for children had been placed there, always drawing as a little boy, observing the animals at the zoo, drawing them with his own style; Theodor lived with the power of might in

“You might catch a boot  
Or you might catch a can.  
You might catch a bottle,  
But listen, young man...  
If you sat fifty years  
With your worms and your wishes,  
You’d grow a long beard  
Long before you’d catch fishes!”

Theodor wrote well in advance of his time; he was a visionary, seeing the effects of pollution, giving warning to the need of taking care of the environment.<sup>437</sup>

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his mind and imagination. He created a world from his little river to the great sea, creating characters and animals only an imagination could and did create. This might of imagination gave children the love of reading and respect to one’s self.

<sup>437</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: anger at a situation, in this case, Theodor had a righteous indignation toward pollution; using his books, he used this platform to write of social issues, social interests, identifying with the human species and the need to take care of the planet; he had a desire to help, to do something about it.

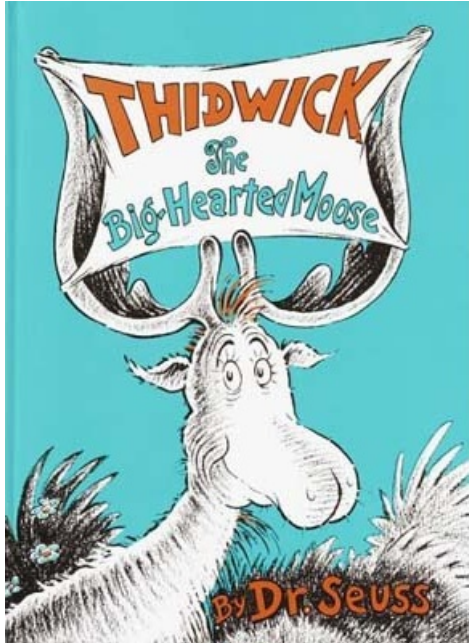
1948 - THIDWICK *The Big-Hearted Moose*

Fig. 13 Seuss. "Book cover." 1975, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

This tale of *THIDWICK The Big-Hearted Moose* was published by Random House in September, 1948 and renewed publication in 1975; it was dedicated to his wife, Helen: EXTRA MOOSE MOSS for HELEN.

The book starts off with a herd of moose at Lake-Winna-Bango; they are going hunting for moose-moss to munch. Thidwick, the main moose in the story, is at the end of the line of sixty moose and is asked by a Bingle Bug if it can jump on Thidwick's horns to catch a ride; feeling happy his antlers can be of use he welcomes his guest and further hopes the bug is comfortable. Thidwick goes on looking for moose-moss. An hour later a Tree-Spider asks the Bingle Bug if he can join on the ride. The bug says, "Hop aboard!" ... "And I think that you'll find That the moose won't object. He's the big-hearted kind!"

More guests arrive: a Zinn-a-zu Bird who builds a nest out of Thidwick's hair, the bird's wife and his uncle, and a woodpecker, who pecks holes in Thidwick's horns. At this point Thidwick's friends see the guests in his horns and tell him to "GET RID OF THOSE PESTS." Thidwick sobbing responds: "I would, but I can't... *They're guests!*" Not wanting those kind of guests, the herd of moose, Thidwick's friends, turn their backs on him and walk off saying, "If *those* are your guests, we don't want *you* around! You can't stay with us, 'cause you're just not our sort!" Thidwick loses all of his friends, except for the guests in his horns. More guests join: squirrels, who hide nuts in the holes of his horns, a Bobcat and a Turtle.

The reader sees in the eyes of Thidwick sadness and is asked: "Well, what would YOU do/ If it happened to YOU?" The rationale response is:

You couldn't say "Skat!" 'cause that wouldn't be right.

You couldn't shout "Scram!" 'cause that isn't polite.

A host has to put up with all kinds of pests.

For a host, above all, must be nice to his guests.

So you'd try hard to smile, and you'd try to look sweet  
 And you'd go right on looking for moose-moss to eat.

Thidwick is confronted with the coming of winter, needing moose-moss to munch. Seeing the herd crossing the river to find food on the other side, he too begins to walk in the same direction. The moment his hoof hits the water the guests scream:

“STOP!” ... “You can't do this to us!  
 These horns are our home and you've no right to take  
 Our home to the far distant side of the lake!”

Thidwick, with his kind, big heart, responds with a lump in his throat: “Be fair!” The guests deciding to be fair, take a vote; with “leven to one,” Thidwick loses! Thidwick, starving, climbs back on the shore and to no surprise, “*They asked in some more!*” A fox arrives along with mice, fleas, a big bear, and then “came a swarm of three hundred and sixty-two bees!” Thidwick heavy and sad, losing hope, sinks down to his knees with a groan.<sup>438</sup> Just as Thidwick thinks it can't get any worse, the reader is given further suspense: “An then, THEN came something that made his heart freeze.” One has to turn the page to find out what made Thidwick's heart freeze!

*Bullets came zinging right past Thidwick's face!*  
 Guns were bang-binging all over the place!  
 “Get that moose!  
 Get that moose!

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<sup>438</sup> Self-actualizing people often attract people who are takers: they see someone with a kind heart and something they need. Maslow wrote about this regarding interpersonal relations A-3: “they attract at least some admirers, friends or even disciples or worshippers. The relation between the individual and his train of admirers is apt to be rather one-sided. The admirers are apt to demand more than our individual is willing to give...these devotions can be rather embarrassing, distressing, and even distasteful to the self-actualizing person, since they often go beyond ordinary bounds.” (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 167)

This is exactly the scene one sees with Thidwick. Theodor seemed to keep himself clear of these sort of people; Helen especially protected him throughout his early career, keeping an eye on their social calendar. Lessons Theodor was learning in life came to life in his books. Even to the end, Thidwick was “kind and pleasant” to his guests; Maslow confirmed: “The usual picture is of our subject being kind and pleasant when forced into these relationships, but ordinarily trying to avoid them as gracefully as possible” (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 167).

Thidwick heard a voice call.  
 “Fire again and again  
 And shoot straight, one and all!  
 We must get his head  
 For the Harvard Club wall!”

Thidwick, afraid for his life begins to run with the “five hundred pounds on his horns”; with this chase Thidwick is thinking he could run faster without these pests, but reminds himself: “But a host, above all, must be nice to his guests.” After going through a variety of places: a canyon, a rocky trail, a gully and gulch, the reader sees a comparison, the heart of the guests versus Thidwick’s heart: “with the hard-hearted guests raced the soft-hearted moose!”

The climax of the story arrives as the reader turns the page:

*Then finally they had him!*  
 Because of those pests, he had run out of luck,  
 Because of those guests on his horns, he was stuck!  
 He gasped! He felt faint! And the whole world grew fuzzy!  
 Thidwick was finished, completely....  
 ...or *WAS* he...?

Thidwick’s tongue is hanging out, even the guests have fear in their eyes - hope is gone. But Dr. Seuss has the reader on their toes as he asks the question: “...or *WAS* he...?” A cliff hanger is again presented; turning the page, Thidwick has a grin on his face and a sparkle in his eye; his horns and guests are not visible in the illustration and finally Thidwick has hope:

Finished...?  
 Not Thidwick!  
 DECIDEDLY NOT!  
 It’s true, he was in a most terrible spot,  
*But NOW he remembered a thing he’d forgot!*  
 A wonderful thing that happens each year  
 To the horns of all moose and the horns of all deer.

Today was the day,  
Thidwick happened to know...

Thidwick's grin and eyes are funny. Something wonderful is about to happen. The reader can feel it and as the page is turned, the sentence is completed, and hope above all hope arrives!

*...that OLD horns come off so that NEW ones can grow!*

And he called to the pests on his horns as he threw 'em,  
"You wanted my horns; now you're quite welcome to 'em!  
Keep 'em! They're yours!  
As for ME, I shall take  
Myself to the far distant  
Side of the lake!"

The illustration needs no words: the horns have fallen off in mid-air; the guests' eyes are huge, filled with anger and surprise; Thidwick the big-hearted moose is bending down, showing his respect to his guests but now free from his horns, his guests and his responsibility of being the correct host. He swims across the lake to join his friends "where there's moose-moss to munch."

Feeling satisfied that Thidwick is finally free, the reader may think the story has come to a happy ending. But with Dr. Seuss, justice rules: "His *old* horns today are / Where *you* knew they *would* be. / His guests are still on them, / All stuffed, as they *should* be." ...pictured hanging on the Harvard Club wall.

Can it get better than that? Justice wins out in the end and everyone reaps their just reward after learning a difficult lesson: kindness has a limit when one is being taken for granted and abused. There is a time to say no, especially when people are asking with selfish intentions and hard-hearted hearts! Self-actualization demands limits, boundaries in one's heart and life. To know these boundaries requires difficult lessons learned through the school of hard knocks; but to be effective to one's self and then to others, it is necessary to know the right time to say yes or to say no.<sup>439</sup>

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<sup>439</sup> Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: Theodor shared his belief in being kind, yet not being taken for granted; he could not be fooled by phonies. In life there are many people who

This book was written less than three years after the end of WWII; Hitler, wanting to take over the world, to create the perfect human race, perched on many countries' antlers, appearing to be a friend, yet in truth, was "hard-hearted." He was a parasite. Surely there were thoughts in Theodor's mind about false charity, false intentions. The key repeating sentence is "For a host, above all, must be nice to his guests." Even in kindness, though it seems unfair, abuse is evident. Theodor portrayed the need to set boundaries, as mentioned above, warning that there are people with incorrect motives, selfish ambitions. Assuring his readers, there comes a time when truth wins out; people's motives will come to the forefront and everyone will eat their just dessert; Thidwick eventually was free to be with his friends, the guests were stuffed and Hitler lost heart.

One must also see a little sentence in the very beginning when Thidwick has just invited a few guests on his antlers and his moose friends tell him, "If *those* are your guests, we don't want *you* around! You can't stay with us, 'cause you're just not our sort!"<sup>440</sup> On one hand the wrong kind of associations can destroy who you are, for the woodpecker had just pecked holes in Thidwick's horns; friends who really care can often see the truth, while the "host" at times cannot; friends give helpful advice. Yet, on the other hand, the sentence shows a type of arrogance and conceit; there are possibilities of learning from others of different class. The key is this: attention to the intent of the heart. The wrong friends can keep self-actualization at bay and the right friends will give encouragement to become all that one was meant to be.<sup>441</sup>

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want to get a free ride, appearing to be one's friend, yet in truth, have dishonest motives, for self-gain; these people in Theodor's and Thidwick's eyes were phonies.

<sup>440</sup> Maslow wrote that self-actualized people "can be and are friendly with anyone of suitable character regardless of class, education, political belief, race, or color. As a matter of fact it often seems as if they are not even aware of these differences, which are for the average person so obvious and so important" (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 167). Thidwick was not bothered by the differences, yet the other moose were.

<sup>441</sup> A-3 Interpersonal relations: in Maslow's book, *Motivation and Personality*, he described a self-actualizing person as "people [who] tend to be kind or at least patient to almost everyone. They have an especially tender love for children and are easily touched by them... they love or rather have compassion for all mankind" (166 – 167). Thidwick and Theodor revealed these characteristics. Maslow continued further with "The Democratic Character Structure," explaining that SA people can be friendly with all types of people with "suitable character regardless of class, education, political belief, race or color...they are not even aware of these differences" (167). What is important is "to learn from anybody who has something to teach them – no matter what other characteristics he may have" (168). Yet, at the same time, as Dr. Seuss wrote, it is important to pay attention to the motives of the heart. Theodor had a very close knit group of friends; he was very selective. Maslow wrote that "these individuals, themselves



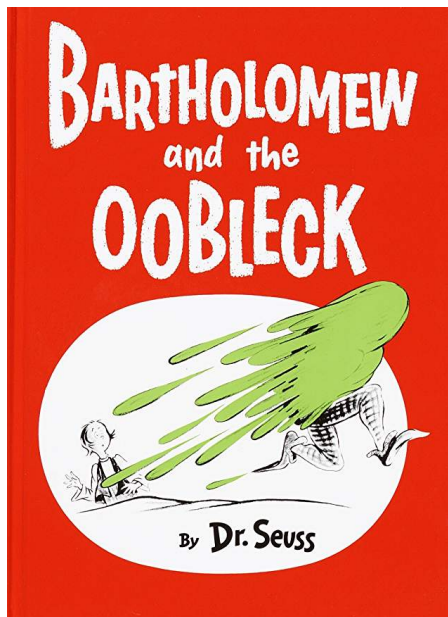
1949 - *Bartholomew and the Oobleck*

Fig. 14 Seuss. "Book cover." 1976,  
digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-  
Prutzman, 2017.

*Bartholomew and the Oobleck* was published in October, 1949, by Random House and renewed in 1976; it was the winner of the Caldecott award in 1950, and dedicated to Kelvin C. Vanderlip, JR., Theodor's godson and son of Frank Vanderlip, an American banker and journalist in the late 1880's to the early 1900's; the Geisel's were friends with the Vanderlip family. The reader is taken back to the Kingdom of Didd, with Bartholomew Cubbins, the page boy, and King Derwin; both characters were in Dr. Seuss's second book, *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*; which was written in prose as is this story, with pieces of rhyme throughout.

It is recounted as *The-Year-the-King-Got-Angry-with-the-Sky*; he would look at the sky and growl over and over, getting angrier and angrier at what came down from the sky: And that winter when the snow came down, he started shouting! "This snow! This fog! This sunshine! This rain! BAHH! These four things that come down from my sky!" The King wanted something new to fall from his sky and when Bartholomew tried to reason with the King that "even kings can't rule the *sky*" - this put the King into a rage. Thinking about it constantly, one night, "a strange wild light began to shine in his gray-green eyes"; the king has an idea to call the royal magicians. Bartholomew warns the King that he may be sorry but blows the secret whistle to summon the magicians. The magicians come from their "musty hole beneath the dungeon" and are asked to make something fall from the King's sky like no one has ever had before. The magicians say one word: "Oobleck." The King can barely fall asleep as he is so excited; Bartholomew is worried and cannot sleep and the magicians go to their Mystic Mountain Neeka-take and begin their chant:

"Oh, snow and rain are not enough!  
Oh, we must make some brand-new stuff!  
So feed the fire with wet mouse hair,

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elite, select from their friends elite, but this is an elite of character, capacity and talent, rather than of birth, race, blood, name, family, age, youth, fame, or power" (168).

*Burn an onion. Burn a chair.*  
*Burn a whisker from your chin.*  
*And burn a long sour lizard skin.*  
*Burn yellow twigs and burn red rust*  
*And burn a stocking full of dust.*  
*Make magic smoke, green, thick and hot!*  
*(It sure smells dreadful, does it not?)*  
*That means the smoke is now just right*  
*So, quick! Before the day gets light,*  
*Go, magic smoke! Go high! Go high!*  
*Go rise into the kingdom's sky!*  
*Go make the oobleck tumble down*  
*On every street, in every town!*  
*Go make the wondrous oobleck fall!*  
*Oh, bring down oobleck on us all!"*

The next day it seems nothing has happened until suddenly Bartholomew sees a "little greenish cloud...just a wisp of greenish steam. But now it was coming lower, closer, down toward the fields, farms, and houses of the sleeping little kingdom." Then green blobs fall right into the hand of Bartholomew Cubbins who wakes up the King to say, "Your oobleck! It's falling!" The King is excited; the blobs start to get bigger and bigger and Cubbins is ordered to run to the royal bell tower to have the bells rung to announce a holiday. The bell ringer tries to ring the bells, but oobleck is stuck in the bells and the bells cannot ring. Bartholomew looks out the window of the tower and sees the oobleck is stuck on the wings of the robins: "If that green stuff sticks up *robins*, it'll stick up *people*, too!" Bartholomew must warn the people and goes to the trumpeter but he cannot blow his trumpet, it is full of oobleck; off to the Captain of the Guard, who tries to prove a point that he is not scared of the now greenish baseball size oobleck and eats some to only have his mouth stuck shut and green sticky bubbles come out; next, off to the Royal Stables, but when arriving there is oobleck everywhere, falling as big as footballs and no one can move; so he goes inside the palace but sees the oobleck is "as big as greenish buckets full of gooey asparagus soup" coming in through the windows, dripping through the ceiling, rolling down the chimneys and even in the keyholes. The lords and ladies come out of their

rooms but Bartholomew tells them to stay in their beds, under the blankets; they don't listen out of fear: "But nobody paid the slightest attention. Everyone in the palace started rushing madly about." Bartholomew saw the Royal Cook stuck to pots, the Royal Laundress stuck to the clothesline, the Royal Fiddlers stuck to their fiddles and "every last friend he had in the world was flopping and floundering, all hopelessly caught in the goo."

Suddenly, Bartholomew remembers the King and wonders where he is; the King is stuck to his throne with his royal crown stuck to his head. The King tells him to go to the Mountain Neeka-tave to tell the magicians to stop the oobleck; Bartholomew cannot, the mountain is buried deep in oobleck. The King tries to remember the magicians chant but cannot; Bartholomew at his wits end says to the King: "And it's going to keep on falling...until your whole great marble palace tumbles down! So don't waste your time saying foolish *magic* words. YOU ought to be saying some *simple* words!" The King replies, "*Simple* words...? What do you mean *boy*?" And Bartholomew delivers the answer, "I mean, ... this is all your fault! Now, the least you can do is say the simple words, 'I'm sorry'." The King has never been spoken to like this and bellows out, "What!"... "ME... *ME* say I'm sorry! Kings *never* say 'I'm sorry!' And I am the mightiest king in all the world!" The climax of the story is when Bartholomew looks the King in the eyes and says, "You may be a mighty king," ... "But you're sitting in oobleck up to your chin. And so is everyone else in your land. And if you won't even *say* you're sorry, *you're no sort of a king at all!*"

As a blob of oobleck falls on the King's head, he begins to cry and says, "Come back Bartholomew Cubbins! You're right! It *is* all my fault! And I *am* sorry! Oh, Bartholomew, I'm awfully, *awfully* sorry." Immediately the oobleck stops falling and starts to melt away and the sun comes out. "Maybe there *was* something magic in those simple words, 'I'm sorry.' Maybe there *was* something magic in those simple words, 'It's all my fault.'" Bartholomew took the King by the sleeve, went to the bell tower and had the King ring the bell tower. "Then the King proclaimed a brand-new national holiday...in honor of the four perfect things that come down from the sky."

It is said that Theodor was inspired to write this book after he heard a soldier in Belgium say: "Rain, always rain. Why can't we have something different for a change?" (Fensch *The Man Who* 95). The moral is rather simple, it seems, and is applicable to self-actualization: to be

thankful for the everyday things we take for granted;<sup>442</sup> to be able to say the simple words “I’m sorry” and “It’s my fault”; to recognize that everyone has a role to play in the world and is important, from the least to the greatest, the youngest to the eldest, but not simple to put into practice; pride and arrogance keeps self-actualization at a distance, for it demands looking inward, being honest, having humility and thereby bringing growth.<sup>443</sup>

Theodor always appreciated the idea of respecting individuals for who they are and not for their rank or age. He wrote for children with the same respect as for an adult. In *The Saturday Evening Post*, October 23, 1965, Theodor spoke of the process of writing for children, but more importantly revealed his view on respecting the individual: “A formula is usually tantamount to writing down to children, which is something a child spots instantly. I try to treat the child as an equal<sup>444</sup> and go on the assumption a child can understand anything that is read to him if the writer takes care to state it clearly and simply enough” (Jennings).

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<sup>442</sup> Awareness: B-2 Freshness of appreciation: a miracle remains a miracle even if it happens every morning. Theodor delivered the thought that the rain, snow, the everyday happenings can be appreciated; there is so much to be in awe of in the world, this awe keeps boredom and contempt at bay. Malsow, in his book *Motivation and Personality*, wrote:

...getting used to our blessings is one of the most nonevil generators of human evil, tragedy, and suffering. What we take for granted we undervalue, and we are therefore too apt to sell a valuable birthright for a mess of pottage, leaving behind regret, remorse, and a lowering of self-esteem...we learn their true value after we have lost them...life could be vastly improved if we could count our blessings as self-actualizing people can and do, and if we could retain their constant sense of good fortune and gratitude for it. (163 – 164)

<sup>443</sup> 5-B Making better choices; to be courageous and take responsibility for oneself; to listen to the inner voice, be humble and honest.

<sup>444</sup> Honesty: A-3 Interpersonal relations: Theodor let go of boundaries and ego in dealing with people; he had a great respect for children. Maslow stated that self-actualized people “have an especially tender love for children and are easily touched by them” (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 167); these children whom Theodor respected and wrote for, had not been yet been adulterated by adult’s rules and their narrow ways of thinking.

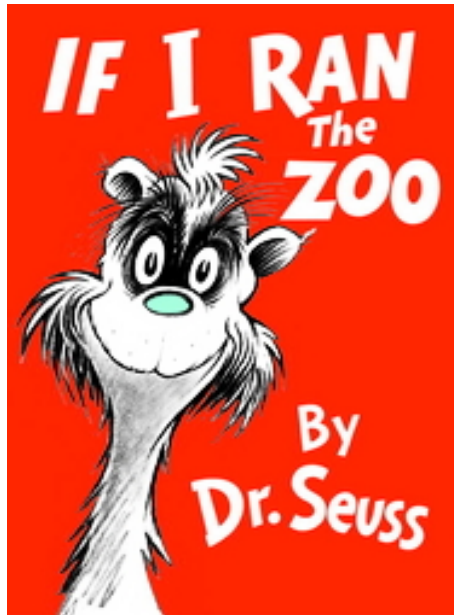
1950 - *If I Ran the Zoo*

Fig. 15 Seuss. "Book cover." 1977, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*If I Ran the Zoo* was published in 1950 and renewed in 1977 by Random House; it was dedicated to Toni and Michael Gordon Tackaberry Thompson, his godchildren of James Thompson and Peggy Conklin, a Broadway actress. The story is about a young boy named Gerald McGrew and his thoughts and imaginations on how he would run a zoo; it is written in anapestic tetrameter, comic rhyme.

Young Gerald McGrew walks into the zoo and sees the zookeeper with his eyes closed, smile on his face, hands in his pocket, and beside him in a cage, a sleeping lion. Gerald looks up with puzzlement on his face yet gives the zookeeper credit:

"It's a pretty good zoo,"  
Said young Gerald McGrew,  
"And the fellow who runs it  
Seems proud of it, too."

Turning the page, Gerald has taken the zookeeper's place; eyes closed, smile on his face, hands in his pocket and beside him in a cage, the lion and tiger have woken up and are wondering what has happened. The little boy begins to imagine what it would be like if *he* ran the zoo; surely he would make changes because,

The lions and tigers and that kind of stuff  
They have up here now are not *quite* good enough.  
You see things like these in just any old zoo.  
They're awfully old-fashioned. I wanted something *new!*

Off Gerald wanders through the zoo with his imagination, letting the ordinary animals out to make way for the "un-usual kind." He imagines all sort of animals, beasts, and strange creatures that will make people talk and gawk and swallow their gum when they wonder where

he gets things like that from. Gerald pushes himself and his imagination when he says “But that’s just a start. I’ll do better than that.” Off to strange lands he goes.

If you want to catch beasts you don’t see every day,  
 You have to go places quite out-of-the-way.  
 You have to go places no others can get to.  
 You have to get cold and you have to get wet, too.

Gerald makes up imaginary contraptions and machines to catch the beasts, going all over the planet, no place too high, the mountains of Zomba-ma-Tant, and places not heard of, the country of Motta-fa-Potta-fa-Pell.

*Then* the people will say, “Now I like that boy heaps,  
 His New Zoo, McGrew Zoo, is growing by leaps.  
 He captures them wild and he captures them meek,  
 He captures them slim and he captures them sleek.  
 What *do* you suppose he will capture next week?”

The reader is wondering as they turn the page, what will come next? Gerald continues to capture with imaginary machines, unusual creatures and bugs from various states in America – North Dakota, South Carolina and far-off lands; and so, people will think it is a wonder and...

*Then* people will flock to my zoo in a mobsk.  
 “McGrew,” they will say, “does a wonderful jobsk!  
 He hunts with such vim and he hunts with such vigor,  
 His New Zoo, McGrew Zoo, gets bigger and bigger!”

At one point he brings eight Persian Princes carrying baskets but does know their names; “So don’t ask it.” With no sleep, Gerald goes on searching as he hears the town gasp.

Then the whole wall town will gasp, “Why, this boy never sleeps!  
 No keeper before ever kept what *he* keeps!  
 There’s no telling WHAT that young fellow will do!”  
 And then, just to show them, I’ll sail to Ka-Troo

And bring back an It-Kutch a Preep and a Proo  
a Nerkle a Nerd and a Seersucker, too!

Gerald is now hunting animals that end and rhyme with gus: Hippo-no-Hungus, Bippo-no-Bungus, Dippo-no-Dungus and Nippo-no-Nungus, living in Nungus and Dungus. With this the people will say,

“This Zoo Keeper, New Keeper’s simply astounding!  
He travels so far that you’d think he would drop!  
When *do* you suppose this young fellow will stop?”

Turning the page, the answer is evident:

Stop...?  
Well, I should.  
But I won’t stop until  
I’ve captured the Fizza-ma-Wizza-ma-Dill,  
The world’s largest bird from the Island of Gwark  
Who only eats pine trees and spits out the bark.  
And boy! When I get *him* back home to my park,  
The whole *world* will say, “Young McGrew’s made his mark.  
He’s built a zoo better than Noah’s whole Ark!  
These wonderful, marvelous beasts that he chooses  
Have made him the greatest of all the McGrewses!”

The imagined zoo opens: cars are driving through the gate entrance, people with excitement on their faces are walking in with great anticipation, the animals are proud as they can be, and meanwhile - Gerald McGrew standing on top of the entrance building, is small and discreet giving a zebra looking animal a drink – thinking:

“WOW!” They’ll all cheer,  
*“What this zoo must be worth!*  
*It’s the gol-darndest zoo*  
*On the face of the earth!”*

The last page turned, the reader is brought back to the first page and reality: the zoo keeper is back in his place with his eyes closed, smile on his face, and hands in his pocket; the sleeping lion is in his cage and the little boy, Gerald, is looking up with puzzlement on his face to the zoo keeper and says:

“Yes...  
*That’s* what I’d do,”  
 Said young Gerald McGrew.  
 “I’d make a few changes  
 If *I* ran the zoo.”

The story goes from one imagination to the next, getting grander and grander, with the people looking in being more and more impressed. In the end the crowd is cheering as the greatest zoo in the world is imagined. One must think big before ever achieving greatness, pushing the limits - all begins with thoughts and ideas. To experience self-actualization: the extra, the un-usual, one’s potential within, one must be willing to go odd places and be in uncomfortable situations and conditions, stay up later, work harder and not stop.

Theodor had the ideas in his head for books which only he could write.<sup>445</sup> “In his head, he had such definite ideas about books he wanted others to do,” Julie said (Julie Olfe, the Geisel’s secretary), “but they could not carry out ideas that he could not express” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 199). Like Gerald, Theodor’s ideas were grand and took a mind which was willing to go beyond.<sup>446</sup>

Theodor at the age of 46 was creating his world where one day the world would say “WOW” to a man’s imagination that touched the world. Like the zoo keeper in the book, his father, Theodor Robert Geisel, a zoo keeper, was proud of his boy as it is noted in a letter written to Theodor on July 28, 1983, by Mary A. Ashe:

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<sup>445</sup> D-1 Life mission: Theodor had this mission to create an imaginary world for children, with imaginary creatures; in his life as he searched for his own path, he was discovering along the way what was suited only for him; it would be impossible for someone else to have the same imagination. It was solely his mission.

<sup>446</sup> Freedom: Theodor had his own freedom; C-1 Detachment: he was detached and undisturbed by the creativity that came forth; he trusted himself to be freely who he was letting his mind be and enjoyed the creations he imagined. With this strength and confidence, Theodor could appear to be like an unspoiled child in his creativeness C-2. He changed the conception of creativeness to true inventiveness and did indeed create a world, a zoo, books filled with zany creatures and animals for all the world to see.



Each of our group chose to explain an approaching vacation time, lest it be thought we were ill or otherwise met up with unpleasantries. Your father's explanation was always the same... "I'm going out to see my boy". On his return, one of the group would ask – "How is he doing?" His answer to question— "He seems to be doing well." Knowing the celebrity his "boy" was, and knowing his feelings of pride for his "boy", we would chuckle affectionately at his modesty. He was truly a remarkable person, so kind and deep feeling for all. (Ashe)

When Gerald is asked if he will stop, he says he should but he will not until the whole world will say he has made his mark. In *Dr. Seuss and Mr. Geisel* it is said "Ted chafed at Helen's discipline: 'They had so much in common, but they were driving each other crazy. Helen wasn't well, and she probably depressed Ted. She had been very, very good for him, but I could not say she was good for him at that time'" (193). Theodor had a drive within that pushed him; discipline and imagination do not always work hand in hand,<sup>447</sup> especially when the imagination is what brought success and meaning to his reality. Theodor did not stop work until a month before his death.

Theodor visiting his hometown of Springfield, on May 21, at the age of 82, himself, gasped a Wow!

Finally, his hosts from City Library gently ushered the tall, grey-bearded author back into the bus, and a line of people about 20 yards long waved wildly and, using the titles of two of his books, began chanting, "Yes, we like your 'Green Eggs and Ham,' thank you, thank you, 'Sam I am.'"

A loud "Wow" and a deep sigh came from deep in the throat of the 82-year-old author. (Osterman *And to Think That*)

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<sup>447</sup> Freedom: C-3 Spontaneity: springing for an effect; to have an effect needs surprise; Theodor appreciated the unknown in human behavior, creating suspense, the cliff hangers, making the reader want to turn the page. In his life, he was inspired by travel which often brought pleasant and unexpected surprises; at parties, often slipping away with a friend to act spontaneous rather than act the part.

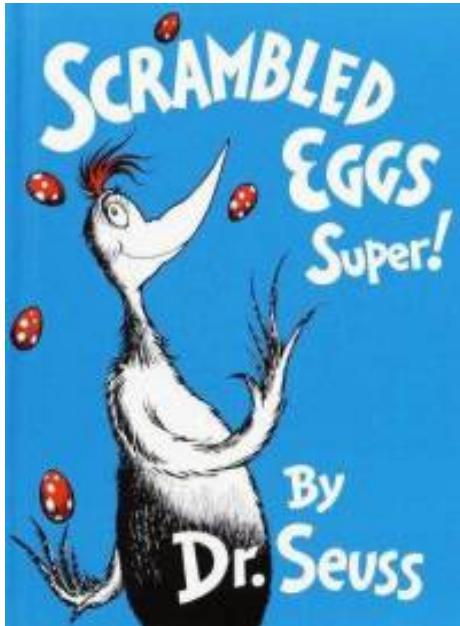
1953 - *Scrambled Eggs Super!*

Fig. 16 Seuss. "Book cover." 1953, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*Scrambled Eggs Super!* was published by Random House in 1953, written in rhyme, and dedicated to Libby, Orlo, Brad, and Barry Childs. Orlo and Libby (Elizabeth) Childs were close friends of Theodor and Helen.

*Scrambled Egg Super* starts in an ordinary kitchen with a little boy, Peter T. Hooper, telling his sister, Liz, that he doesn't like to brag but he is the best cook there is and is about to tell her something he made last Tuesday that is worth talking about. Turning the page, there are two hands with an egg in each and Peter's thoughts about scrambled eggs: they are always the same because they are eggs from a hen. Why not use other eggs from other birds?

The imagination is set to go! Different un-usual birds are imagined from all over the world, in bizarre places, with

varying sizes of eggs. Peter takes these eggs home, adds some tasty ingredients, whisks them up and says:

Then I tasted the stuff  
And it tasted quite fine,  
*But not quite fine enough.*

So off he goes, searching for more eggs. He finds birds, but they are not laying so he goes on until suddenly he finds birds all over the place laying eggs. His imagination of what he will make is peaked:

Why, I'd have a scramble *more* super than super!  
*Scrambled eggs Super-dee-Dooper-dee-Booper*  
*Special deluxe a-la-Peter T Hooper!*

Continuing his search, he finds the sweetest eggs in the world, eggs from the Kweet; an explanation is given why they are so sweet, going down the food chain: the Kweet eat the trout,

the trout eat the Wogs, (the sweetest frogs), the Wogs eat the sweetest bees and the bees eat the blossoms off the Beeslenut trees, which are sweeter than sweet. Peter then travels to more places, with birds of varying sizes of eggs: some as big as a pin head - no bigger, to a bird called a Pelf - laying eggs three times bigger than herself. Friends are called in for help to catch an egg in the North Pole, on a boat called a Katta-ma-Side. And on he goes until he needs just one more:

And I saved it for last...  
 The egg of the frightful Bombastic Aghast!  
 And that bird is so mean and that bird is so fast  
 That I had to escape on a Jill-ikka-Jast  
 A fleet-footed beast who can run like a deer  
 But looks sort of different. You steer him by ear.

Turning the page, back in the kitchen, eggs are stacked everywhere; Peter begins to cook something amazing - his eyes excited and his sleeves rolled up:

All through with the searching! All through with the looking!  
 I had all I needed! And now for the cooking.  
 I rushed to the kitchen, the place where I'd stacked 'em.  
 I rolled up my sleeves. I unpacked 'em and cracked 'em  
 And shucked 'em and chucked 'em in ninety-nine pans.  
 Then I mixed in some beans. I used fifty-five cans.  
 Then I mixed in some ginger, nine prunes and three figs  
 And parsley. Quite sparsely. Just twenty-two sprigs.  
 Then I added six cinnamon sticks and a clove.  
*And my scramble was ready to go on the stove!*

The last page has Peter leaning back on a counter, eyes shut with contentment as he has just told his story with delight; Liz and a cat have a look of amazement and surprise on their faces. Peter ends by saying:

And you know how they tasted?  
 They tasted just like...  
 Well, they tasted exactly,  
*Exactly* just like ... like Scrambled eggs Super-  
 Dee-Dooper-dee-Booper, Special de luxe  
 a-la-Peter T. Hooper.

A fun story with Peter's imagination, takes the reader throughout the world to create a delicious dish. Why have normal, everyday scrambled eggs when there are so many birds in the world laying various and strange types of eggs? Go on an adventure searching for what is already out in the world, but not normally used, a Tizzle-Topped Grouse, for example, and mix it with the ordinary: sugar, pepper, horseradish, and nuts. Tasting it and realizing it tastes fine but not quite fine enough, one must search deeper and higher for more; then again with a little more bizarre or extra-ordinary, add it to the ordinary: beans, ginger, prunes, figs, parsley, cinnamon and cloves to make up for a very tasty dish. And so it is in life, in self-actualization, making the most of the ordinary, searching for what is out there but never thought about, looking deep within and without. Trying one's best but knowing it can be better, can be tastier, one must push to find that "extra-ordinary." A story about ordinary and the "other" fine things one can choose.<sup>448</sup>

Theodor in his life kept tasting his work. It was good, but it could be better; even in his last message he said it must be better:

"Any message or slogan? Whenever things go a bit sour in a job I'm doing, I always tell myself, 'You can do better than this.'

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<sup>448</sup> Awareness: the ability to know what is going on inside and to be able to express this; to be aware of one's world, to see and to hear; Theodor in this book expressed the idea to be aware, of the ordinary (B-2, freshness of appreciation over and over the basic goods of life) and the extra-ordinary; in mixing the two there can be peak experiences, B-3: limitless horizons that open the vision.

The best slogan I can think of to leave with the kids of the U.S.A. would be: ‘We can... and we’ve got to... do better than this.’”<sup>449</sup> (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 287)

Gerald in the zoo knew he could make a better zoo and so he did with effort and determination. Pushing his mind when challenged to make a book using only 50 words, Theodor created *The Cat in the Hat*, a book that changed American literature and the lives of millions of children around the world by teaching them to read with fun - the little extra important ingredient! And in the end, like Peter and Liz: Theodor sitting with Audrey, his wife, or his agent Phyllis, or a friend... sharing his life and recalling what he had made - mixing the ordinary and the millions of other “eggs”, plus the one more, the most “frightful”, the one that looked “sort of different” - all to make Scrambled Eggs Super-Dee-Dooper-dee-Booper, Special de luxe a-la-Dr. Seuss.

1954 - *Horton Hears a Who!*

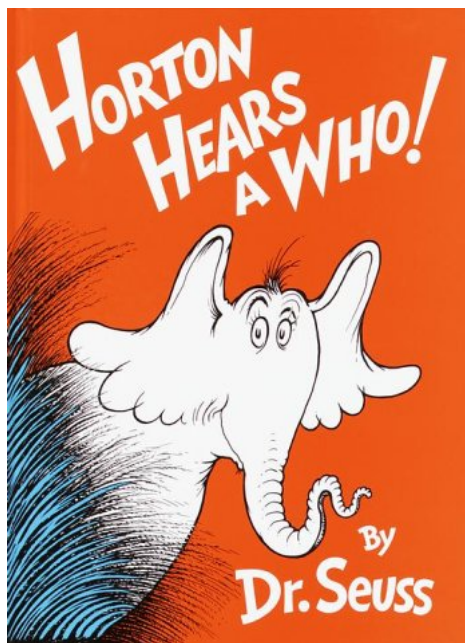


Fig. 17 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1982, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*Horton Hears a Who!* was published in 1954 by Random House, renewed in 1982, and written in rhyme and dedicated: For My Great Friend, Mitsugi Nakamura of Kyoto, Japan; a Kyoto university professor Theodor had met while touring Japan to see the effects of the war on the youth.

Horton is an elephant living in the Jungle of Nool. On the fifteenth of May, while enjoying a splash in a cool pool he hears a small noise. Looking around he cannot see anything except for a speck of dust but hears someone calling for help. Realizing a dust speck cannot speak, he rationalizes that there is a creature very small on it, too small for his eyes to see, but believing it is in danger on the dust speck, he must steer it to safety because: “A person’s a person, no matter how small.” Horton puts the dust speck very gently and with the greatest of care down on a soft clover. A sour kangaroo and her baby arrive and make fun of Horton as he is talking to a clover. Horton tries to convince them that there is someone or even a family on the clover. The kangaroos jump into the pool making a big splash and calling Horton a fool. Horton is now

<sup>449</sup> <sup>449</sup> Honesty: this was a deep feeling inside Theodor; this drive to excel, A-2 Social interest and A-3 Interpersonal relations: pushed him throughout his entire life to greatness, to do better.

determined to protect the little speck and goes away from the water into the jungle only to meet monkeys who mock him as well, saying he is out of his head. Horton thinks about putting the clover down for a moment but replies:

“Should I put this speck down?...” Horton thought with alarm.

“If I do, these small persons may come to great harm.

I *can't* put it down. And I *won't!* After all

A person's a person. No matter how small.”

Horton continues through the jungle and suddenly hears a “speck-voice talking!” Horton listens as the creature introduces himself and his village; he is the Mayor of *Who*-ville and the creatures are called *Whos*. The *Whos* thank Horton for saving their village. Just as Horton says they are safe and he will protect them, the page is turned and three monkeys, The Wickersham Brothers, are climbing on Horton's back to grab the speck at the top of his trunk to stop this nonsense of an elephant talking to a clover. The monkeys bring the speck to an eagle called Vlad Vlad-i-koff, and tell him to get rid of it. Vlad Vlad-i-koff takes the speck and flies through the night away from Horton and drops the clover in a field of clover “a hundred miles wide” at precisely 6:56 the next morning. The entire time Horton follows the eagle through the night, over mountains and to the clover field. Horton is determined.

All that late afternoon and far into the night

That black-bottom bird flapped his wings in fast flight,

While Horton chased after, with groans, over stones

That tattered his toenails and battered his bones,

And begged, “Please don't harm all my little folks, who

Have as much right to live as us bigger folks do!”

Horton looks through the day determined to find his friends; he is calling out “Are you there?” Clover by clover he looks, “more dead than alive,” until “on the three millionth flower” he finds them. Their village has been tattered by the great fall and Horton is asked if he will stay with the *Whos* as they make repairs. Horton is pleased to stay, and says, “I'll stick by you small folks through thin and through thick!” And just as this is decided, the page is turned and here come the sour kangaroos and The Wickersham Brothers who are determined to stop this

“nonsensical game.” The plan is to put Horton in a cage and the clover “in a hot steaming kettle of Beezle-Nut oil.” Horton is frantic. He must get the *Whos* to make a loud noise so they can be heard.

“Mr. Mayor! Mister Mayor!” Horton called. “Mr. Mayor!”  
 You’ve *got* to prove now that you really are there!  
 So call a big meeting. Get everyone out.  
 Make every *Who* holler! Make every *Who* shout!  
 Make every *Who* scream! If you don’t, every *Who*  
 Is going to end up in a Beezle-Nut stew!

The *Whos* shout but to no avail and Horton is being pulled into the cage. Horton calls to the Mayor:

“Don’t give up! I believe in you all!  
 A person’s a person, no matter how small!  
 And you very small persons will *not* have to die  
 If you make yourself heard! *So come on, now, and TRY!*”

The *Whos* bring out the tom-toms, the kettles, the brass pans, garbage pail tops, bazookas, clarinets and flutes; but they cannot be heard, only Horton can hear the *Whos*. Horton asks if every person in *Who*-ville is working. “Quick! Look through your town! Is there anyone shirking?” The Major searches and finds a shriker named Jo-Jo at Fairfax Apartments, Apartment 12-J, just bouncing a Yo-Yo. He grabs the “young twerp” and brings him to the top of “Eiffelberg Tower” and says:

“This,” cried the Mayor, “is your town’s darkest hour!  
 The time for all *Whos* who have blood that is red  
 To come to the aid of their country!” he said.  
 “We’ve GOT to make noises in greater amounts!  
 So, open your mouth, lad! For every voice counts!”

Jo-Jo shouts “Yopp!” and with that one extra small voice, the *Whos* were heard and saved. Horton smiles and says:

“Do you see what I mean?...

They’ve proved they ARE persons, no matter how small.

And their whole world was saved by the Smallest of ALL!”

The animals promise to protect the *Whos*, “No matter how small-ish!”

The smallest of all is just as important as the greatest of all. Horton felt responsible and was determined to protect his fellow mankind, no matter the size. He could hear what others could not. Though he never saw them, he believed in them, in their village. The *Whos* had to rally together to save their *Who*-ville because it was the smallest of the *Whos* who gave that extra push to be heard; every voice counted.

Theodor believed in the importance of mankind: coming back from Japan after World War II, reporting on what he saw, how others needed to be respected, regardless of age, culture or race.<sup>450</sup> As well, giving importance and listening to the voice within, the smallest of the voices that may be hiding in a room, just waiting to be summoned to give that last extra “Yopp!” Theodor gave importance to the voice within himself, no matter how small, for it became great. Dr. Seuss was perhaps Horton, speaking out for Theodor, a *Who*. Parents have great power to the voice within their child, reinforcing or discouraging; Theodor’s mother often told Marnie and Theodor stories, rhyming, playing with words - she encouraged the voice within Theodor to be loud, to be bold. Self-actualization needs strong voices around to encourage one to greatness, to listen and also support the voice within.<sup>451</sup>

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<sup>450</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: a call to social justice against cruelty, at a situation; it is called a righteous indignation; a feeling of identification with the human species. A-3 Interpersonal relations: “compassion for all mankind...lack of discrimination... friendly with anyone of suitable character regardless of class, education, political belief, race or color... not even aware of these differences” (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 167 – 168).

<sup>451</sup> Awareness: to know what is going on inside and to be able to express this; to be aware of one’s world, to see and to hear; Theodor and Horton both were aware of the voices talking to them, the voices within for the case of Dr. Seuss, and the voices around with Horton and the *Whos*. Theodor’s mother recognized what she saw in Theodor and encouraged him in his drawings and imagination. She encouraged him to greatness as did the select friends he kept close during his lifetime.



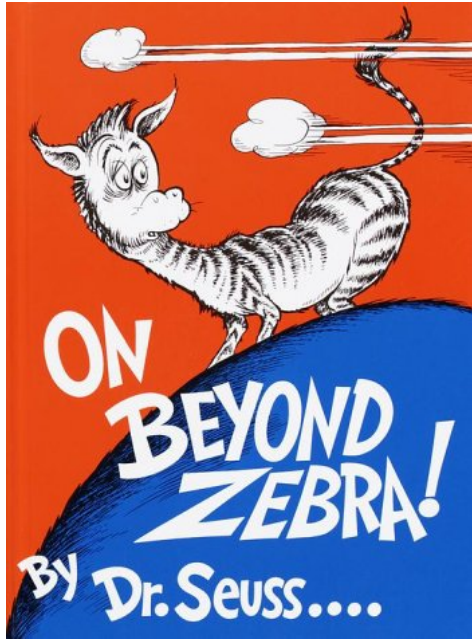
1955 - *On Beyond Zebra!*

Fig. 18 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1955,  
digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-  
Prutzman, 2017.

*On Beyond Zebra!* was published by Random House in 1955, renewed in 1983, dedicated to Helen and written in rhyme. Conrad Cornelius o’Donald o’Dell, a young boy, is talking to an older boy, the protagonist, who has no name (for need of a name, we will call the protagonist, *Regerde-doo*, Reg would be too normal, don’t you think?).

Conrad is wearing a pink sweater, standing on a chair with chalk in his hand as he has just drawn all the letters of the alphabet ending with z, telling Regerde-doo how he knows all the letters of the alphabet from A to Z. Regerde-doo has a bright red shirt on and spikey hair; he is looking up at Conrad and the letters on the board with a casual look on his face listening. Conrad says:

“So now I know everything *anyone* knows

“From beginning to end. From the start to the close.

“Because Z is as far as the alphabet goes.”

Regerde-doo grabs the chalk and draws one more letter and says:

“*You* can stop, if you want, with the Z

Because most people stop with the Z

“*But not me!*”

“In the places I go there are things that I see.

“That I *never* could spell if I stopped with the Z.

“I’m telling you this ’cause you’re one of my friends.

“My alphabet starts where *your* alphabet ends!

And off Conrad and Regerde-doo go on an adventure in an alphabet beyond the normal 26 letter alphabet to places unheard of, to see new letters imaginable to one with a great imagination. There are 20 new letters, each given a word association:

YUZZ is for Yuzz-a-ma-Tuzz

WUM is for Wumbus

UM is for Umbus

HUMPF is for Humpf-Humpf-a-Dumpfer

FUDDLE is for Miss Fuddle-dee-Duddle

GLIKK is for Glikker

NUH is for Nutches

SNEE is for Sneedle

QUAN is for Quandary

THNAD is for Thnadner

SPAZZ is for Spazzim

FLOOB is for Floob-Boober Bab-Boober-Bubs

ZATZ is for Zatz-it

JOGG is for Jogg-oons

FLUNN is for Flunnel

ITCH is for Itch-a-pods

YEKK is for Yekko

VROO is for Vrooms

HI! Is for High Gargel-orum

And the last is for the reader to decide; it is quite the letter!

Regerde-doo not only shows Conrad new letters; he gives him a lesson that he doesn't know all.

You'll be sort of surprised what there is to be found

Once you go beyond Z and start poking around!

.....

So, on beyond Z! It's high time you were shown

That you really don't know all there is to be known.

.....

And, boy! She is something *most* people don't see

Because most people stop at the Z

*But not me!*

.....

Which is awfully hard work. So it's easy to see

Why most people stop at the Z. *But not me!*

.....

So, to get there and do it, I built an invention:

The Three-Seater Zatz-it Nose-Patting Extension.

If *you* try to drive one,

You'll certainly see

Why most people stop at the Z

*But not me!*

.....

*So you see!*

*There's no end*

*To the things you might know,*

*Depending how far beyond Zebra you go!*

Having taken Conrad through an exciting new alphabet, filled with adventure and new words, Regerde-doo ends with this:

The places I took him!

I tried hard to tell

Young Conrad Cornelius o'Donald o'Dell

A few brand-new wonderful words he might spell.

I led him around and I tried hard to show

There are things beyond Z that most people don't know.

I took him past Zebra. As far as I could.

And I think, perhaps, maybe I did him some good...

The last page Conrad has taken back the chalk, standing on a chair and writing a new letter; Regerde-doo is proudly standing beside Conrad, one hand outstretched, eyes closed, smile on his face, knowing he has done a good job because:

NOW the letters he uses are something to see!

Most people *still* stop at the Z...

*But not HE!*

The story is a delightful experience in playing with sounds and making up new words, going beyond Zebra! Most people stop at what is taught to them, at the expected ending; but if one goes on beyond, there are adventures to be had, new people to meet, new challenges to face, and a new world to experience. To be self-actualized one must: poke around to be surprised at what there is to be found; realize you really don't know all there is to know; be willing to see

more, because *most* people don't see, because they stop at Z; but know, it is awfully hard work to go beyond Z; you may have to build an invention, create new ideas.<sup>452</sup> There's no end to the things you might know, depending how far beyond Zebra you go!

Theodor started as a young boy going beyond Z; in his father's zoo, he drew animals but not realistically, exaggerated because he always said he did not know how to draw. "I could never draw things as they are, but I can draw weird animals" (Shea 5b). In fact, his first and last art class was in high school. His one and only art class was short and brief; his teacher said to Theodor: "You will never learn to draw, Theodor. Why don't you just skip class for the rest of the term?" (Shea). She also told him that if he broke the rules of an artist it would lead him to failure (Grahame-Smith 10); he never returned to another art class. "That teacher wanted me to draw the world as it is," said Geisel, "and I wanted to draw things as I saw them." He left art class after a day, and took his peculiar view to the school paper (Sullivan 22).

Theodor went beyond Z, beyond what his father thought, beyond to where his mother brought him; in the beginning of chapter one of this paper it reads:

She read to Theodor and his older sister Marnie every night and chanted rhymes she had learned when she as a young girl working at her family's bakery which was across from the Howard Street Armory (Springfield Museums *Exhibit*). "Apple, mince, lemon...peach, apricot, pineapple...blueberry, coconut, custard and SQUASH!" (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 7). His mother encouraged both her children's imagination. "I was always drawing with pencils, pens, crayons, or anything," he said. "And nearly always it was animals, goofy-looking ones. My mother over-indulged me

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<sup>452</sup> Freedom: the ability to be spontaneous, to create; C-2 Creativeness: rather kin to naïve, an unspoiled child; a person who is everyday inventing, changing the conception of creativeness to true inventiveness; Theodor encouraged playing with sounds and making up new words, as he himself truly did – creating *Seussian* words and creatures; he as a child had his mother playing with rhyming words; she set an example, taught his mind to play and go beyond. Maslow wrote that children are born with this spontaneous ability, and perhaps keep it in them as they become adults, but the world puts on a "set of inhibitions" to keep the spontaneous actions from appearing; he calls these inhibitions "choking-off forces" (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 171). Sometimes it takes detachment C-1, to be able to see beyond; people prefer to keep what is known, comfortable, and in a routine - in contrast to the unknown which reveals growth and potential.

and seemed to be saying, ‘Everything you do is great, just go ahead and do it.’” (Sullivan 22)

Theodor, like *Regerde-doo*, the protagonist, taught children *and* adults to go beyond Z; he gave a new love to reading, a new way to think about the environment, to respect each other no matter race, color or religion, to push one’s mind to go further to make a life - “Stoo-pendous!”

### 1956 - *IF I RAN THE CIRCUS*

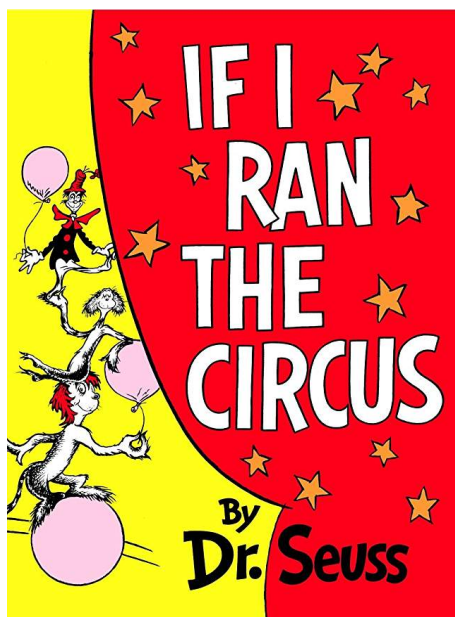


Fig. 19 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1984, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*If I Ran the Circus* was published in 1956 by Random House, renewed in 1984, written in rhyme, and dedicated: This book is for my Dad, Big Ted of Springfield / The Finest Man I’ll Ever know.

The story begins with Young Morris McGurk walking on the top of a fence which is surrounding a vacant lot full of empty cans, three old cars, a dead tree, and weeds; he is imagining what he could do with a cleaned up lot that is behind Mr. Sneelock’s store. Young Morris McGurk will put up tents to build the Greatest Show On Earth:

The Circus McGurkus.

The Circus McGurkus! The cream of the cream!

The Circus McGurkus! The Circus Supreme!

The Circus McGurkus! Colossal! Studendous!

Astounding! Fantastic! Terrific! Termendous!

.....

And I don’t suppose old Mr. Sneelock will mind

When he suddenly has a big circus behind...

Mr. Sneelock is a very important person in Morris McGurk’s circus; he helps out selling pink lemonade and balloons on the opening night. Into the first tent, on stage one, there are horns blowing, a walrus named Rolf is balancing on one whisker on top of five balls; the second stage there is a Drum-Tummied Snumm drumming on his tummy and the third stage the Remarkable Foon is eating hot pebbles and blowing smoke out of his ears. Mr. Sneelock continues to help by

finding hot pebbles for the Remarkable Foon to eat. And on the circus is imagined... with Mr. Sneelock, always smoking his pipe and helping in various ways because Young Morris is sure he won't mind as he is his friend.

That being the side show, everyone is ushered into the Big Tent to make their heads spin as the Parade-of-Parades is about to begin. There is Young Morris on a podium with a large blow horn, telling everyone to come in and get their seats in the Tent-of-all-Tents. Mr. Sneelock is helping by holding the front of the blow horn up with his cane – and smoking his pipe. Once inside the tent, the imagination is beyond normal in the parade that follows:

Then a fluff-muffled Truffle will ride on a Huffle  
 And, next in the line, a fine Flummox will shuffle.  
 The Flummox will carry a Lurch in a pail  
 And a Fibbel will carry the Flummox's tail

.....

Then more stuff! For forty-five minutes, about!

And then there is more! “Mr. Sneelock on his Roller-Skate-Skis going through a maze of prickly cactus. The Man who takes chance after chance! / And he won't even rip a small hole in his pants.” Young Morris imagines dangerous acts with his friend being the brave Colonel Sneelock; Young Morris is sure Mr. Sneelock won't mind - Sneelock will simply be delighted; he'll love it; he will even become Trainer Sneelock! The grand finale has the Great Daredevil Sneelock being pulled above the crowd, his pipe attached to a hook with three wires attached to the beaks of three Soobrian Snipe birds. The suspense is high:

And while people below are all turning chalk white  
 And all biting their fingernails off in their fright,  
 Great Sneelock soars up to a terrible height!

Turning the page, Sneelock has let go of the hook, pipe still in mouth, arms out like he is flying as “he plunges! Down! Down! With his hair still combed neat / *Four thousand, six hundred / And ninety-two feet!*” Page turned and Sneelock is positioned as a diver, getting ready to plunge into a little fish bowl, pipe in mouth, glasses resting on his nose, not a care in the world

with the confidence that “he’ll land in a fish bowl. / He’ll manage just fine. / Don’t ask *how* he’ll manage. / That’s *his* job. Not mine.”

On the last page, reality is back: there is the fenced in yard with junk around, Mr. Sneelock is leaning against the opened door of his store, hands in his pockets and smoking a pipe. Young Morris is leaning against a tree by Mr. Sneelock’s store thinking:

Why! He’ll be a Hero!  
 Of *course* he won’t mind  
 When he finds that he has  
 A big circus behind.

Young Morris has imagined a great circus behind Mr. Sneelock’s store with the purpose of making Mr. Sneelock the hero of the story, but it took Young Morris’s imagination to bring it all together. In life, often other people can see greatness that one cannot see within themselves. The pipe Mr. Sneelock had with him constantly, could reference habits, tendencies, one’s humanity; yet still with this human identity one can go beyond. Others are needed to bring the good and possible out when one cannot imagine it themselves - pushing a person to do the extraordinary, normally out of one’s comfort zone. And as one stretches, they can even begin to like it, accept it, and relax; greatness becomes the norm. Self-actualization pushes one to greatness through imagination.<sup>453</sup>

Everyone has garbage: experiences, thoughts, bad or negative experiences - just need some creative imagination to clean it up to make it useful; the backyard of junk gets cleaned up and becomes something wonderful, something colorful, something everyone enjoys – purpose! It takes vision and a daring spirit<sup>454</sup> as had Young Morris, who then gave it to Mr. Sneelock in the Greatest Show On Earth!

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<sup>453</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creativeness: originality that comes from imagination, inventiveness which is marked by C-3 Spontaneity: springing for an effect; Theodor’s imagination created effect’s in the world around him, especially in the world of children who also could appreciate and identify with Dr. Seuss’s weird and zany characters.

<sup>454</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: Theodor had an inner vision and dared to create what others could not see. In creating worlds and books for children to read and to help them learn how to read, he gave them hope to have a wonderful life, to make the backyard into something beautiful, for the ability to read opens doors of potential and endless possibilities as Theodor himself experienced - by way of his own imagination and daring spirit.



Theodor kept strong people close to him,<sup>455</sup> people who could see *with* him, see different details and possibilities to make a great life, even with human tendencies. An inner drive for excellence came from his father, a man of humaneness, yet ever so much his hero, who always pushed him to excellence, to greatness in what he saw was doable. The pipe could also reflect his father's constant presence in Theodor's subconscious - the constant push to go bigger and better toward excellence. As Theodor went out into the world, away from his home, he tended toward the people who would push him:

“Well, my big inspiration for writing there was Ben Pressey [W. Benfield Pressey of the Department of English at Dartmouth]. He was important to me in college as Smith was in high school. “He seemed to like the stuff I wrote. He was very informal, and he had little seminars at his house (plus a very beautiful wife, who served us cocoa). In between sips of cocoa, we students read our trash aloud.

“He's the only person I took any creative writing courses from ever, anywhere, and he was very kind and encouraging.” (Lathem 3 – 5)

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<sup>455</sup>Honesty: A-3 Interpersonal relations: Maslow observed that self-actualized people are very selective in whom they choose to be close with: “the other members of these relationships are likely to be healthier and closer to self-actualization than the average, often *much* closer. There is a selectiveness here” (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 166).

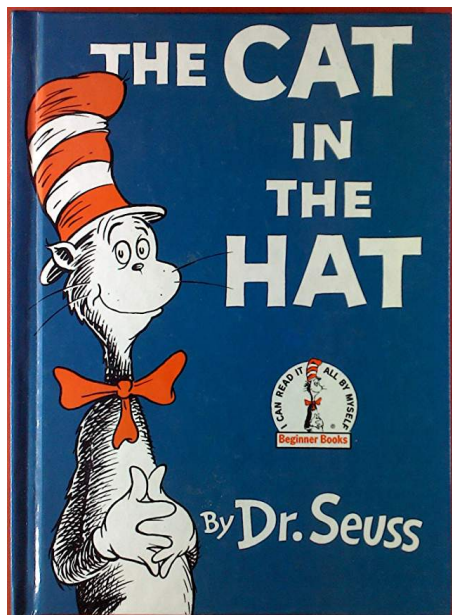
1957 - *The CAT in the HAT*

Fig. 20 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1985, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*The Cat in the Hat* was published March 12, 1957 by Random House and renewed in 1985; it was written in rhyme and dedicated to no one. This was the book that was the beginning of greatness for Dr. Seuss and the beginning of Beginner Books, a subdivision of Random House for children’s books.

The story starts off with two children, Sally and her little brother, the protagonists, looking out their window on a rainy cold day with nothing to do; he begins to say that he wished he had something to do, because all they do is sit, sit, sit, and sit! And they did not like it, “Not one little bit” (3).

Turning the page, there is a big BUMP! in red, which makes the children jump. Even the red fish in the bowl has been startled; looking for where the sound came from they

all see a Cat in the Hat walk into their house. He wonders why they are sitting there when they can have “lots of good fun that is funny!” (7). The Cat in the Hat says he has some tricks, a lot of good tricks, he will show them; the children are not sure what to do as their mother is out and the fish is sure it is not a good idea as he says, “No! No! / Make that cat go away! / Tell that Cat in the Hat / You do NOT want to play. / He should not be here. / He should not be about. / He should not be here/ When your mother is out!” (11)

The Cat in the Hat proceeds to do his tricks with the fish at the top of a balancing act, adding more and more objects, raising the tension as seen in Sally’s and her brother’s face. Suddenly, the Cat in the Hat falls and everything with it as well. The fish angry, his finger pointed and eyes cross, tells the Cat in the Hat to leave. He does not leave but brings in a box to play a new game called FUN-IN-A-BOX; it is a game with two things, Thing One and Thing Two. The two things race around the house with a kite, pulling everything down, even their mother’s new gown. The little boy says he does not like these things, these tricks, these Things.

“I do NOT like the way that they play!

If Mother could see this,

Oh, what would she say!” (45)

Turning the page, the fish on the kite line, looks out the window and sees their mother! He says,

... "Look! Look!"  
 And our fish shook with fear.  
 "Your mother is on her way home!  
 Do you hear?  
 Oh, what will she do to us?  
 What will she say?  
 Oh, she will not like it  
 To find us this way!" (47)

The fish tells the Cat in the Hat to do something fast and to get rid of Thing One and Thing Two. The boy with determination catches the Things with a net, puts them in the box they came in and sends the Cat in the Hat out the door carrying the box; the children now look at the mess in the house - it is a terrible mess! But to their surprise, the page is turned and the Cat in the Hat returns with a machine that has hands coming out from all sides to pick up the mess.

"Have no fear of this mess,"  
 Said the Cat in the Hat.  
 "I always pick up all my playthings  
 And so...  
 I will show you another  
 Good trick that I know!" (57)

The mess is cleaned up and as the Cat in the Hat leaves, he tips his hat farewell and says "That is all" (58). Sally and her brother are back in their chairs by the window, the fish is smiling in his bowl, and mother asked them what they did, did they have any fun? The response is this:

And Sally and I did not know  
 What to say.  
 Should we tell her  
 The things that went on there that day?  
 Should we tell her about it?  
 Now, what SHOULD we do?

Well...

What would YOU do

If your mother asked YOU? (61)

This book takes a child to a place where the forbidden is doable and done – in the imagination. Nothing serious is done but a little fun has been had. Fun that every child thinks about but normally would not dare do, at least not with his or her mother at home. Sally and her brother are introduced to a cat that is humanized with a hat. He is full of tricks and in the end cleans up his mess; a lesson every person must learn. Sometimes, in self-actualization, one comes in contact with a person or a situation that will take one to a place often thought about but dared not go or not even thought about but is out there; once taken, there is new fun to be had, room to explore and yet, the time needed will be there to put things back in order before those “other” people who don’t understand fun or this way of thinking and doing things come back to ask what has been going on. Life is for the living and daring, not just looking out the window wishing.<sup>456</sup>

This book was a changing point in Theodor’s life and career; maybe he had gotten used to the routine of writing books for children, yet, looking out the window, like Sally and her brother, was wondering if there was something else, something more? On May 24, 1954, John Hersey wrote an article titled: “Why Do Students Bog Down On the First R?” He began the article asking this question: “... are our young citizens learning to use our language well enough?” (136). Conformity was addressed: “It is evident, however, that both the reading text and the manuals used in our schools do tend to encourage uniformity and discourage individuality” (139). The article caught Theodor’s attention; Hersey suggested Dr. Seuss and other illustrators at the time to give aid: “Why should they not have pictures that widen rather than narrow the associative richness the children give to the words they illustrate-drawings like those of the wonderfully imaginative geniuses among children's illustrators, Tenniel, Howard

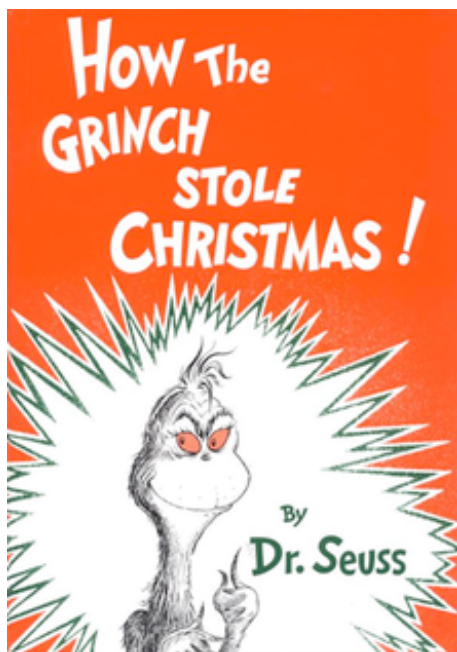
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<sup>456</sup> Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: there is more than the ordinary routine; what adults or people see as the real world could be considered phony, it is just the base, the superficial; to see with clear eyes, to have sharper vision and acuity demands the imagination to be aware and C-1 detached. A detached child is free to imagine, free to enjoy the world of possibilities. When one uses their imagination, anything is possible for everything begins with a thought in the mind. Autonomy D-2, needs to be given to children in order to learn independence of thinking, independence from culture and environment; with this freedom, one is free to create rather than just sit, looking out the window wondering what could be or not wonder at all.

Pyle, Dr. Seuss, Walt Disney?” (Hersey 148). Hersey’s question about widening the richness for the children was the push Theodor needed to create *The Cat in the Hat*. It got him off his chair, out of routine and into an even higher creative mode than before; from this one book, a company was born, Beginner Books and children’s lives were forever changed.

Theodor lived his life not looking out the window, wondering about what he could do; he lived his life with the Cat in the Hat in his mind, making up new tricks, making up Things One and Things Two. Theodor through Dr. Seuss, became the Cat in the Hat, making fun for himself and for children all over the world to discover fun right inside their own home – reading and adventure!<sup>457</sup>

### 1957 - *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*



*How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* was published by Random House in the same year as *The Cat in the Hat*, 1957, renewed publication in 1985, and dedicated to Teddy Owen, Theodor’s nephew. Like the majority of his books, it was written in rhyme.

The opening page, the reader is introduced to the antagonists of the story, the *Whos* who live in *Who*-ville, who liked Christmas a lot. The protagonist, the Grinch, who lives north of *Who*-ville, did not! He hated Christmas, hated the *Whos*, hated everything about this Christmas season for the last fifty-three years. Possible reasons why the Grinch hated Christmas are given:

Fig. 21 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1985, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

<sup>457</sup> Freedom: Theodor had an ability to be spontaneous like a child, to create, to be whatever one is at the moment, like the Cat in the Hat, creating fun and adventure. Theodor trusted himself to be truly himself. He was detached C-1, from what others expected, he created more; his spontaneity gave him ease in his books; his writing had a sense of honesty and lack of striving; the Cat in the Hat moved with ease and grace in Sally and her brother’s home. Theodor when with his close friends, often at dinner parties at his home, would entertain his audience, putting on hats, creating short plays; he had freedom to be who he truly was, creative, spontaneous and imaginative. Never was it boring looking out the window through the eyes of Theodor aka Dr. Seuss.

The Grinch *hated* Christmas! The whole Christmas season!  
 Now, please don't ask why. No one quite knows this reason.  
 It *could* be his head wasn't screwed on just right.  
 It *could* be, perhaps, that his shoes were too tight.  
 But I think that the most likely reason of all  
 May have been that his heart was two sizes too small.

Looking down to *Who*-ville, it is Christmas Eve and the Grinch knows every *Who* is preparing for Christmas morning: wrapping presents, hanging stockings, decorating trees, and putting up mistletoe; this making him very nervous, he says to himself, "I MUST find some way to stop Christmas from coming!" because he knows there will be NOISE! NOISE! NOISE! NOISE!, the *Whos* will FEAST! FEAST! FEAST! FEAST! on *Who*-pudding and *Who*-roast-beast, and worst of all the *Whos* will SING! SING! SING! SING! The Grinch has a wonderful idea and decides to dress-up like Santa Clause and remove Christmas from every home in *Who*-ville. Not having a reindeer, he decides to make one: he calls his dog Max and ties antlers and a big horn on the top of his head with red thread and attaches an old sled behind carrying empty sacks.

Off the Grinch and Max go into town and as the *Whos* are asleep in their beds, he slides down the chimneys, raiding every house of stockings, presents, *Who*-pudding, the roast-beast and even the *Who*-hash, and all Christmas decorations, not even leaving a morsel big enough for a mouse to enjoy – all are stuffed into the empty sacks, pushed up the chimney and put in the sled. At the first house as he is pushing the Christmas tree up the chimney, a little *Who*, Cindy-Lou *Who*, is getting a glass of water and asks why is he taking their Christmas tree? The Grinch, lies and says: "There's a light on this tree that won't light on one side. / "So I'm taking it home to my workshop, my dear. / "I'll fix it up *there*. Then I'll bring it back *here*."

With all the houses being accounted for, the Grinch and Max go to dump the gifts and trees and all that is Christmas off a very tall mountain, Mt. Crumpit. As he is about to push off the sled, he is humming Grinch-ish-ly, "Pooh-Pooh to the *Whos*!" ... "They're finding out now that no Christmas is coming! / "They're just waking up! I know *just* what they'll do! / "Their mouths will hang open a minute or two / "Then the *Whos* down in *Who*-ville will all cry BOO-HOO!"

Turning the page, the climax arrives; the Grinch has one finger holding the sled, it is just

about to fall off Mt. Crumpit, and with the other hand to his ear listening for a sound he MUST hear, Max as well... “And he *did* hear a sound rising over the snow. / It started in low. Then it started to grow...” The cliff-hanger, the sound is not sad, it is merry, VERY MERRY! The Grinch is shocked! What could it be? Page turned and there are the *Whos*, all together, hands joined, faces happy and singing.

Every *Who* down in *Who*-ville, the tall and the small,  
 Was singing! Without any presents at all!  
 He HADN'T stopped Christmas from coming!  
 IT CAME!  
 Somehow or other, it came just the same!

The Grinch, puzzled, thinks about this for three hours, making his puzzler sore, wondering how Christmas came without-ribbons, tags, packages, boxes or bags. *Then* he thinks of something not thought of before, “Maybe Christmas,” he thought, “*doesn't* come from a store. / “Maybe Christmas...perhaps...means a little bit more!” With this one thought, the Grinch is changed.

And what happened *then*...?  
 Well...in *Who*-ville they say  
 That the Grinch's small heart  
 Grew three sizes that day!  
 And the minute his heart didn't feel quite so tight,  
 He whizzed with his load through the bright morning light  
 And he brought back the toys! And the food for the feast!  
 And he...

(Page turned)

...HE HIIMSELF...!  
*The Grinch carved the roast beast!*

The Grinch miserable over the thought of the *Whos* celebrating Christmas, wanted to steal their joy, tried his best, found out that Christmas is more than the outward, but in the hearts; with this realization, his heart also grew three sizes and he too celebrated with the *Whos*. Self-

actualization, is inward, in the heart; finding the real meaning, looking beyond, inward, and finding the good in mankind; realizing we are all humans, and together can celebrate and share joy and love, making one's heart grow and not be so tight, giving room to experience the beauty of sharing.<sup>458</sup>

Theodor, like the Grinch, fifty-three at the time of publication, wrote this book after he had a reflection of himself. He told how the idea of the Grinch came to him while he was:

“brushing his teeth on the morning of the 26th of last December when I noted a very Grinchish countenance in the mirror. It was Seuss! Something had gone wrong with Christmas, I realized, or more likely with me. So I wrote the story about my sour friend, the Grinch, to see if I could rediscover something about Christmas that obviously I'd lost.” (W. “Beginner Books”)

Theodor rediscovered that life is to celebrate; happiness is not bought, it is within the heart of man, being kind to each other, loving each other.<sup>459</sup>

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<sup>458</sup> Honesty: being able to trust feelings of love; A-2 Social interest: the feeling of identification with the human species, sharing of humanness, breaking through social artificial barriers and boundaries; the Grinch after seeing that Christmas was not about gifts but the act of giving and sharing, lost his anger and found love instead to fill his heart and to share with the *Whos*. Awareness: A-3 Interpersonal relations: capable of a higher love, more perfect identification; Theodor revealed to the Grinch a purer love in *Who-ville*; being different levels of love, the *Whos'* love was admirable, a purer love. Theodor was upset with the commercialism of Christmas and had become himself the Grinch, yet with deep reflection and the reflection in the mirror, found the true meaning again and shared this with the world.

<sup>459</sup> 1-V Truth: honesty, simplicity, pure and clean, unadulterated completeness; Theodor put on paper the beauty of a true heart revealed in the *Whos*. 2-V Goodness: rightness, desirability, benevolence; humanity needs love and is attracted to it; the Grinch was attracted to this love and sharing; his heart felt the goodness which in turn made his heart grow, allowing love to replace his anger and dislike of Christmas.



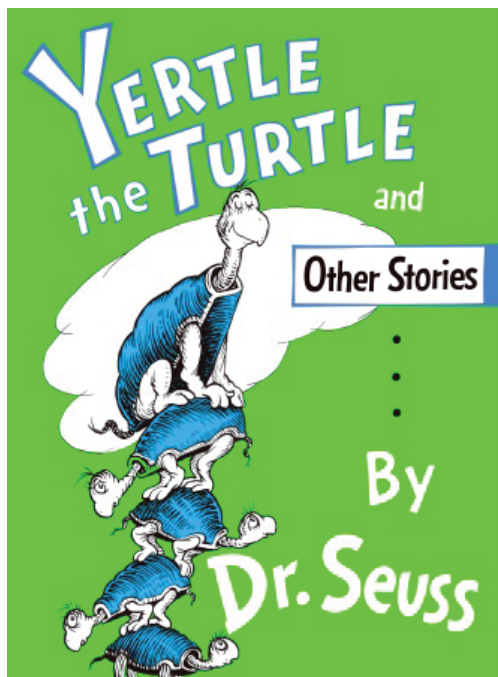
1958 - *Yertle the Turtle and Other Stories*

Fig. 22 Seuss. "Book cover." 1986,  
digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-  
Prutzman, 2017.

*Yertle the Turtle and Other Stories* was published by Random House on April 12, 1958, renewed in 1977, 1979, and 1986; the dedication was written to both friends and colleagues from his time at Dartmouth: This Book is for The Bartletts of Norwiche, Vt. And for The Sagmasters of Cincinnati, Ohio. In *The New Yorker*, the Sagmaster is mentioned; he introduced Theodor to Helen, his future wife: "An American Rhodes Scholar there, Joseph Sagmaster, who knew and pitied both of them, thought that misery deserved company, and introduced them in his rooms one afternoon over anchovy toast" (Kahn).

In the main story, *Yertle the Turtle*, there is a far-away island called Sala-ma-Sond, where Yertle is the king of the pond. There is everything a turtle needs to be happy in this pond: a clean and neat pond with warm water and food to eat. Everyone seemed happy until one day, Yertle, wants his kingdom to be bigger and higher so he can see more. "If I could sit high, how much greater I'd be! / What a king! I'd be ruler of all I could see!" Yertle commands nine turtles to come, one on top of the other, he climbs to the top where he can see almost a mile. He declares that all that he can now see is his:

"All mine!" Yertle cried. "Oh, the things I now rule!  
I'm king of a cow! And I'm king of a mule!  
I'm king of a house! And, what's more, beyond that,  
I'm king of a blueberry bush and a cat!  
I'm Yertle the Turtle! Oh, marvelous me!  
For I am the ruler of all that I see!"

Yertle is proud of himself as a great king until he hears a noise from below; the turtle on the bottom, named Mack, asks how long must they stay as he has pains in his back, shoulders and knees. Turning the page, Yertle is taking up the entire page and yells to Mack down below:

“SILENCE!” ... “I’m king, and you’re only a turtle named Mack.”

“You stay in your place while I sit here and rule.

I’m king of a cow! And I’m king of a mule!

.....

But that isn’t all. I’ll do better than *that*!

My throne shall be *higher!*” his royal voice thundered,

“So pile up more turtles! I want ’bout two hundred!”

More turtles come as they obey Yertle; shaking as they climb up on the back of Mack. Yertle the Turtle can now “see forty miles from his throne in the sky!” All that he could see he claims as his:

Ah, me! What a throne! What a wonderful chair!

I’m Yertle the Turtle! Oh, marvelous me!

For I am the ruler of all that I see!”

Mack again feeling the pain groans and says:

“Your Majesty, please... I don’t like to complain,

But down here below, we are feeling great pain.

I know, up on top you are seeing great sights,

But down at the bottom we, too, should have rights.

We turtles can’t stand it. Our shells will all crack!

Besides, we need food. We are starving!” groaned Mack.

Yertle tells Mack to hush up and that he has no right to speak to the worlds’ highest turtle; there is NOTHING higher than he. But as night falls, Yertle sees the moon rising, rising higher than he. This cannot be, as Yertle is standing on the backs of the turtles, just as he is about to call for five thousand, six hundred and seven more turtles to make him reach to the heavens in his throne - Mack *burps!* With the *burp*, the throne of the king comes tumbling down and Yertle the Turtle lands in the pond.

Well, *that* was the end of the Turtle King’s rule!

For Yertle, the King of all Sala-ma-Sond,

Fell off his high throne and fell *Plunk!* in the pond!

Yertle is now King of the Mud. “And the turtles, of course ... all the turtles are free / As turtles and, maybe, all creatures should be.”

Yertle the Turtle is a representation of a ruler or person who uses others to gain power. It has been said that Theodor likened Yertle to Hitler. The key sentence is when Mack says, “But down at the bottom we, too, should have rights.” Mack is the voice speaking for those who have been used at the expense of others to raise themselves up. A little burp and the king came tumbling down off his throne. Humility and the voice to speak up for what is right is necessary for everyone to live well together. Respecting each other for who they are, no matter the job or rank is key.<sup>460</sup> Self-actualization demands one to be humble for if others are used and misused to find success, it will escape them with a simple human act and they will come tumbling down.

Theodor as a young boy was taught respect from his parents who worked hard to reach the success they found. His grandparents had come from Germany and as an adolescent during WWI, Theodor experienced discrimination; their family was not trusted as they were German immigrants; this brought a humility yet a determination to the Geisels. Having worked hard as everyone else, yet judged and made to feel lower just because they had German heritage.

During the time of World War I, 1914 – 1918, Theodor was in his adolescence, and Anti-Deutschland sentiment was at a high; he and his sister, Marnie, were often made fun of and shunned due to their German heritage. They suddenly were not welcome or popular in their neighborhood as they once had been. “Before the war his family was well respected in the community. After the war began, when Ted was just 10 years old, friends and neighbors subtly altered their interactions with his family” (Springfield Museums “Seuss in” photo 5026). Theodor was known as “the German kid with the three-legged dog.” (Grahame-Smith 10)

Never forgetting this lesson, Theodor through his life always kept a respect for all individuals. He believed in writing for children with integrity and respect, not down to them as lesser individuals, but as equals. In *The Los Angeles Times*, November 1960, he explained his

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<sup>460</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: anger at a situation, usually at cruelty, pomposity; Mack revealed his anger at Yertle the Turtle. Theodor never appreciated phoniness or inequality; he was passionate about treating all people with respect, from the littlest to the oldest. There is in his writing a feeling of identification with the human species; Theodor had a desire to help, to break down cast systems, break down the idea that children are less or not as intelligent as adults; respect and honor came through in his writings and illustrations.

convictions:

In those days, an appalling percentage of books for children were concocted out of inept, condescending, nature-faking treacle. They insulted the intelligence not only of a child, but also of the people who wrote them.

.....

And the children are eagerly welcoming the good writers who talk, not down to them as kiddies, but talk to them clearly and honestly as equals. (Seuss. "Brat Books on the March")

*Gertrude McFuzz – first of the Other Stories*

Gertrude McFuzz is a girl-bird with one droopy-droop feather that makes her so sad. Gertrude knows of a young birdie named Loola-Lee-Lou who has two feathers, not one, and each time she sees her fly by gets very jealous, angry and pouts - until one day full of anger she shouts:

“This just isn’t fair! I have one! She has two!

I MUST have a tail just like Lolla-Lee-Lou!”

Gertrude flies to her uncle, Dake, who is a doctor and asks him if there is a pill she can take to make her tail grow. He says her tail is just right for the kind of bird she is. Not happy, Gertrude has a tantrum; Dake the doctor, tells her where she can find such a pill, on the top of a hill. Gertrude thanks him and flies to the hill. She takes a pill berry and suddenly another tail grows; she takes another and another and finally all - three dozen!

Then the feathers popped out! With a *zang*! With a *zing*!

They blossomed like flowers that bloom in the spring.

All fit for a queen! What a sight to behold!

They sparkled like diamonds and gumdrops and gold!

Like silk! Like spaghetti! Like satin! Like lace!

They burst out like rockets all over the place!

.....

“And NOW,” giggled Gertrude, “The next thing to do

Is to fly right straight home and show Lolla-Lee-Lou!

And when Lolla sees these, why her face will get red  
 And she'll let out a scream and she'll fall right down dead!"

As Gertrude prepares to fly, she cannot, she is stuck to the hill all day and night by the weight of her feathers. Her Uncle Dake hears her cry and comes to rescue her, bringing birds to carry her home.

To lift Gertrude up almost broke all their beaks  
 To fly her back home, it took almost two weeks.  
 And *then* it took almost another week more  
 To pull out those feathers. My! Gertrude was sore!

And, finally, when all the pulling was done,  
 Gertrude, behind her, again had just one...  
 That one little feather she had as a starter.  
 But now that's enough, because now she is smarter.

To be jealous of others is foolish. It is best to be thankful for what one has and not to compare; each person has been made to be unique, to be their own person, their own likeness and carry their own design.<sup>461</sup>

*The Big Brag – second of the Other Stories*

A rabbit is laying between two little hills, eyes closed, fingers crossed and is boasting out loud:

“Of all of the beasts in the world, I’m the best!  
 On land, and on sea... even up in the sky  
 No animal lives who is better than I!”

A bear arrives and says he is the best of the beasts, so there! They argue between themselves who is better and finally the bear asks, “Just what can you DO?” The rabbit thinks a moment and says he has the best ears that can hear the farthest and he'll prove it. After five minutes of

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<sup>461</sup> 6-V Uniqueness: idiosyncrasy, individuality, non-comparability, nothing else like it; Theodor embraced this value as described by Maslow in his Being-Values. As a fingerprint is unique and gives identity, so each individual - unique, but often forgotten.

strenuous listening, “he listened so hard that he started to sweat / And the fur on his ears and his forehead got wet,” he hears ninety miles away a fly cough and says,

“So you see,” bragged the rabbit, “it’s perfectly true  
That my ears are the best, so I’m better than you!”

The bear not having it says his nose can smell twice the distance of the rabbit’s ears and will prove it: after listening ten minutes he says he smells two hummingbird eggs in a nest - “six hundred miles more to the edge of a pond”, and further declares, “That the egg on the left is a little bit stale!”

“So you see,” the bear boasted, “I’m better than you!  
My smeller’s so keen that it just can’t be beat...”

Up pops a worm beneath the rabbit and bear and says his eyes are better than the rabbit’s ears and the bear’s nose. The worm looks with great intent.

And the little old worm cocked his head to one side  
And he opened his eyes and he opened them wide.  
And they looked far away with a strange sort of stare.  
As if they were burning two holes in the air.  
The eyes of that worm almost popped from his head.  
He stared half an hour till his eyelids got red.

Around the world he looks until he ends up back to the rabbit and the bear and says,

“And I kept right on looking and looking at until  
*I’d looked ’round the world and right back to this hill!*  
*And I saw on this hill, since my eyesight’s so keen,*  
*The two biggest fools have ever been seen!*  
*And the fools that I saw were none other than you,*  
*Who seem to have nothing else better to do*  
*Than sit here and argue who’s better than who!*

Turning the page, there is the bear and the rabbit looking at the worm as he jumps back into his hole. “Then the little old worm gave his head a small jerk / And he dived in his hole and went back to his work.”

A story of bragging and how foolish it is. No work gets done when one wastes time bragging and thinking one is better than the other; this consumes needless energy and stops productivity. It is necessary in self-actualization to appreciate each other’s strengths and abilities; to focus on what one is good at and work, like the worm.<sup>462</sup>

### 1958 - *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back*

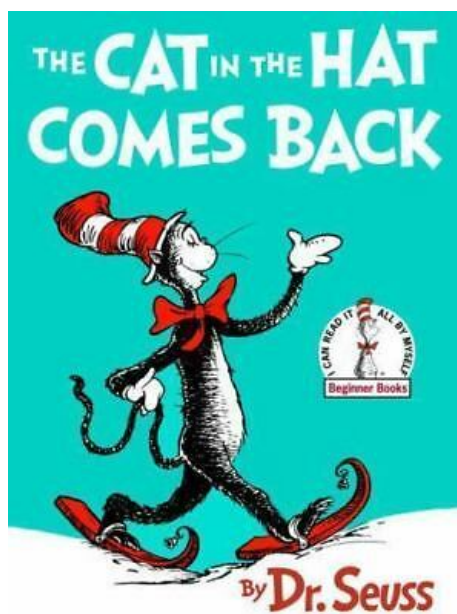


Fig. 23 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1986, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*The Cat in the Hat Comes Back*, the sequel to *The Cat in the Hat*, was published by Beginner Books and distributed by Random House in 1958 and renewed in 1986 by Dr. Seuss Enterprises; a Beginner Book written in rhyme with no dedication.

Sally and her brother, the protagonists, are outside shoveling snow as their mother is away; no time for play, fun, or games, work has to be done. Suddenly, the Cat in the Hat arrives:

“Oh-oh!” Sally said.

“Don’t you talk to that cat.

That cat is a bad one,

That Cat in the Hat.

He plays lots of bad tricks.

Don’t you let him come near.

You know what he did

The last time he was here.” (7)

The Cat in the Hat says he doesn’t want to play tricks, just walk in and get out of the snow; he won’t keep them from doing their work; and with this the Cat in the Hat walks into the house. The boy runs in as fast as he can and finds the Cat in the Hat in the tub, eating cake with the hot

<sup>462</sup> 6-V Uniqueness: Theodor was again delivering the message of the importance of individuality, not that of comparing each other and measuring up against others.

and cold water running. He tells the cat to get out! There is no time for games. The Cat in the Hat gets out of the tub only to find a red ring around the tub. And the fun begins. The Cat in the Hat gets their mother's dress to rub the red ring out; the ring is gone but now there is a red spot on the dress. The red spot gets transferred from one item to another until it gets on a bed. The spot cannot be taken off.

The Cat in the Hat needs help and lifts up his hat to find Little Cat A. Then Little Cat A, B, and C arrive to help. The spot eventually gets blown out the front door with a fan to the snow. There are red snow spots everywhere! Little Cat C thinks for a moment and out of his hat Little Cat D, E, F and G pop out. With pop guns the little cats try to kill the red snow spots only to spread them more. The two children yell at the Cat in the Hat to put the little cats back. The Cat in the Hat says he just needs more help; then Little Cat G takes his hat off and there are more Little Cats, H, I, J, K, L, and M; but needing even more help, Little Cats N, P, Q, R, S, T, U and V arrive.

“Come on! Kill those spots!  
Kill the mess!” yelled the cats.  
And they jumped at the snow  
With long rakes and red bats.  
They put it in pails  
And they made high pink hills!  
Pink snow men! Pink snow balls!  
And little pink pills! (51)

Turning the page, the snow is all pink. And the Cat in the Hat says this is exactly what should be done.

“This is good.  
This is what they should do  
And I knew that they would.  
“With a little more help,  
All the work will be done.  
They need one more cat.  
And I know just the one.” (52)



In the hand of the Cat in the Hat is Little Cat V, X, Y and Z. Little Cat Z is too small to see, but Little Cat Z is the cat to clean up the spot! Little Cat Z has something called voom in his hat.

Take the Voom off your head!  
 Make it clean up the snow!  
 Hurry! You Little Cat!  
 One! Two! Three! GO! (57)

And the word VOOM is across the entire page cleaning up the snow. Sally and her brother now have a perfect path to their home; the snow is white and the Cat in the Hat says the work is all done.

And so, if you ever  
 Have spots, now and then,  
 I will be very happy  
 To come here again... (61)

Turning the page and the Cat in the Hat is walking away saying,

“...with Little Cats A, B, C, D...

E, F, G...

...

and little Cats W

X

Y

and Z!” (62-63)

The Cat in the Hat came back not for fun this time, but to get out of the snow. And getting out of the snow, in his relaxation, a problem arose - the ring in the tub. Trying to fix his problem with different solutions, only to make it worse, required friends to assist him. Getting bigger and bigger the problem seemingly, more help was needed; the help came from smaller and smaller little cats and the littlest of the little cats had the trick in his hat to make the problem go -VOOM away! Not only did they find a solution, the work the children had been doing for

their mother was done better in the end.

Self-realization can often bring little or big problems needing solutions; often what seems to be a mess brings new inventions or new ideas.<sup>463</sup> Even when it is time to work, problems arise; help may be needed, from friends or from within. And in the end, the smallest idea, or person, may have that VOOM to find the solution. Giving people second chances may prove to be wise. The Cat in the Hat, coming back was not welcomed at first, only until he redeemed himself by helping Sally and her brother clean up the snow and make a nice path to the house was he in their good graces; throughout the process, the friends of the Cat in the Hat were introduced to the children, Little Cat A through Little Cat Z, their acquaintances enlarged and the possibilities as well.

Theodor, with his first book, *And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street* had needed a little VOOM to make it all work:

“I was wandering down Madison Avenue in New York, humping around my battered manuscript and feeling pretty sorry for myself.

“Suddenly a fellow I knew stepped out of an office doorway. We chatted a while and I told him of my bad luck. Then he told me of his good luck: he’d just been appointed children’s books editor of a big publishing house. And so, then and there, I got another job – writing and drawing books for kids...

“But just supposing I hadn’t been walking down Madison Avenue at that particular moment and on that particular side of the street...Yes, I’ve been extraordinarily lucky.”  
(Lathem 31 – 33)

Challenges in life make for stronger people; from problem to solution, getting stronger and stronger, realizing solutions often solve other problems once stuck with in the beginning. Like Sally and her brother, starting out in the snow, a solution came, from a problem, which helped

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<sup>463</sup> 4a-V Dichotomy: acceptance, resolution, integration, transcendence of dichotomies, opposites, contradictions, transformation of oppositions into unities, of antagonists into collaborating or mutually enhancing partners; Theodor and Maslow were saying the exact same thing; the Cat in the Hat, the antagonist, collaborated with Sally and her brother to find a solution to each of their problems. The Cat in the Hat just wanted to get out of the snow and the children had work to do but with the three collaborating, along with all the other Little Cats, solutions were made and a little fun was had.

them in the long run make for a straight clear path in the snow. One person's solution may help another person in their work. Theodor's work laid down stepping stones for millions of children, helping and providing a path to learn how to read and enjoy it along the way; as well, it helped himself to discover his full potential – life mission.

1959 - *Happy Birthday to You!*

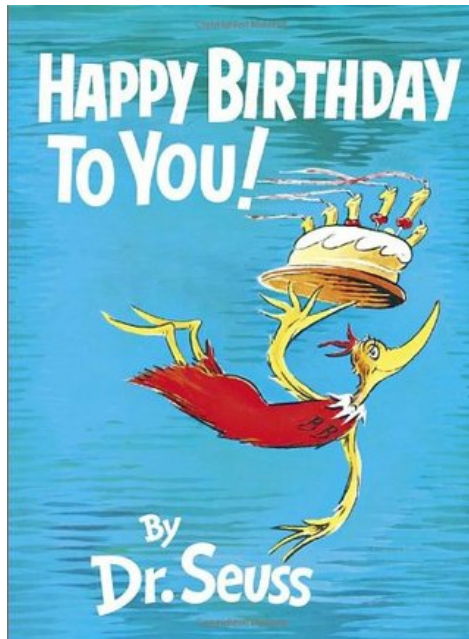


Fig. 24 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1987, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*Happy Birthday to You!* was published by Random House in 1959, the year Theodor turned 55, renewed in 1987, written in rhyme and dedicated: For my good friends, The Children of San Diego County. The children referred here were those who would come to visit the planned extension in the San Diego Fine Arts Gallery which would be named the Dr. Seuss Wing. Theodor spoke about this museum and his hopes for the children:

“I want a museum that will have a real, operable printing press alongside a shelf of books, and blocks of wood and chisels alongside woodcuts, so that children can watch and work at the same time... I want every kid in San Diego to be able to blow a glass bottle while looking at some Venetian glass, and to make a tapestry in front of a Gobelin.”  
(Kahn)

The story begins with a loud blasting horn, from a place called Katroo, where the Birthday Honk-Honker has hiked up Mt. Zorn on your birthday to say, “Wake Up! For today is your Day of all Days!” Once the horn has been heard, the Great Birthday Bird arrives to make it the most special and unforgettable day; he knows your address and is coming to you. “*Just to you!*” He gets you out of bed, teeth brushed, dressed and off you go on a Smorgasbord’s back [it is a creature that carries you, the Special Birthday guest, and the Birthday Bird], with the Birthday Bird, so you don’t waste a minute!

“Today,” laughs the Bird, “eat whatever you want.  
 Today no one tells you you cawnt or you shawnt.  
 And, today, you don’t have to be tidy or neat.  
 If you wish, you may eat with both hands and both feet.  
 So get in there and munch. Have a big munch-er-oo!  
 Today is your birthday! *Today you are you!*”

Turning the page, the reason why you are you is explained:

If we didn’t have birthdays, you wouldn’t be you.  
 If you’d never been born, well then what would you do?  
 If you’d never been born, well then what would you be?  
 You *might* be a fish! Or a toad in a tree!  
 You might be a doorknob! Or three baked potatoes!  
 You might be a bag full of hard green tomatoes.  
 Or worse than all that... Why, you might be a WASN’T!  
 A wasn’t has no fun at all. No, he doesn’t  
 A wasn’t just isn’t. He just isn’t present.  
 But you... You ARE YOU! And, now isn’t that pleasant!

To the highest of blue spaces, you are taken to yell out: “I AM I! / ME! / I am! /... Three cheers!  
 I AM I!” You are taken to many fun places: a Birthday Flower Jungle, a Birthday Lunch, and  
 Mustard-Off Pools where as you are drying off will sing loud that “I am lucky! I am I!” For...

If you’d never been born, then you might be an ISN’T!  
 An Isn’t has no fun at all. No he disn’t.  
 He never has birthdays, and that isn’t pleasant.  
 You have to be born, or you don’t get a present.

A present is next on the agenda, one you will remember forever - a pet! Pets of all sizes  
 and shapes are before you as you ride on a unicycle with the Great Birthday Bird; they are lined  
 up from smallest to tallest; just be sure to watch their feet, sometimes they cheat! Diver Gertz  
 and Diver Gitz are called because perhaps you may like a nice Time-Telling Fish. Speaking of  
 time, it’s time to go to the Birthday Pal-alace to play games in and have a party with friends.

Walking into the palace there are drummers, scrummers and zummers all humming: “All is for you!” Your name is spelt out by the Derring Herrings as they swim in a lake. The cake is up next, cooked by Snookers and Snookers, the Official Katroo Happy Birthday Cake Cookers. As the cake is cut you are reminded:

Today you are you! That is truer than true!  
 There is no one alive who is you-er than you!  
 Shout loud, “I am lucky to be what I am!  
 Thank goodness I am not just a clam or a ham  
 Or a dusty old jar of sour gooseberry jam!  
 I am what I am! That’s a great thing to be!  
 If I say so myself, HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ME!”

Friends come by horseback, Bird-back and Hiffer-back, all to celebrate you as long as it lasts. When it ends, the Bird flies you home happier, richer, and fatter on a very soft platter. The ending is for all:

And I wish  
 I could do  
 All these great things for **you!**

This book is all about YOU! celebrating you. The key sentence is “I am what I am! That’s a great thing to be! / If I say so myself, HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ME!” Being thankful to be alive is key in self-actualization; to love one’s self is essential; individuality is to be celebrated.<sup>464</sup>

Theodor was taking the liberty to say Happy Birthday to himself; he had accepted who he was and was thankful to be alive.

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<sup>464</sup> Trust: to trust oneself deeply; this act of trust requires knowing who one is, the core, and then acceptance D-3: relaxed in who one is, in the world. Maslow explained:

“healthy individuals find it possible to accept themselves and their own nature without chagrin or complaint or, for that matter, even without thinking about the matter very much...they can take the frailties and sins, weaknesses, and evils of human nature in the same unquestioning spirit with which one accepts the characteristics of nature.” (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 155)

1960 - Green Eggs and Ham

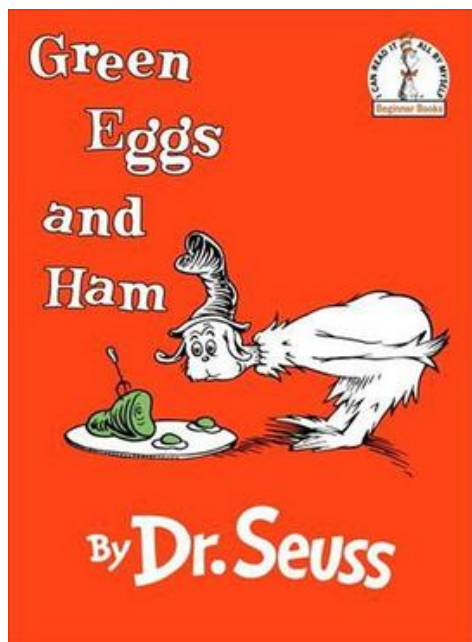


Fig. 25 Seuss. "Book cover." 1988, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*Green Eggs and Ham* was published by Random House on August 12, 1960, renewed in 1988, and written in rhyme for the Beginner Book series. The book is profound in that it was made over a bet of fifty-dollars that Theodor could not write a book with fifty words. He won.

Entering the book, there is Sam, a funny creature with a yellow body and a red hat. He is on top of his dog holding a sign saying: *I am Sam*. Sam dashes past an older creature who is wearing a black hat and returns going back in the other direction on a cat with another sign: *Sam I am*. The creature in the hat is annoyed and says that he does not like that Sam-I-am! Sam now returns with a plate of green eggs and ham and asks if he likes green eggs and ham. Hand in the air, eyes shut, he

says: I do not like them, / Sam-I-am. / I do not like / green eggs and ham (12). Sam then presents the green eggs in a variety of ways:

Would you eat them  
in a box?  
Would you eat them  
with a fox? (22)

And always the response is the same:

Not in a box.  
Not with a fox.  
Not in a house.  
Not with a mouse.  
I would not eat them here or there.  
I would not eat them anywhere.

I would not eat green eggs and ham.

I do not like them, Sam-I-am. (24)

Sam, now having presented the green eggs and ham in every way possible, but to no avail, asks just one more time:

You do not like them.

So you say.

Try them! Try them!

And you may.

Try them and you may, I say. (53)

Just to get Sam to stop bothering him, he says:

Sam!

If you will let me be,

I will try them.

You will see. (54)

Page turned, no words, just the yellow creature with the black hat, snarly face with a question in his eyes, in one hand a fork holding a green egg, in the other hand a tray with another green egg and green ham, ready to try green eggs and ham. Beside him is Sam wearing a red hat and his body is yellow; he has a smile on his face in anticipation, along with all the other animals who were used to entice, watching with expectation. As the page is turned again, the egg is gone off the fork, the creature has a slight smile on his face, Sam with a pleasant chagrin on his face, fingers crossed hears these words:

Say!

I like green eggs and ham!

I do! I like them, Sam-I-am!

And I would eat them in a boat.

And I would eat them with a goat...

And I will eat them in the rain.

And in the dark. And on a train.

And in a car. And in a tree.  
 They are so good, so good, you see!  
 So I will eat them in a box.  
 And I will eat them with a fox.  
 And I will eat them in a house.  
 And I will eat them with a mouse.  
 And I will eat them here and there.  
 Say! I will eat them ANYWHERE!  
 I so like  
 green eggs and ham!  
 Thank you!  
 Thank you,  
 Sam-I-am. (59 - 62)

Fifty words later, Sam convinced the creature with the black hat to try something new – green eggs and ham. The play with the words and rhyming is splendid to the ear. And with the change and surprise at the end where the creature says he would eat green eggs and ham, makes it even more pleasant. Taking a chance in life can prove to bring a new outlook, a new understanding, a new appreciation. Self-realization requires pushing past the comfort zone of what one thinks they like or are comfortable with to try new things, think new ideas, and once done, has a new appreciation and has developed and grown as a person.<sup>465</sup>

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<sup>465</sup> Awareness: to push past comfort zones requires confidence in one's self, an awareness of what is going on inside, to be aware of one's world, and with this awareness comes a deep knowing and hunger to go further, think and try new ideas. B-1 Efficient perception of reality: being able to see the real from the false; Maslow wrote regarding the self-actualizing person that the unknown is something attractive to them, like it has a pull or magnet:

Our healthy subjects are generally unthreatened and unfrightened by the unknown, being therein quite different from average man. They accept it, are comfortable with it, and often are even more attracted by it than by the known. They not only tolerate the ambiguous and unstructured; they like it. Quite characteristic is Einstein's statement, "The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all art and science." (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 154)

Sam finally got the creature to try green eggs and ham; Theodor was encouraging his audience to try the unknown, as he himself did in creating his own world of characters. He said as he drew the characters, the plot and stories would come.



Theodor was always trying new things and looked at the world upside down; in an interview on March 25, 1986, with *The Los Angeles Times*, he explained how he worked and lived:

He attributes most of his success to the rhyming format of his books, and, in general, avoids analyzing the muse that drives him. "I prefer to look at things through the wrong end of the telescope," he offers. "I see things more clearly with a little astigmatism." He bristles at people who accost him at parties and say they could knock out a kids' book in a few hours.

Geisel's breezy style just makes it look easy. His success affords him an autonomy rare in publishing: He writes, designs, lays out and selects the colors and paper of each book.<sup>466</sup> But when a visitor asks Geisel to draw a self-portrait, he refuses, protesting that he "can't draw things the way they are. I just get at the soul of things, like that sculpture." He points to a small, bosomy figurine in his bathroom. Geisel sculpted it when he was a young man, and although the face does not resemble the woman who inspired it, the figure must have caught her essence--because when his employer found Geisel working on the sculpture, he recognized it and cried, "You're doing my wife!" The future children's author was out of a job. (Harper)

He did things different, not normal; as he tried new ideas, he found success; it gave him courage to move forward to greater challenges and thus greater successes. His first nationally published cartoon, a cartoon depicting two tourists on a camel, appeared in the July 16, 1927 issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*; he signed it Seuss. This single \$25 sale encouraged Geisel to move from Springfield to New York City.

"When the *Post* paid me twenty-five bucks for that picture, I informed my parents that my future success was assured; I would quickly make my fame and fortune in *The Saturday Evening Post*.

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<sup>466</sup> Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: born with a perception to have clear eyes, can see color differences, shaper vision, sharper acuity through befuddlement; Theodor created what was inside him; he welcomed and was comfortable with the unknown as it came out on paper. He trusted the process from beginning to end; he saw clearly exactly the way the book should be.

“It didn’t quite work out that way. It took thirty-seven years before they bought a second Seuss: an article in 1964 called ‘If At First You Don’t Succeed – Quit!’

“...Bubbling over with self-assurance, I told my parents they no longer had to feed or clothe me.

“I had a thousand dollars saved up from the *Jack-O-Lantern*...and with this I jumped onto the New York, New Haven, & Hartford Railroad; and I invaded the Big City, where I knew that all the editors would be waiting to buy my wares. (Lathem 20)

Theodor tried many green eggs and ham in his life and in the end, the world would say, “Thank you! Thank you, Sam-I-am!”<sup>467</sup>

1960 - *One fish two fish red fish blue fish*

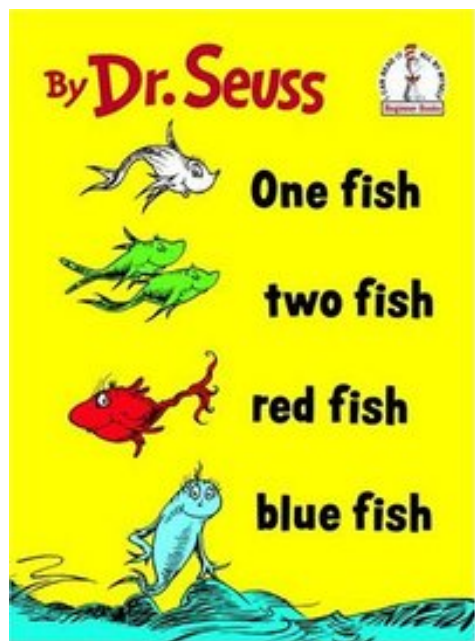


Fig. 26 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1988, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*One fish two fish red fish blue fish* was published by Beginner Books in 1960, renewed publication in 1988, and written in rhyme for the Beginner Books series. The front left opening page on the left hand bottom corner there is a quote: “From there to here, / from here to there, / funny things / are everywhere” (2); this is exactly what is found inside the book, not just one fish, two fish, red fish and a blue fish, but funny things everywhere, some are fat with a yellow hat, some like to run in the sun, some have two feet and some have more, oh me, oh my!

Two little children, a boy and girl, follow as the funny things go by; they know a man called Mr. Gump, who has more than one hump, called a Wump of Gump, and when they take a ride it goes bump! Bump! Along comes

<sup>467</sup> Trust: to trust oneself deeply, the mission in life D-1; D-2 Autonomy: independent of culture, environment, an inner directedness; they are dependent for their own development; D-3 Acceptance: taking things as they come, naturally. Theodor over time gained this inner trust in his steps and work, leaving behind him stepping stones for generations to follow.

Mr. Ned, who has a little bed he does not like, because his feet stick out all night; when he pulls them in, his head goes out of the bed. There is a bike for three, the two children and Mike. There are many funny things along the way: a Nook, who has a book, on a hook on how to cook.

We saw him sit  
and try to cook.  
He took a look  
at the book on the hook.

But a Nook can't read,  
so a Nook can't cook.

SO...  
what good to a Nook  
is a hook cook book? (31)

There is a Zans for opening cans, a Gox who likes to box, a Ying who can sing, a Yink who likes to wink and drink, and drink, and drink, and a Yop that likes to hop. The children try many new adventures and find it is fun.

Did you ever  
fly a kite  
in bed?

Did you ever walk  
with ten cats  
on your head?

Did you ever milk  
this kind of cow?  
Well, we can do it.  
We know how.

If you never did,  
you should.

These things are fun  
and fun is good. (50 - 51)

The fun continues as they meet an Ish who has a dish to help him wish; they play a game called Ring the Gack and all are welcome as they have the only Gack in town; night has come and they find a Clark, in the park, in the dark, and take him home. After a long day of finding funny things here and there, they arrive home.

And now  
good night.  
It is time to sleep.  
So we will sleep  
with our pet Zeep.

Today is gone. Today was fun.  
Tomorrow is another one.  
Every day,  
from here to there,  
funny things are everywhere. (62 - 63)

The theme of the book is fun, there are funny things everywhere. It is even fun to read as the words play on your mouth and in your mind as they hop gently from one rhyme to another. Self-actualization requires joy, happiness, an expectation of fun, here to there because it is everywhere! This joy frees the mind to play, like a child, carefree, embracing life, embracing learning, experiencing all the newness of life.<sup>468</sup>

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<sup>468</sup> 13-V Playfulness: fun, joy, amusement, gaiety, humor, exuberance, effortlessness; this is a value sought after by self-actualizing people and delivered by Theodor over and over with his zany characters and free imagination. B-2 Freshness of appreciation: appreciating the basic goods of life with awe and wonder, the simple things to the exotic, appreciation. C-2 Creativeness: that what is original; Theodor in each book continued to create with new inventiveness, delivering new wonder and excitement; the reader can experience the author's joy and spontaneity of thinking. Maslow explained: "The creativeness of the self-actualized man seems rather to be kin to the naïve and universal creativeness of unspoiled children...It is as if this special type of creativeness, being an expression of healthy personality, is projected out upon the world or touches whatever activity the person is engaged in" (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 170 – 171).

Theodor believed in fun. He is quoted over and over that the reason he wrote books was for children to have fun and for he himself to have fun. “Fun is the most important thing in a children’s book” ... “fun and interest. If you’re interested yourself, the children who read you will be interested” ... “I always do my own illustrations. I do what I do mostly to entertain and to have fun” (Osterman *Seuss on the loose* Chapter One).

1961 – *The Sneetches and Other Stories*

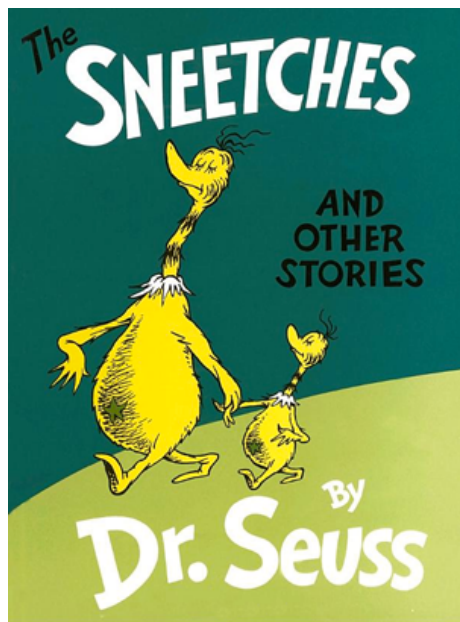


Fig. 27 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1989, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*The Sneetches and Other Stories* was published by Random House in 1961, renewed publication in 1989 and written in rhyme. The “and Other Stories” after “The Sneetches” are: *The Zax*, *Too Many Daves*, and *What was I Scared of?*

*The Sneetches* begins with two Sneetches walking on a beach; one is called a Star-Belly Sneetch as he has a small green star on his belly and has his head held high and his nose in the air; the other, a Plain-Belly Sneetch has nothing upon his belly and is slightly behind with a sad look on his face. “Those stars weren’t so big. They were really so small. You might think such a thing wouldn’t matter at all” (3). But they did make a difference, the Sneetches with stars thought they were much better as they

would brag, holding their snoots up in the air and wanting nothing to do with those who had none upon thars; they walked past them without saying hello, the children with stars would only play with children that had stars upon thars. The Sneetches with no stars upon thars were left out year after year. Until one day Sylvester McMonkey McBean came driving up with a strange looking car; he called himself the Fix-it-Up Chappie and guaranteed his work one hundred per cent.

Seeing the problem, he makes a machine that put stars upon thars. The Plain-Belly Sneetches pay their money, walk into the machine that klonks, bonks, jerks, berks and bops them around and when they come out they have a star upon thars! Now being just like the Sneetches with stars, they want to participate in all the events. The Sneetches who first had stars are not happy and say:

“We’re *still* the best Sneetches and they are the worst.  
 But, now, how in the world will we know,” they all frowned,  
 If which kind is what, or the other way round?” (13)

McBean, with a sly wink, says he has a machine that will take off the stars for only ten dollars. The Sneetches go in, have the stars removed and again walk proudly with their snoots in the air and shout: “We know who is who! Now there isn’t a doubt. / The best kind of Sneetches are Sneetches without!” (18). Mr. McBean has both machines running, putting stars on, taking stars off; the Sneetches go in and out, paying until they didn’t know who was who: “whether this one was that one...or that one was this one / Or which one was what one...or what one was who” (21).

The Fix-it-Up Chappie leaves town with all the Sneetches money laughing and says: “They never will learn. / No. You can’t teach a Sneetch!” (22). Turning the page there is a nice surprise; the Sneetches are holding hands; one with a star upon thars and one with having none upon thars.

But McBean was quite wrong. I’m quite happy to say  
 That the Sneetches got really quite smart on that day,  
 The day they decided that Sneetches are Sneetches  
 And no kind of Sneetch is the best on the beaches.  
 That day, all the Sneetches forgot about the stars  
 And whether they had one, or not, upon the thars. (24)

Being different yet being accepted is the key in this story. To be like everyone does not make one smarter or happier. Acceptance of differences brings friendship and unity. Self-actualization requires an individual to accept themselves for who they are and accepting others as they are.<sup>469</sup>

Theodor grew up in a difficult time as a child: his ancestors coming from Germany, not

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<sup>469</sup> Honesty: is to be your feelings, trust your feelings in inter-personal relationships. Maslow wrote that in social interests A-2: one has a feeling of identification, “a desire to help the human race. It is as if they were all members of a single family. One’s feelings toward his brothers would be on the whole affectionate, even if these brothers were foolish, weak, or even if they were sometimes nasty. They would still be more easily forgiven than strangers” (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 165). This is the message Theodor created through the Sneetches.

accepted during WWI, his grandfather and father running a brewery in a rather Protestant town and then The Prohibition. He knew what it meant to be without a star or to be the star and in either case, never did it matter to him either which way; what mattered was respect for the individual and their uniqueness.<sup>470</sup>

*The Zax – second story in the book*

In the Zax there is a North-Going Zax and a South-Going Zax walking in the prairie of Prax. This is the path they always take but have never met up before. The North-Going Zax tells the South-Going Zax to get out of his way as this is the way he always goes. The South-Going Zax tells the North-Going Zax this is his way and to get out of the way. Both refuse and say they will stay there even “if it makes you and me and the whole world stand still!” (32). Turning the page, the world has moved on, there are roads everywhere with cars driving here and there, and the Zax’s standing face to face stubborn with a Zax by Pass on top of them.

Compromise is essential in life; stubborn headiness literally gets one nowhere.

*Too Many Daves – third story in the book*

Mrs. McCave had twenty-three sons; she named them all Dave. When she would call them, “Yoo-Hoo! Come into the house, Dave!” (38) all twenty-three sons came running. She could have named them all different names: Snimm, Jim, Blinkey, Stinkey, Moon Face, Balloon Face, Soggy Muff, Biffalo Buff and on and on, but she didn’t and now it’s too late.

With each name there is a face, a person, a mind, a will, a spirit, an individual; there are many Daves in this world, but each is unique; a name has its own identity; this is essential in life to know one’s self and as one goes on this journey of discover, self-actualization occurs.<sup>471</sup>

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<sup>470</sup> Honesty: A-3 Interpersonal relations: obliteration of the ego boundaries; Theodor gave this respect to his audience, children; he had a deep appreciation for children’s minds and imaginations and felt it a great responsibility to write for children. Maslow wrote that self-actualized people “*tend* to be kind or at least patient to almost everyone. They have an especially tender love for children and are easily touched by them. In a very real even though special sense, they love or rather have compassion for all mankind” (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 166 – 167).

<sup>471</sup> Awareness: to be aware of one’s world; B-2 Freshness of appreciation: as one appreciates a single flower and its beauty, one can appreciate the uniqueness in each person they meet in the

*What was I Scared of? – the fourth story in the book*

A cute little creature is walking one night in the forest. He sees nothing scary so he should not be afraid as he has not been afraid of anything before, not very. Turning the page, he sees across the path a pair of pale green pants standing up with nobody in them. Rationalizing to himself, he says he is not scared but wonders why those pants are there at night. The next page the little creature is running and the pants are running too; the little creature explains:

And then they moved! Those empty pants!  
 They kind of started jumping.  
 And then my heart, I must admit,  
 It kind of started thumping.

So I got out. I got out fast  
 As fast as I could go, sir.  
 I wasn't scared. But pants like that  
 I did not care for. No, sir. (47)

A week passes and one night as the little creature is going home with a basket of Grin-itch spinach, a bike races by with the pale green pants riding on it:

I lost my Grin-itch spinach  
 But I didn't even care.  
 I ran for home! Believe me,  
 I had really had a scare!

Now, bicycles were never made  
 For pale green pants to ride 'em,  
 Especially spooky pale green pants  
 With nobody inside 'em! (49)

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day, have in friendships and relationships; to keep an awareness of the individuality each person has, even though the human race is vast, this is a stepping stone of Dr. Seuss and Theodor Geisel.



The next night he is fishing and sure enough a boat with the pale green pants comes rowing his way. And the little creature begins to shiver with fear:

And by now I was SO frightened  
That, I'll tell you, but I hate to...  
I screamed and rowed away and lost  
My hook and line and bait, too! (50)

The little creature hides in a Brickel bush all night and the next night too. But the following night he has an errand to do - pick a peck of Snide in a gloomy Snide-field. In the dark, picking Snide he says over and over, "I do not fear those pants / With nobody inside them" (55). As he reaches in a Snide bush he feels someone – the pale green pants someone! There the two are, face to face!

I yelled for help. I screamed. I shrieked.  
I howled. I yowled. I cried,  
"Oh, save me from these pale green pants  
With nobody inside!" (59)

Turning the page, the pants begins to cry, tremble, and whimper; it is as scared as the little creature himself and a realization occurs in the little creature:

I never heard such whimpering  
And I began to see  
That I was just as strange to them  
As they were strange to me! (61)

Sitting down beside the pale green pants, he puts his arm around the waist to calm him down. And with new confidence explains:

And, now, we meet quite often,  
Those empty pants and I,  
And we never shake or tremble.  
We both smile

And we say  
 “Hi!” (62)

Fearing an unknown is ignorance of what is actually causing the thoughts in the mind. It is necessary for self-actualization to face fear in the face, to walk up to fear and acquaint one’s self with it; this brings understanding of the unknown - giving tolerance, kindness and courage.<sup>472</sup>

Theodor had fears, financial fears. He spoke to his agent, Phyllis Jackson asking if she thought he could make a living as a child writer/illustrator living off the royalties.

Phyllis Jackson, Theodor’s New York agent, also encouraged him to go forward in a conversation which occurred in 1953:

“It’s been seven years since I gave up being a soldier,” he said. “Now I’d like to give up on movies and advertising and anything else that means dueling with vice presidents and committees, hmmm?”

“So what will you do?” she asked.

“I want to stay in La Jolla and write children’s books,” he said... “If I dropped everything else, do you think I could count on royalties of five thousand dollars a year?”

“It’s entirely possible,” she said. “The children’s market is building because the baby boom, and you have a reputation.”

.....

Theodor did not expect to get rich: “We can live on one hundred dollars a week. If I could get five thousand dollars a year in royalties, I’d be set up for life!” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 140 - 141)

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<sup>472</sup> Awareness: knowing what is going on inside and out brings clarity to the real world which in turn brings truth to the perceived reality in one’s mind, B-1 efficient perception of reality: the opposite of fear. With truth brings freedom to be with one’s self alone, to listen to one’s inner voice, C-1 detachment. Embracing the unknown opens creativity in life, in the gifts that are placed within, and from this trust is born and develops; Theodor learned to trust his mission in life D-1, to write for children, to make them laugh, learn to read and to face their own fears which in turn brings freedom; the ability to be spontaneous, to be whatever one is at the moment, no matter what that is, but to trust that self. This all came from facing his fears and realizing his talents were greater than the unknown and would carry him into light and greatness.

Embracing his own talents and desires, the fear of lack lost its power.

1962 - Dr. Seuss's Sleep Book

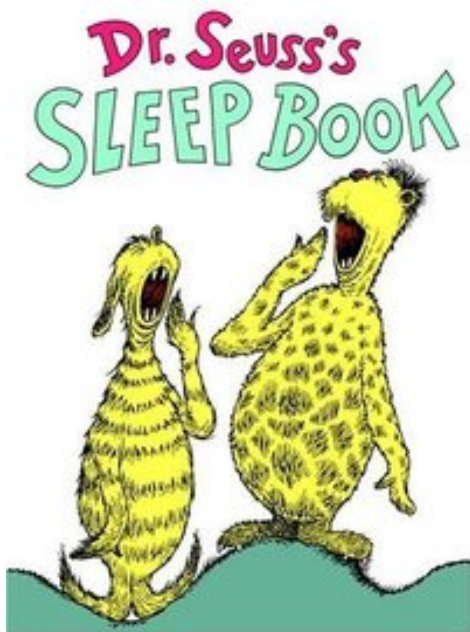


Fig. 28 Seuss. "Book cover." 1990, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*Dr. Seuss's Sleep Book* was published by Random House in 1962, renewed in 1990, written in rhyme and dedicated to Marie and Bert Hupp, Theodor's neighbors and trusted friends who would often give last minute advice or encouragement before a book was delivered to Random House. Hubb explained:

"The night before he heads East, he usually goes without sleep. He spreads the pages of his book out on the floor of his living room and crawls back and forth in anguish among them, hovering over the composite parts with the awkward concern of a brood elephant." Hupp, who is the board chairman of the Sunshine Biscuit Company and was formerly a director of the Santa Fe Railroad, drops to his knees, too, and

encourages Geisel with the kind of pep talk that a football coach might deliver in a locker room." (Kahn)

*Dr. Seuss's Sleep Book*, on the front and back cover, has a distinct message: *This Book is to be Read in Bed*. Beginning the book there is news to be told: in the county of Keck, a little bug named Van Vleck, is yawning a very big yawn, so wide, "you can look down his neck."

This may not seem  
Very important, I know.  
But it is. So I'm bothering  
Telling you so.

It is important news because Van Vleck's friends are yawning now too, since yawns are contagious. The yawn spreads through the fields and to the entire country every-which-where. "Creatures are starting to think about rest." Birds are making their nest, the Biffer-Baum Birds,

do this each night. “Sleep thoughts are spreading... time for night-brushing of teeth is at hand” and there are the Herk-Heimer Sisters brushing their teeth at the Herk-Heimer Falls. Lights are going out throughout the land; draw bridges are pulled up; the Stilt-Walkers have put their stilts stacked on a wall; the Hinkle-Horn Honking Club have their horns in private Hinkle-Horn Nook. “Everywhere, creatures are falling asleep”: at the moment, forty thousand, four hundred and four; the number is exact as there is an Audio-Telly-o-Tally-o Count machine on a mountain between Reno and Rome, and when a person falls asleep a ball goes flop and the counter marks it down.

Once asleep, the question of things people do in their sleep is addressed. Talking in your sleep; there are two characters, Jo and Mo Redd-Zoff, they are the World-Champion Sleep-Talkers, babbling and gabbling all night to each other. Walking in your sleep; there is a sleepwalking group who walk with hoops; they walk so much they need to have a snack along the way, so they often snoop for soup and for this they are called the Hoop-Soup-Snoop Group. There are also the sleepwalkers who walk with candles on their head, just in case they wake up, they will know where they are. Snoring, Snorter McPhail and his Snore-a-Snort-Band can snore the Dixie and Old Swanee River so loud that they live twenty miles out of town!

Talking of alarm clocks, these are quite imaginary; a Chippendale Mupp has a tail so long that when he goes to sleep he bites it, but since it is sooo long, it takes eight hours for the pain to register before he wakes up and yells “Ouch!”

The numbers of sleepers are being counted as the story is told. Jedd is in bed; he has the softest of beds as he makes his bed from pom poms which grow on the top of his head. A moose and a goose are asleep dreaming of moose juice and goose juice but warned not to mix the two up and never drink in your dreams. Speaking of dreams, there is the Bumble-Tub Club, who dream while afloat, full of bliss.

Everyone near the end of the book is asleep in the bed of their choice:

They’re sleeping in bushes. They’re sleeping in crannies.

Some on their stomachs, and some on their fannies.

They’re peacefully sleeping in comfortable holes.

Some, even, on soft-tufted barber shop poles.

The number of sleepers is now past the millions!

The number of sleepers is now in the billions!

Turning the page, there are creatures of all sorts sleeping in all kinds of places. And the number is rising! It is now up to the Zillions!

Ninety-nine zillion,  
 Nine trillion and two  
 Creatures are sleeping!  
 So...  
 How about you?

The last number is counted with a moon in the sky; when the light in a window is put out the number will be “Ninety-nine zillion, Nine trillion and three.”

Good night.

The beauty of sleep is embraced in this story, of how sleep begins: from yawning, to preparing for bed, putting things away in order, and turning the lights off; to what can happen in sleep: sleep talking, sleepwalking, and dreaming. Creatures sleeping all over in various ways, in various places, all enjoying blissful sleep. The subconscious is wide awake as one sleeps, giving ideas, solutions and vitality to life. Self-actualization depends on minds that are strong and well-rested. No matter who one is, where one lives, how one sleeps, and what one does in their sleep, all creatures require a good night’s sleep.<sup>473</sup>

Theodor worked hard into the night yet slept late into the day:

A late riser, he usually puts in an eight-hour day at the desk and drawing board in his expansive studio, with illustrations for his current project lining the walls. If the work is going well, he may press on for 10 or 12 hours, slowly, meticulously, painfully, and usually into the night. “At night,” he explains, “nobody calls you on the phone and tries to sell you insurance.” (Freeman)

At night he would paint, a pleasure he enjoyed; Theodor considered himself an artist first, a writer second. “His desk, which is littered with cans and jars of brushes and pens, seems to

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<sup>473</sup> Awareness: B-2 Freshness of appreciation: is that of appreciating over and over the basic goods of life with awe, wonder and even ecstasy; Theodor thought about the wonder and awe of sleep, creating a book, a stepping stone - over this everyday occurrence. Sleep brings detachment C-1: the need for privacy, which gives strength to remain above the battle, undisturbed and unruffled.

indicate that he regards himself as artist first and writer second, for it is a drafting table, with a sloping work surface; he keeps his typewriter on top of it, and types at a tilt” (Kahn).

Creativity requires a fresh mind, and a fresh mind requires a good night’s sleep. “Good night.”

1963 - *Dr. Seuss’s ABC*

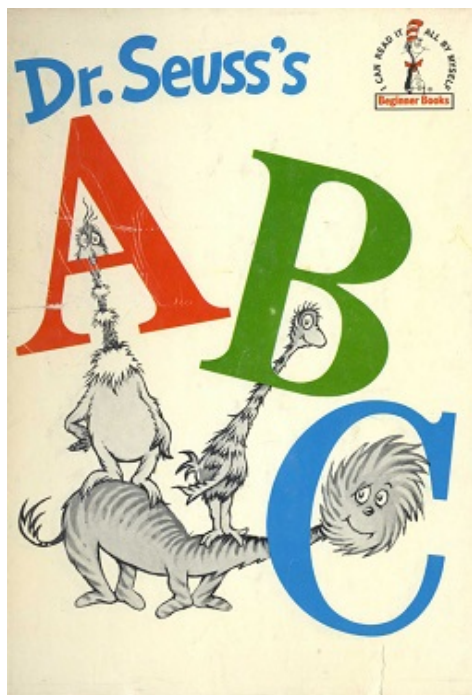


Fig. 29 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1991, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*Dr. Seuss’s ABC* was published by Random House in 1963, renewed in 1991 and written in rhyme. This book was created for the Beginner Books reading series.

A book going through the alphabet from A to Z with funny creatures for each letter. “A” starts off like this:

BIG A

little a

What begins with A? (3)

Next page, a happy lady is riding a long green alligator.

Aunt Annie’s alligator.....A..a..A (5)

The capital letter and the little letter are typed on the page, asking the question, “What begins with B? The answer:

Barber / baby / bubbles / and a / bumblebee” (7 - 8).

The identifying images to the letters are described in no ordinary manner; the form is fun and the way to learn is easy and repetitive:

ABCDE...e..e

ear

egg

elephant

e

e

E. (14)

With the learning there is encouragement along the way:

Big H  
 little h  
 Hungry horse.  
 Hay.  
 Hen in a hat.  
 Hooray !  
 Hooray ! (20 - 21)

The alphabet is often repeated to encourage imprinting on the brain:

ABCD  
 EFG  
 HIJK  
 LMNO....  
 P (36 - 37)

And excitement is holding as two little creatures are looking at the P on the page:

Painting pink pajamas.  
 Policeman in a pail.  
 Peter Pepper's puppy.  
 And now  
 Papa's in the pail. (38 - 39)

Fun. This alphabet is fun:

ABCD  
 EFG...  
 HIJK  
 LMNOP...  
 QRS  
 TUV...  
 W..X  
 Y..and...(58 - 59)

Turning the page to a humongous capital letter pink z on a page and the question:

BIG Z

little z

What begins with Z? (61)

Answer last page:

I do.

I am a

*Zizzer-Zazzet-Zuzz*

as you can

plainly see. (63)

What alphabet could be more fun than that? It is fun to learn and that is what life is all about - discovering from the base to build a great adventure. Enjoying learning and discovering brings a lightness to life, makes the ordinary special. With the pleasure of learning at a young age, the mind is in the habit of being open, happy, ready for the next page, the next adventure in learning. Self-actualization feeds off a happy mind, a hungry mind; from concept to concept, self is evolving from the base to a great structure, in the mind with thoughts first and then outward.<sup>474</sup>

Theodor believed that learning should be fun, reading should be fun. If he didn't enjoy it, he was sure the children wouldn't enjoy it. He wrote for himself and he himself liked to be amused: "Fun is the most important thing in a children's book" ... "fun and interest. If you're interested yourself, the children who read you will be interested" ... "I always do my own illustrations. I do what I do mostly to entertain and to have fun" (Osterman *Seuss on the Loose*).

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<sup>474</sup> 13-V Playfulness: fun, joy, humor, exuberance, effortlessness; Theodor encouraged children to have fun when reading and in reading. 5-V Aliveness: full functioning, expressing itself; Maslow stated that self-actualizing people have freedom: "these individuals are less inhibited, less constricted, less bound, in a word, less enculturated. In more positive terms, they are more spontaneous" (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 171). Theodor was uninhibited by the twenty-six letters in the alphabet; it was a beginning point for him.



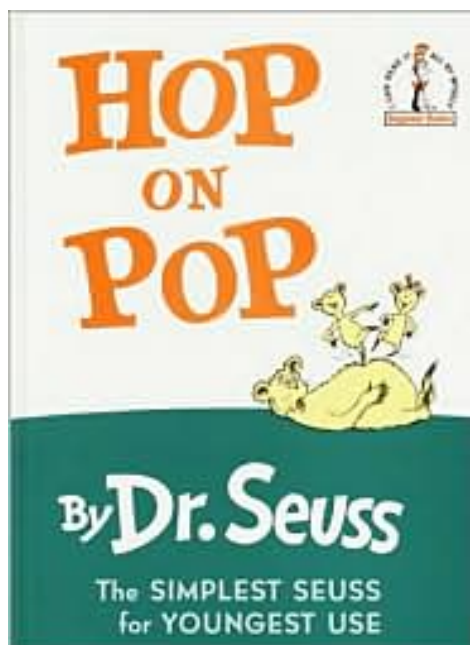
1963 - *HOP on POP*

Fig. 30 Seuss. "Book cover." 1963, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*Hop on Pop* was published in 1963 by Beginner Books, a division of Random House for the very young readers just learning to appreciate sounds and beginning words that rhyme; it renewed publication in 1991.

The book starts with a familiar and favorite animal to all children, a pup:

UP

PUP

Pup is up. (3)

Words are repeated and repositioned to make reading fun:

CUP

PUP

Pup in cup.

PUP

CUP

Cup on pup. (4 - 5)

The changes are subtle but they are there, changing in to on. The images are surreal which makes the reading fun for the children:

MOUSE

HOUSE

Mouse on house.

HOUSE

MOUSE

House on mouse. (6 - 7)

Whoever heard of a house on a mouse? Exactly! That is why it is fun. Opposites are presented: tall and small, day and night, and up and down. Colors are played with: black, brown, and red. The family is important:

FATHER

MOTHER

SISTER

BROTHER

That one is my other brother. (58 - 59)

Pride in his brothers shine out as he brags about them:

My brothers read

a little bit.

Little

words

like

If and it. (60 - 61)

Ending with his father explaining that he can read big words like CONSTANTINOPLE and TIMBUKTU and then asking a playful question to the reader:

SAY

SAY

What does this say?

sehemewe

patpuppup

hethreetreebee

tophopstop

Ask me tomorrow

but not today. (64)

A fun book on learning to read basic words that rhyme. The secret is to have fun while learning; to use the imagination even in the simplest act. Fun while growing in life, important. And if one doesn't have the answers today, not to stress, tomorrow will always come.<sup>475</sup>

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<sup>475</sup> Awareness: to be aware of magic moments, peak experiences that have significance; in the simplest of ways, fun can be had; teaching the joy of life is a great tool to overcome hardships and to look at life not so seriously. B-1 Efficient perception of reality: tomorrow will come, don't

Theodor while in Oxford, in a Shakespeare class, at the same time everyone was learning where to put the punctuation marks, he was drawing funny creatures on the side of his book. It needed to be fun for him, needed to grab his mind. These little creatures lead him to self-actualization; Helen Palmer, in the class at the time with Theodor, asked what he was doing at Oxford when he should be in America drawing cartoons. These animals and imaginary characters were with him as a young boy; often he would go to the zoo where his father worked and would draw bizarre animals; as a young man, these characters had to come out and when they did, they lead him to his path, his journey of helping millions upon millions of young children learn how to read, having fun along the way.

1965 - *Fox in Socks*

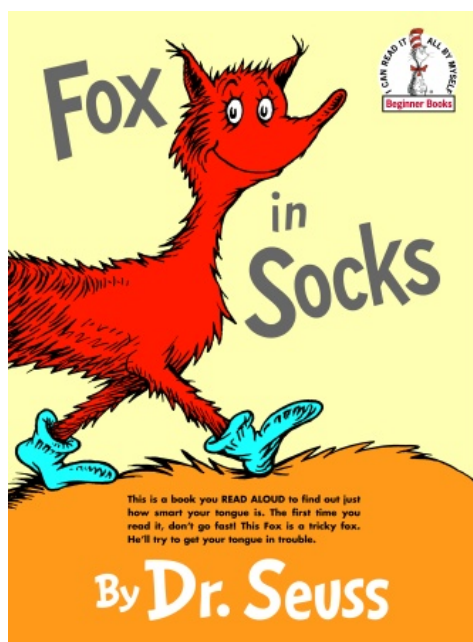


Fig. 31 Seuss. "Book cover." 1993, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*Fox in Socks* was published by Beginner Books a division of Random House in 1965, renewed in 1993, written in rhyme and dedicated to Mitzi Long and Audrey Dimond of the Mt. Soledad Lingual Laboratories.

A warning is written in the front cover: "Take it slowly / This Book is DANGEROUS!" Opening the book there is a red Fox with his hand to his chin with a sheepish grin, and wearing a pair of blue socks. As well, there is a brown Box and a Knox who has his hands together and fingers crossed with his eyes closed and a slight grin on his face. Seems rather innocent. Turning the page and off one goes:

Socks on Knox  
and Knox in box.

Fox in socks  
on box on Knox. (7)

---

stress; appreciate the now and know what makes one happy is key, 8-B finding out who one is, what one likes. As well, humor and honesty A-1; to be able to laugh at one's mistakes, one's self, makes life lighter. Maslow stated that humor can be "poking fun at human beings in general when they are foolish, or forget their place in the universe, or try to be big when they are actually small. This can take the form of poking fun at themselves, but this is not done any masochistic or clownlike way" (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 169 – 170).

The Fox asks Mr. Knox if he would like to do tricks and proceeds to present a variety of rhyming words to him:

First, I'll make a  
quick trick brick stack.

Then I'll make a  
quick trick block stack.

You can make a  
quick trick chick stack.

You can make a  
quick trick clock stack. (10 - 11)

Mr. Knox does not enjoy the tricks by the look on his face. Fox is enjoying trying new tricks and with each trick, they get harder and harder...to say. Mr. Knox says:

Please, sir. I don't  
like this trick, sir.

My tongue isn't  
quick or slick, sir.

I get all those  
ticks and clocks, sir,  
mixed up with the  
chicks and tocks, sir.

I can't do it, Mr. Fox, sir.

I'm so sorry,  
Mr. Knox, sir. (16 - 17)

The Fox says he is sorry and tries an easier game:

New socks.

Two socks.

Whose socks?

Sue's socks. (19)

Seems rather easy until the page is turned and he continues:

Who sews whose socks?

Sue sews Sue's socks.

Who sees who sew

whose new socks, sir?

You see Sue sew

Sue's new socks, sir.

That's not easy,

Mr. Fox, sir. (21)

The tongue twisters continue as the Fox creates a story about sewing; Mr. Knox is part of the story and as it gets more difficult he says with exasperation:

Mr. Fox!

I hate this game, sir.

This game makes

my tongue quite lame, sir. (28)

The Fox, now not smiling, one hand holding his chin, and his face quite surprised and disappointed says:

Mr. Knox, sir,

what a shame, sir. (29)

Having turned the page, the Fox says they will find something new to do; Knox is not looking very happy or confident. They go into some blue goo, that is new goo, which is gluey gluey. Knox refuses to say it and chew it. Fox as foxes do, has another game to play, this time with Bim and Ben who have a band that bangs and booms. Knox says his poor mouth is too slow to play this game. Fox persistent, tells Knox to bring his mouth to something it can say:

Luke Luck likes lakes.

Luke's duck likes lakes.

Luke Luck licks lakes.

Luke's duck licks lakes.

Duck takes licks

in lakes Luke Luck likes.

Luke Luck takes licks

in lakes duck likes. (42 - 43)

Fox tries more tongue twisters, getting Knox more and more frustrated. Fox presents beetles in a bottle going on and on, twistier and twistier for the tongue. Fox is having fun playing with the words and the rhymes until Knox has had enough and tells Fox to wait a minute. Knox puts Fox in the bottle with the beetles and creates a tongue twister ending with "fox in socks, Sir!" Mr. Knox, pleased with himself, a smile on his face, says thank you for the fun to the Fox in socks and walks happily away.

A tongue twister of a story. Sometimes the joke is played on the one who is pushing and pushing their way; situations can turn around when least expected, for the good or the bad. Learning when to back off, to stand up for one's self is important, to put a person in their place, all are important lessons to learn in life. Life can be a tongue twister, twisty and full of turns, not always so easy; sometimes it seems one loses the ability to speak, to say the right words, to make it sound right, yet when the right time comes, the words are there, the ability is present and one can walk away confident and content. Self-actualization requires humor in messy situations, to laugh at one's self; when the tongue gets twisted in life and it is difficult to speak, remember to relax, speak slowly and the words will come out clear.<sup>476</sup>

Theodor in his life found it difficult to speak in front of audiences, yet with Dr. Seuss at his side, he found the exact words to say on paper, though it took him a lot of time to find the right words:

"The problem with writing a book in verse is, to be successful it has to sound like you knocked it off on a rainy Friday afternoon. It has to sound easy. When you can do it, it

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<sup>476</sup> Honesty: to trust ones' feelings: anger, love, inter-personal relationships, this requires honesty and humor A-1. To laugh at one's self, to not take life so seriously, to laugh at the human condition and be good humored; Theodor embraced humor and Maslow saw it in healthy self-actualizing people.

helps tremendously because it's a thing that forces kids to read on. You have this unconsummated feeling if you stop. You have to go right through to the end--to the final beat.

"The main problem with writing in verse is, if your fourth line doesn't come out right, you've got to throw four lines away and figure out a whole new way to attack the problem. So the mortality rate is terrific." (Harper)

Yet, when he did find the words, and he did, they were often addressing sticky and not so funny topics.<sup>477</sup>

1965 - *I Had TROUBLE in getting to SOLLA SOLLEW*

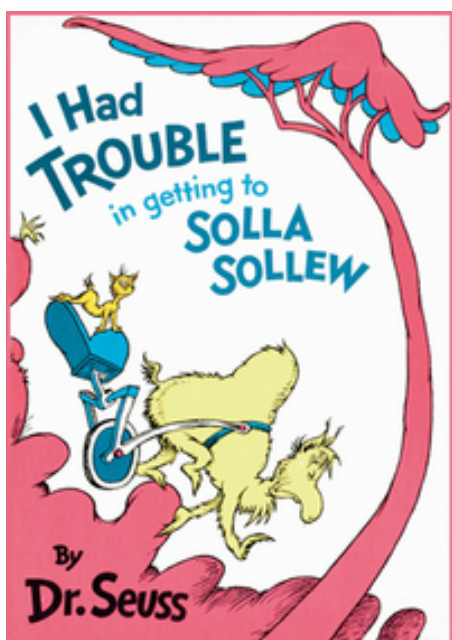


Fig. 32 Seuss. "Book cover." 1993, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*I Had TROUBLE in getting to SOLLA SOLLEW* was published by Random House in 1965, renewed publication in 1993, written in rhyme and dedicated to Margaretha Dahmen Owens with love and with thanks, (Theodor's niece).

The story begins with a little character, the protagonist, who is carefree, young, and lives in the Valley of Vung where nothing goes wrong until one day... he is gawking at the flowers and not looking when he stumps his toe and falls on the tip of his tail. This is the first time he has encountered trouble:

Now, I never had ever had  
 Troubles before.  
 So I said to myself,  
 "I don't want any more.  
 "If I watch out for rocks  
 With my eyes straight ahead,

<sup>477</sup> Theodor used humor A-1, to address social interests A-2; he had a righteous indignation to treat children with respect, to address environmental issues; Theodor had a desire to help children read and did something about it; it became his life mission D-1.

I'll keep out of trouble  
Forever," I said.

Looking very carefully ahead and determined not to meet trouble, suddenly from behind, a green-headed Quilligan Quail goes after his tail. Now there is trouble from ahead and behind. Double determined, crossing his eyes, looking ahead and behind, being twice as smart, watching out for trouble, he thinks he is safe until NEW troubles arrive from above and below:

"A Skritz at my neck!  
and a Skrink at my toe!  
And now I was really in trouble, you know.  
The rocks! And the Quail!  
And the Skritz! And the Shrink!  
I had so many troubles, I just couldn't think!"

Suddenly a chap in a One-Wheeler Wubble arrives; he says he understands the trouble as everyone experiences this, but he is on his way to Solla Sollew, on the banks of the beautiful River Wah-Hoo, and here there are never troubles. Would he like to come along? It is not very far. The little character agrees to go and jumps on the Wubble; it gets bumpy, rocky and tricky as they drive to Solla Sollew on through the night to the next day; the camel gets sick so the Chap and the little character must pull the Wubble and camel up the mountain to find a camel physician. Turning the page, the camel and Wubble chap are in the Wubble crate and the little character is doing the pulling to find the physician:

"Now really!" I thought, "this is rather unfair!"  
But he said, "Don't you stew. I am doing my share.  
"This is called teamwork. I furnish the brains.  
You furnish the muscles, the aches and the pains.  
I'll pick the best roads, tell you just where to go  
And we'll find a good doctor more quickly, you know."

Finally, the camel physician is found and the Wubble Chap tells the little character there is a bus stop just down the road; the bus will take him to "Solla Sollew, / on the banks of the beautiful River Wah-Hoo, / where they never have troubles. At least, very few." Arriving at the



bus stop there is a sign that the bus is not running - four nails punctured the tires, have a pleasant journey by foot, signed by the Bus Line President, Horace P. Sweet. He walks a hundred miles, his feet are sore and it begins to pour. Drenched to the skin, the little character meets a chap in a slicker who says the Midwinter Jicker has come early and it will not be comfortable around here so he is on his way to Palm Springs; the little character looking for no trouble is welcome to stay in his comfy house. In the house, as it is pouring outside, there are owls and mice also trying to stay warm and dry. His feet are cold and icy, until finally at five he falls asleep and begins to dream:

Then I dreamt I was sleeping on billowy billows  
 Of soft silk and satin marshmallow-stuffed pillows.  
 I dreamed I was sleeping in Solla Sollew  
 On the banks of the beautiful River Wah-Hoo,  
 Where they never have troubles. At least, very few.

As he is dreaming, he wakes up to a flubulous flood; the house with the mice, the owls and himself are crashing down a hill, like in a bad dream. He wonders why this trouble has to happen to him. He floats for twelve days until someone rescues him with a rope: a friend he believes and says thank you. But to his dismay, it is not a friend but General Genghis Kahn Schmitz who is going to war to attack and destroy the Perilous Poozer of Pompelmoose Pass. Now, the little character is a Private First Class and marching to war:

He gave me a shooter  
 And one little bean,  
 Which was not very much,  
 If you see what I mean.

Then he yelled, "Get that Poozer! Attack without fear!  
 The glorious moment of victory is near!"

The warriors look brave with the General in front, with one Poozer visible, a grin on his face. The page is turned and there are more than one Poozers ready to attack; General Genghis tells his men there are times when you cannot win, so it is time to retreat. The little character is standing there with his little shooter alone against the Poozers. He wonders if he will ever get to Solla

Sollew where they never have trouble, at least, very few.

As the page is turned, the little character finds a vent and jumps in, barely escaping death; the vent takes him through a frightful black tunnel where there are billions of birds all in a traffic jam. Being in the dark tunnel for three days, he falls smack on his face, injures three fingers, both thumbs, both lips, his shinbone, backbone, wishbone and hips; plus, he starves and grows moss on his feet as it is so damp.

By chance he finds a trap door and out he goes to the banks of the beautiful River Wah-Hoo where he is sure Solla Sollew is near! He sees a chap by a glittering tower who welcomes him to Solla Sollew. There is a little trouble here though - the key to the door to Solla Sollew doesn't work because a Key-Slapping Slippard moved in and won't let him open the door. If he kills the Slippard it is bad luck, so the town has gone to pot, and it's a terrible state of affairs. The Doorman says he is going to the city of Boola Boo Ball on the banks of the beautiful River Woo-Wall, and here there are never troubles, no troubles at all. He asks the little character to come with him and assures him he will never have troubles. The little character starts to go, stops, and does some thinking in his head:

Then I started back home  
 To the Valley of Vung.  
 I know I'll have troubles.  
 I'll, maybe, get stung.  
 I'll always have troubles.  
 I'll, maybe, get bit  
 By the Green-Headed Quail  
 On the place where I sit.  
  
 But I've bought a big bat.  
 I'm ready, you see.  
 Now my troubles are going  
 To have troubles with *me!*

The theme of this story is trouble goes with you wherever you go; no matter how hard one tries to escape trouble, it is a part of life. Others will come, talk about their great life where there are fewer troubles, or at least it sounds like it, and try to entice you to come be involved in

their life. Once you are there, their troubles maybe even more troublesome than what you were experiencing before. Trouble comes in many forms and in different ways, but the key is learning to take your own “big bat”, face trouble in the face and know how to deal with it once encountered. Truly, as the saying goes, the pasture is “not” greener on the other side of the fence. It is an illusion. Self-actualization requires learning to deal with life challenges and troubles.<sup>478</sup> Going along on someone else’s cart will just side-track you, bring more headaches; your energy will be used on another’s problem and not appreciated; in the end, most people return to their own life and realize they must learn to deal with their own problems – with their own big bat of confidence. It is in only facing one’s trouble does one gain confidence, courage and wisdom.

Theodor at the time of writing this book was having problems in his marriage. Helen was not in the best of health; Theodor had a new interest in another woman whom both he and Helen were friends with. There was trouble and Theodor was looking for his big bat.

1967 - *The Cat in the Hat Songbook*

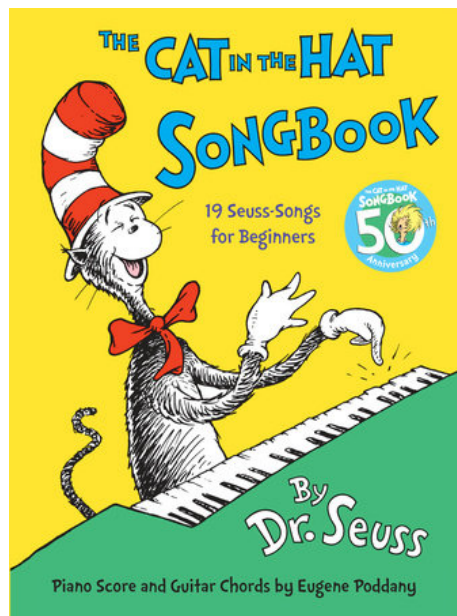


Fig. 33 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1995, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*The Cat in the Hat Songbook* was published by Random House in 1967, renewed in 1995 and dedicated: “For Lark and Lea / of / Ludington Lane. Lark and Lea”; daughters of Edmund and Audrey Dimond, friends of Theodor and Helen. Lyrics were written by Dr. Seuss and the musical score written by Eugene Poddany, a music composer for other popular cartoon classics of the day, Tom and Jerry.

The book opens with the Cat in the Hat holding a baton stick leading a host of Seussian characters in song and it reads: “LET US / ALL SING.” The book has 20 funny and zany songs for children beginning to read and sing: Let

<sup>478</sup> Trust: to trust one’s self, the mission in life D-1. D-2 Autonomy: independent for one’s own development, growth, potential and lightened resources; to be responsible in life, to be one’s own boss; Theodor realized life brought trouble and encouraged his readers to face life with a bat in hand and not hide in another’s situation but face life head on. Independence, teaches responsibility and gives confidence in life to grow from hardship to hardship, success to success.

Us All Sing, The Super-Supper March, My Uncle Terwillieger Waltzes with Bears, In My Bureau Drawer (where a tooth is kept safe), The No Laugh Race (A Party Game Song), Plinker Plunker, Beeper Booper, Hurry Hurry Hurry (hurry with two legs, four legs, six legs, eight!), Cry A Pint, Ah-a-a-a-a-H Choo, I Can Figure Figures, Somebody Stole My Hoo-to Foo-to Boo-to Bah!, Rainy Day in Utica, N.Y., Lullaby for Mr. Benjamin B. Bickelbaum, Happy Birthday to Little Sally Spingel Spungel Sporn, My Uncle Terwilliger Likes to Pat, Yawn Song, The Left-Sock Thievers, Drummers Drumming A Round, and the last song Party Parting.<sup>479</sup>

1968 - *The Foot Book*

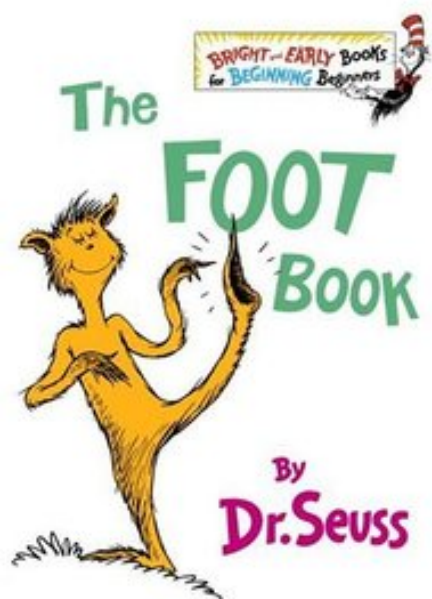


Fig. 34 Seuss. "Book cover." 1996, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*The Foot Book* was published by Random House in 1968, renewed publication in 1996, a book for the Bright and Early Book series – children being introduced to books, younger than the children who read the Beginner Books series; it was the first book he wrote after the death of his wife, Helen. It is a book of rhyming opposites, left foot, right foot, with the base word “foot” used throughout to make comparisons and often repetitions.

The book starts off with a little creature walking, the right foot in front of the left foot, and the words are “Left foot / Left foot ... Right foot / Right.” The feet start walking in the morning and into the night: “Feet in the morning / Feet at night / Left foot / Left foot / Left foot / Right.” Feet go up and feet go down, there are wet feet and dry feet, pig

feet and clown feet, small feet and big feet, her feet and his feet, many, many more feet, and ending with “Left foot. Right foot. Feet. Feet. Feet. Oh, how many / feet you meet!”

Feet are what one needs to walk, one in front of the other. Feet bring one up and they bring one down. With feet many different people in life are met, many different colors of feet, sometimes they are wet and sometimes they are dry. This is what life is about, taking one step in front of the other. Self-actualization requires continued walking, continued progression,

<sup>479</sup> Freedom: the ability to be spontaneous; Theodor in creating C-2, the lyrics for the songbook, allowed his mind to be spontaneous C-3. He trusted himself enough to share the melody in his heart with his audience.

continued movement and continued growth - all giving balance to life.<sup>480</sup>

Theodor at this time in his life was off step; normally one takes one left step, then a right step; the book begins with the steps not in the normal walking fashion of left foot, right foot but “left foot, left foot, right foot, right... left foot, left foot, left foot, right.” After Helen’s death Theodor was beside himself and was not sure of what he should do; he was off step. “I didn’t know whether to kill myself, burn the house down, or just go away and get lost” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 195). Balance and rhythm were very important to Theodor, in his work and play, and in his art and writing. The importance of this balance in life was earlier addressed in the story Theodor wrote twenty-nine years earlier, *The King’s Stilts*. Theodor would find his balance again, with Audrey helping him.

#### 1969 - *I Can Lick 30 Tigers Today! And Other Stories*

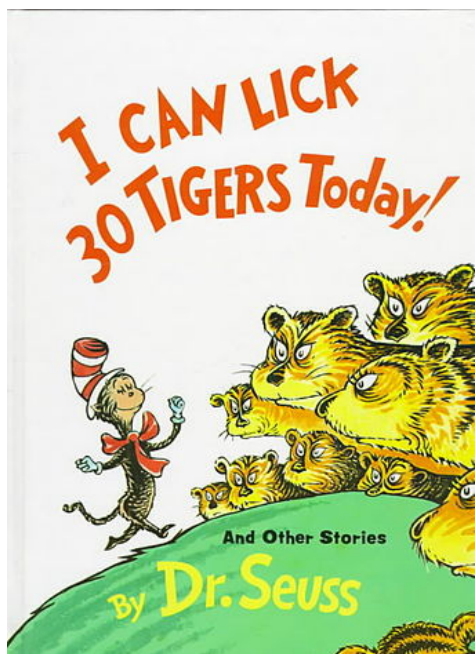


Fig. 35 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1997, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*I Can Lick 30 Tigers Today! And Other Stories* was published by Random House in 1969, renewed in 1997, written in rhyme and dedicated to Audrey, his second wife. The Other Stories in the book are: *King Looie Katz* and *The Glunk That Got Thunk*.

*I Can Lick 30 Tigers Today* begins with a famous Seuss character, the Cat in the Hat, but in this story he is a Little Cat in the Hat, wearing the famous striped red and white hat. Walking up a little hill, full of determination and confidence he says, “I can lick / thirty tigers today!”; behind a hill, there is a set of eyes from ONE tiger. Turning the page, suddenly there are thirty tigers all coming and the Little Cat in the Hat says that maybe he can lick only twenty-nine, as there is one tiger with curly hair to which he

<sup>480</sup> Theodor at this time was searching for balance as his world was out of balance: 7-V Necessity: nothing lacking, everything in its right place, just-so-ness. 8-V Completion: ending, finality, justice, fulfillment of destiny, consummation closure, death and rebirth, cessation and completion of growth and development; Helen’s death brought completion of one period of Theodor’s life and with death brought development into a new era of writing with Audrey at Theodor’s side. In difficult times one must keep walking to find again balance: 13-V playfulness, and 14-V self-sufficiency.

addresses: “You! / Down there! / With the curly hair. / Will you please step out of line / I can lick / twenty-nine tigers today...”

Each page turned, the tigers are coming closer and closer, the Little Cat in the Hat finds reasons to dismiss tigers and thereby lick less and less tigers. The problems are always with the tigers: “Your fingernails aren’t very clean... you seem underweight... you look sort of sleepy to me... the sun is bright, go lie down in the shade...” In the end he says, “I can lick / One mighty tiger today...”, but as the tiger is now very big on a higher hill and the Little Cat in the Hat very small on a lower hill, he thinks twice and says:

But...

You know, I have sort of a hunch

That noontime is near.

You just wait for me here.

I’ll beat you up right after lunch.

It is important to know why one wants to lick 30 Tigers today. Why 30, why tigers, and why today? Having a bad day? Need to get some steam off? Something is bothersome? Feeling a bit over confident? Wanting to be a bully to feel power? But the Little Cat in the Hat’s face is not angry but smiling with his fists in the air wearing blue gloves, and a skip to his walk. In his mind he is strong until he faces the 30 tigers; then everything changes; he begins to find reasons in them why they could not be licked but are lucky and can go, thus eliminating the number until it is down to just one tiger. Self-realization brings conflict with one’s self and from without; tigers in one’ mind or real.<sup>481</sup> Everyday there is something to lick, within or without and reasons can

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<sup>481</sup> Honesty: to be your feelings; to trust your feelings: anger, love, inter-personal relationships; Maslow’s first sub-characteristic in honesty of a self-actualizing people is A-1 sense of humor: laughing at the human condition, good natured at the silliness, ludicrous situation of the humanness. Being a human brings many areas of conflict which in turn brings mixed feelings. These feelings are not always pleasant yet it is essential to understand where these feelings come from: to take the time to realize what is going on inside or without which arouse these thoughts, feelings; to not be so serious and realize the humanness of mankind, making the way to understanding more doable. The second area of self-actualization in honesty is social interest A-2: feeling of identification with the human species, willing to fight when fighting is necessary over a good cause; the Little Cat in the Hat in the end found no good reason to fight with his fellow creatures; Theodor in the end came to terms with himself and the inner conflict, realizing Helen had been his anchor but now Audrey was there to walk beside him for the continuation of his journey; this being A-3 interpersonal relations: becoming capable of more fusion, greater

be made to dismiss the tigers, reasons that pertain to the “other” person, not one’s own ability or lack of. Conflict brings challenges, inner dealings. This Little Cat in the Hat lost his steam as the tigers got closer and closer; whether it was confidence or courage he lacked as he faced the Tigers, the resolve melted away. Tomorrow he would come back to face the tiger; like facing one’s inner demons, if not faced, they remain.

Theodor had many tigers to lick. It had just been two years since Helen’s death, when she had committed suicide; now married to a woman who divorced her husband and put her children in boarding school to be with him. Perhaps there were thoughts pushing at his mind that needed to be dealt with, but always there were good reasons not to deal with them, tomorrow was another day. Wanting to be the happy-go-lucky Little Cat in the Hat, but there were 30 Tigers to lick today. Theodor worked long hours to deal with the conflict; his work changed with the application of softer pastel colors in his books. Taking life one step at a time, brought back life, peace and balance; Audrey, his new wife, gave him strength and encouragement to face these inner thoughts, demons and tigers.

#### 1969 - *My Book about Me, By Me, Myself*

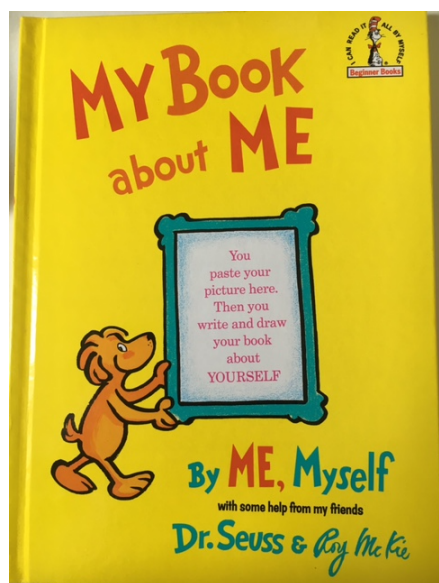


Fig. 36 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1969, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*My Book about Me* was published September 12, 1969 by Random House Children’s Books, a division of Random House; Dr. Seuss wrote the book and Roy McKie made the illustrations. It is an inter-active book where the child is making their own book by writing, drawing, coloring, and putting in information pertaining to who they are.

On the front inside cover, the starting point begins with what they are called, their name; on the right hand side there is a little note:

I don’t care  
my name or not.

love, more perfect identification and obliteration of the ego boundaries; contrary to the lower love, a higher love, purer love was attained in his dealing with inner voices, inner tigers causing conflict; once a person deals with their own tigers, freedom to be one’s self is enabled and growth is on-going.

That's my name.  
 It's the only  
 name I've got.

First things first, a boy or a girl? Then all the physical aspects of the child are discussed: weight, height, number of teeth, hair, size of hand and foot, nose, eyes, and freckles. Next, where do they live and all the countries of the world are listed with a place to write their country in. From this, closer to home information is asked: the address, telephone number, what kind of house and where it is located, the farm, town, city; moving into the house various detailed questions are asked with illustrations and fill-in-the-blank places for answers: how many windows, forks, mirrors and other common items are listed. Eating is the next topic, favorite food and what one cannot stand. Birthdays are important and listed, with what gift would be wanted most of all; but a little note in parenthesis reads: (if it costs too much, forget it). Going to school is a big part of any child's life; how they go, their favorite teacher and subjects, if they are a good student, a so-so student or an awful student. More interesting items are written and illustrated, always leaving room for the child's response; if the feet are ticklish, yes or no; what is their favorite pet and if they have one. Some secret things one knows is discussed making the book more personal:

It is \_\_\_\_\_ steps  
 from my door  
 to the first tree.

It is \_\_\_\_\_ steps  
 from my tree  
 to the first mailbox.

It is \_\_\_\_\_ steps  
 from my mailbox  
 to the first store.

I bet YOU never knew *that* before! (32 - 33)



Back to the personal items: such as clothes with buttons, zippers, and favorite colors; a collection of autographs from people close – grandmother and grandfather to quite distant but still important in one’s life: a firefighter, a policeman, a man with a beard, and a man more than 6 feet 3 inches tall. To relieve any undue stress, in the beginning of the book the words are written: “Most kids can’t get them all.” And then questions are asked with a YES or No response:

Sometimes

I Get Mad

at

Some People

YES NO

Check one.

I kicked someone.

YES NO

I pushed someone.

YES NO.

I hit someone

YES NO

I yanked hair.

YES NO

I’m sorry I did it.

YES NO (40 - 41)

Longest walks are covered in how many miles; longest bike ride... longest hair is \_\_\_\_\_ inches. Next a bird is to be drawn, fun; then to hobbies, favorite sports, songs, and instruments. If one is neat, not so neat, or pretty sloppy. Talking while sleeping, and what time to get up in the morning. Making loud noises like a rooster, a dog, a cat, a goat, a sheep, a goose, a train or three open possibilities. Does the family love the noises, yes or no? Last question, but not least, what every parent and teacher are curious to know:

When I Grow Up, I Want to Be \_\_\_\_\_ . (56)

Funny and real professions are listed from a lion tamer to a sea captain to an alligator wrestler. The last activity is to write a story; two blank lined pages are left for the imagination to play. Ending with:

Well, sir!

That's

MY Book

About ME.

I finished writing it

\_\_\_\_\_ Month

\_\_\_\_\_ Day

\_\_\_\_\_ Year. (60)

Using even the inside covers, three forgotten items: how many shoelaces, buttonholes and if one wishes they were a giraffe, or happy they are not a giraffe. The book is comparable to an overview of what is taught in kindergarten, all about Me, Myself. Celebration of who one is, from little personal details to broader aspects that affects one's life; these are what makes the book special - it is unique for every child. Self-actualization requires the celebration of individuality; to bring this uniqueness out, each person requires encouragement to accept who they are; their gifts and talents given liberty to develop.<sup>482</sup>

Theodor was in touch with his inner person, getting reacquainted with who HE was in the childish ways, the base. Being 65, past middle-aged, taking serious account for where he had

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<sup>482</sup> Trust: to trust oneself deeply, the mission in life, to trust others and nature; when one can trust, one begins to accept, D-3 acceptance: of self, others, nature; can take frailties, sins, and evils of human nature in the unquestioning spirit which one takes the characteristics of nature; Theodor was celebrating who he was at the moment; time brings an awareness that there is good and evil in the world, good and bad, with this awareness it is easier to accept who one is, deep within. Once acceptance is present, one's life mission D-1 can flow easier and autonomy D-2: one's own growth and development, potentialities and lightened resources are enabled. Theodor at 65 was celebrating his gifts and talents; he was a teacher in his own right and wanted his students, audience to learn this lesson at a young age. He left stepping stones for generations to come hoping for the celebration of Me, Myself.

been and what lay ahead of him required introspection and celebration. As the cover of the book reads:

I don't care  
if you like  
my name or not.  
That's my name.  
It's the only  
name I've got.

1970 - *I CAN DRAW IT MYSELF, By ME, Myself*

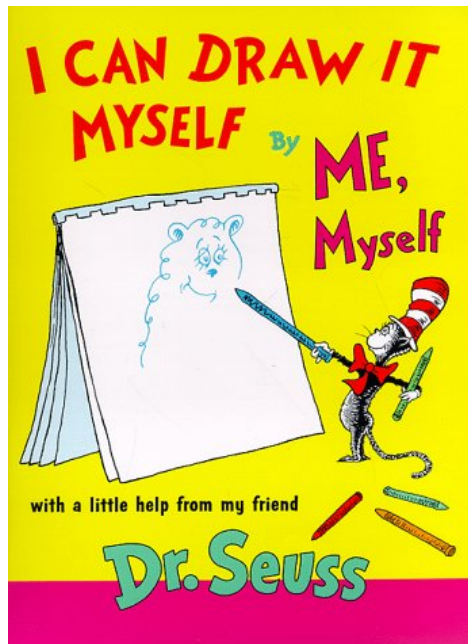


Fig. 37 Seuss. "Book cover." 1998, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*I CAN DRAW IT MYSELF By ME, Myself* was published by Random House Children's Books, a division of Random House, in 1970 and renewed in 1998, written in rhyme and comes complete with a packet of crayons attached on the front cover. The book is told in story format with pictures having missing parts, asking the child to complete the drawing.

The first picture is a boy named Fred, missing his head, standing by a fence with a cat looking at him with curiosity.

Dr. Seuss didn't finish  
So I helped him out,  
and I drew Fred a head.

And I took care  
of a fellow named Pete.  
I saw that Pete needed  
a couple of feet.

Throughout the book there are strange looking creatures with made up names, a bug called a Sneggs, a Hamika-Snamika-Bamika-Bunt, each missing parts, asked to be put on by the artist,

me, myself. There are also common, everyday items to be drawn and colored: stars, moons, balloons, and neckties. Encouragement is given throughout with phrases of:

The more I keep drawing,  
the better I get!

.....

I'm getting so good,  
I draw sailors. And boats!

.....

I'm so good,  
I drew half of a Yill-iga-yakk.  
Dr. Seuss drew the front half, and I drew the back

.....

Oh, boy! I'm terrific!  
I drew the whole front  
of a Hamika-Snamika-Bamika-Bunt!  
And that, let me tell you,  
is no easy stunt.

The last page, the Cat in the Hat is holding a crayon, wearing a proud smile on his face and asking the child to draw SOMETHING in a framed open place and then to sign their name:

And finally, up here,  
in this solid gold frame,  
I drew a BIG SOMETHING.  
Then I signed my name.

BIG SOMETHINGS aren't easy.  
They're hard for a kid.  
But I can draw one by myself.  
AND I DID!

The love of drawing is awakened in the child, drawing and coloring all sorts of imagined and real things; encouragement along the way, giving confidence and freedom to experiment

with the imagination. Essential in self-actualization, to play with the make-belief, to doodle in life, on paper or out loud, enjoying the creative force bringing satisfaction and contentment, awakening the inner-child, which too often, is told at a young age to color in between the lines, not outside; teaching the child to follow conformity; yet in contrast, what is needed is to have their own sense of wonder and adventure, the true inner-self.<sup>483</sup>

Theodor doodled all through his years, as a child, at school, in his home, to Dartmouth, to Oxford where Helen saw his doodles:

Sitting in this course with Theodor was a fellow student, Helen Marion Palmer, six years his senior; she asked why he was in here, when he should be cartooning. She had observed that he found the class “very dull, and drew pictures constantly during lectures.” (“Dr. Seuss.” *Readers’ Choice*)

"She was a gal who was sitting next to me when I was doing this notebook, and she was the one who said, ‘You’re not very interested in the lectures.’ She ‘picked me up’ by looking over and saying, ‘I think that’s a very good flying cow.’

"It was she who finally convinced me that flying cows were a better future than tracing long and short E through Anglo Saxon.

"She was the one who convinced me that I wasn’t for pedagogy at all.” (Lathem 17)

At this point of Theodor’s life, after facing the 30 Tigers to lick, celebrating Me, Myself, it was again time to celebrate what he did best – draw! Draw outside the lines, drawing bizarre and strange creatures, all at the same time bringing his inner child back to life, in celebration.

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<sup>483</sup> Maslow in *Motivation and Personality* wrote that this inner creativeness of a child, once in all human beings at birth, is often lost as they are enculturated, yet can reclaim it later in life; this is called a “second naïveté” (171). Creativeness C-2: rather kin to naïve, an unspoiled child; a person who is everyday inventing, spontaneous creation; Theodor again found and celebrated his love of drawing and celebrated this with his audience, encouraging and hoping they too would draw and create outside the lines.

1970 - *Mr. Brown Can MOO! Can You?*

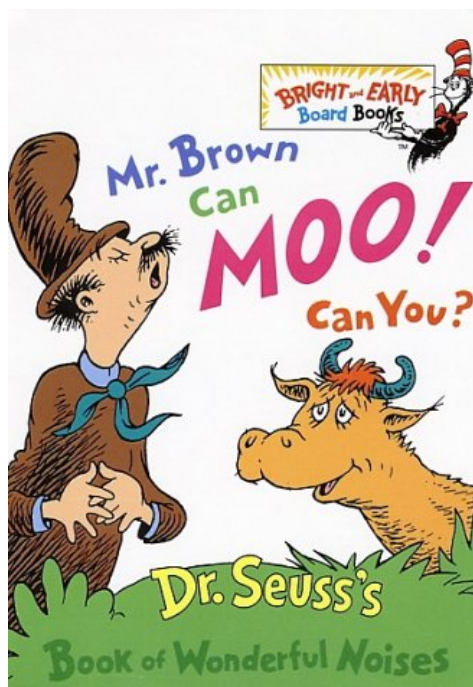


Fig. 38 Seuss. "Book cover." 1998, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*Mr. Brown Can MOO! Can You?* was published by Random House in 1970 and renewed by Audrey S. Geisel in 1998; written in rhyme for the Bright and Early readers (younger than the Beginner Reader series) about funny noises children can make.

Mr. Brown, a man with a moustache, brown suit and blue bowtie is the character who makes all the familiar and fun noises; the reader is then asked if they can make them too. The noises are repeated throughout the book bringing fun and learning through repetition:

Oh, the wonderful things

Mr. Brown can do!

MOO MOO

BUZZ BUZZ

POP POP POP

EEK EEK

HOO HOO

KLOPP KLOPP KLOPP

DIBBLE DIBBLE

DOPP DOPP

COCK-A-DOODLE-DOO

GRUM GRUM

GRUM GRUM

CHOO CHOO CHOO

BOOM BOOM

SPLATT SPLATT

TICK TICK TOCK

SIZZLE SIZZLE  
 BLURP BLURP  
 KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

A SLURP and a WHISPER  
 and a FISH KISS, too.

Mr. Brown can do it.  
 How about YOU?

A fun book of sounds for the very young. In self-actualization it is necessary to remember how to learn: repeat, have fun, repeat, something strange catches your ear, listen, repeat, then do.<sup>484</sup> If Mr. Brown can do it, surely you can too! Listening, identifying and doing, even if it seems to be bizarre, say and do!

Theodor did not follow the normal and expected path of becoming a professor of literature; rather he listened to his inner voice, and those around him giving him encouragement; if Mr. Brown could do it, surely he could too! He left Oxford to follow his dream of drawing and writing – of having fun and repeating it over and over, taking the liberty to be free from within.

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<sup>484</sup> Freedom: the ability to be spontaneous, to withdraw if this is what is needed, to create, to be whatever one is at the moment, no matter what it is, but to trust that self, to be freely oneself. To learn should also be spontaneous and free, to have fun, to have liberty in oneself; children learn by repetition and if the repetition is of a joyous nature, they will come back to it again and again until it is well learned deep within, giving confidence and a hunger to discover even more.

1971 - *The LORAX*

Fig. 39 Seuss. "Book cover." 1999, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*The LORAX* was published by Random House Children's Books, a division of Random House, in 1971, renewed publication in 1999, written in rhyme and dedicated: For Audrey, Lark and Lea / With Love.

The story begins with a grey, grim looking picture of a town at night, the lights are on, the moon is in the sky, the trees outside the town are dead, the grass is grey, a sad bird is flying down toward a path that leads to the town and on the path is a little boy looking up at a sign that reads: "The Street of the Lifted Lorax." Turning the page, the little boy is peeking through some Grickle-grass at an old stump with bricks on top of it; it is said if one looks deep enough they can see where the Lorax once stood

before it was taken away. Questions are posed to the reader, which get the story on its way:

What was the Lorax?

And why was it there?

And why was it lifted and taken somewhere

from the far end of town where the Grickle-grass grows?

The old Once-ler still lives here.

Ask him. *He* knows.

Way up in an old store, in his Lerkim, peeking out of boarded up windows, is the Once-ler, the protagonist of the story. It is also said that on certain dank midnights in August, if paid, perhaps he may tell how the Lorax was lifted away. The little boy pays the requested amount and a Whisper-ma-Phone is dropped down from way up high; the Once-ler has agreed to tell the story of the Lorax as it started way back, such a long, long time ago. The page is turned and color fills the page, the reader is taken back to a long time ago:



Way back in the days when the grass was still green  
 and the pond was still wet  
 and the clouds were still clean,  
 and the song of the Swomee-Swans rang out in space...  
 one morning, I came to this glorious place.  
 And I first saw the trees!  
 The Truffula Trees!  
 The bright-colored tufts of the Truffula Trees!  
 Mile after mile in the fresh morning breeze.

The Once-ler reminisces about the Bar-ba-loots who played in the shade of the trees and ate its fruit, the Humming-fish who hummed in the pond; but the Truffula Trees with their soft tufts was what he had been searching for all his life.

In no time at all, I had built a small shop.  
 Then I chopped down a Truffula Tree with one chop.  
 And with great skillful skill and with great speedy speed,  
 I took the soft tuft. And I knitted a Thneed!

Immediately, once the Thneed was made, there was a great “ga-Zump”; the Lorax popped out of the stump of the newly cut Truffula Tree. What was this Lorax?

He is shortish. And oldish.  
 And brownish. And mossy.  
 And he spoke with a voice  
 that was sharpish and bossy.

And why was the Lorax there?

“Mister!” he said with a sawdusty sneeze,  
 “I am the Lorax. I speak for the trees.  
 I speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues.  
 And I’m asking you, sir, at the top of my lungs” -

he was very upset as he shouted and puffed -

“What’s that THING you’ve made out of my Truffula tuft?”

The Once-ler describes what he has made from the tuft of the Truffula tree: a pink pajama looking piece of clothing that can be used for many things; it can be a shirt, a sock, a glove, a hat, used for carpets, pillows, sheets, curtains, or to cover bicycle seats. “A Thneed’s a Fine-Something-That-All-People-Need!” The Lorax says he is full of greed and no one would buy a Thneed.

But the Lorax was wrong. A man came and bought the Thneed for three ninety-eight. The Lorax begs the Once-ler to stop cutting down trees, but is told to shut-up as he is busy calling family members to come knit Thneeds and get rich. A big Thneed factory is built, trees are cut down, and the Thneeds are made.

Then...

Oh! Baby! Oh!

How my business did grow!

Now, chopping one tree

at a time

was too slow.

So I quickly invented my Super-Axe-Hacker

which whacked off four Truffula Trees at one smacker.

We were making Thneeds

four times as fast as before!

And that Lorax?...

*He* didn’t show up any more.

But the Lorax came back in a week and now spoke up for the Brown Bar-ba-loots who once played in the shade of the trees and ate Truffula Fruits. He snapped:

“NOW...thanks to your hacking my trees to the ground,  
there’s not enough Truffula Fruit to go ’round.

And my poor Bar-ba-loots are all getting the crummies  
because they have gas, and no food, in their tummies!”

The Lorax says they loved living here but now must be sent away to find food. The Once-ler sad for a moment but says “business is business! / And business must grow / regardless of crummies in tummies, you know.” The Brown Bar-ba-loots are all walking away out of the town with chopped Truffula Trees along the way. Sad.

Turning the page, the Once-ler is busy with his business; the Thneeds factory is busy: cutting down trees and bringing in the tufts; black smoke is rising from the factory pipes; trucks are taking the Thneeds north, south, west and east away for delivery.

I meant no harm. I most truly did not.  
But I had to grow bigger. So bigger I got.  
I biggered my factory. I biggered my roads.  
I biggered my wagons. I biggered the loads  
.....  
And I biggered my money, which everyone needs.

The Once-ler said the Lorax, the old-nuisance, came again with more gripes:

“I am the Lorax,” he coughed and he whiffed.  
He sneezed and he snuffled. He snarggled. He sniffled.  
“Once-ler!” he cried with a cruffulous croak.  
“Once-ler! You’re making such smogulous smoke!  
My poor Swomee-Swans...why, they can’t sing a note!  
No one can sing who has smog in his throat.

And...the Swomee-Swans were sent away by the Lorax to escape from the smog. But the Lorax was not finished with his gripes, “His dander was up”; he walked into the factory to discuss the Gluppity-Glupp, the machine that chugs day and night, and asked if the Once-ler, the “dirty old Once-ler”, knew what was done with the left-over goo. A rhetorical question as the Lorax already had the answer:

“I’ll show you. You dirty old Once-ler man, you!

“You’re glumping the pond where the Humming-Fish hummed!  
 No more can they hum, for their gills are all gummed.  
 So I’m sending them off. Oh, their future is dreary.  
 They’ll walk on their fins and get woefully weary  
 in search of some water that isn’t so smeary.”

The Once-ler got terribly mad; he declared he had rights and that he would get bigger and bigger, turning more Truffula Trees into Thneeds, which everyone needs. And at the same moment, there was a whack, a sickening smack, the very last Truffula Tree was cut. With no trees, everyone left the city, leaving only the big empty factory, the Lorax and the Once-ler. Hopelessness.

Turning the page, the Lorax is in the dark polluted sky being carried away himself by the seat of his pants through a little blue hole in the smog. The Once-ler explains that all that was left in the mess is a small pile of rocks with one word “UNLESS”; he has worried and worried throughout the years with all of his heart, but suddenly realizes what the word means, it is perfectly clear:

“UNLESS someone like you  
 cares a whole awful lot,  
 nothing is going to get better.  
 It’s not.

And hope arrives! The Once-ler, through the boarded up window, puts out his green hand and throws down a seed below to the outstretched hands of the little boy.

“SO...  
 Catch!” calls the Once-ler.  
 He lets something fall.  
 “It’s a Truffula Seed.  
 It’s the last one of all!  
 You’re in charge of the last of the Truffula Seeds.  
 And Truffula Trees are what everyone needs.  
 Plant a new Truffula. Treat it with care.

Give it clean water. And feed it fresh air.  
 Grow a forest. Protect it from axes that hack.  
 Then the Lorax  
 and all his friends  
 may come back.”

The theme of this book is the environment, taking care of it: respecting the trees, the animals, the air...for future generations. Greed is the enemy of the heart, making sense and logic go, all for the sake of money, power and influence. Self-actualization speaks out against mans’ acts of greed. It has a voice strong, seeing into the future, hoping to change it before it is too late;<sup>485</sup> the word “unless” gives hope with the last seed that the Lorax and his friends may come back.

Theodor saw beyond the day and was ahead of his time; he used his voice to speak out against the greed he saw in mans’ hearts, wanting to leave this planet a better place, to share what was beautiful for future generations of children.

1972 - *Marvin K. Mooney Will you PLEASE GO NOW!*

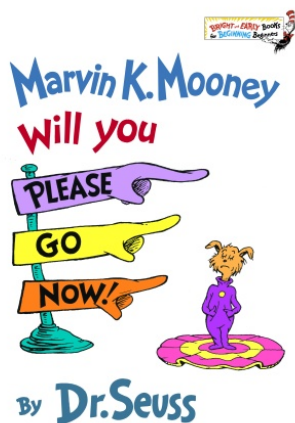


Fig. 40 Seuss. “Book cover.”

2000, digital image photo:

Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*Marvin K. Mooney Will you PLEASE GO NOW!* was published in 1972 by Random House Children’s Books, a division of Random House, and renewed publication in 2000; a book created for the Bright and Early Books series; the Beginner Beginners just beginning to read.

Marvin K. Mooney is a little character with ears, a furry face and wearing a purple one-piece outfit with one yellow button near the top; he is standing on a red rug. The protagonist is a set of hands wearing a watch on its wrist and pointing to Marvin K. Mooney and saying: “The / time / has come.” Wondering what the time is

<sup>485</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: a deep feeling of identification, sympathy, and affection in spite of the occasional anger, impatience and disgust; Theodor saw the future and let his righteous indignation at greed and pollution come forth in the Lorax; this was his way of doing something to help future generations of children to have a place to call home, earth, a beautiful place; he warned against destroying the planet. As Maslow believed in the good of healthy self-actualizing people, Theodor believed in the human race by placing the word “UNLESS” at the end of the story, hoping the Lorax and his friends would come back.

referring to, the page is turned, and again it is repeated with an emphasis the second time: “The time has come. / The time is now.” Still not knowing the answer to the time, page turned, and now the hand is drawn with movement and speed - the answer is given:

Just go.

Go.

GO!

I don't care how.

You can go by foot.

You can go

by cow.

Marvin K. Mooney,

will you

please go now!

Marvin K. Mooney is asked to go. He is given many choices on how he can go: on skates, on skis, in a hat... “but please go. Please!” Marvin has a smiling face as he is trying the various methods of GO. The antagonist seems pushy as he says:

I don't care.

You can go

by bike.

You can go

on a Zike-Bike

if you like.

If you like

you can go

in an old blue shoe.

Just go, go, GO!

Please do, do, DO!

He doesn't care how he goes, he just must GO NOW! And Marvin K. Mooney has an expression of dismissal; he doesn't seem interested in going; he is having too much fun going on stilts, by fish, in a Crunk-Car, by a lion's tail, by mail, but...the time has come to go, Go, GO! The ways of going gets even more fun! He is asked to get on his way, by way of a Zumble-Zay, a balloon, a broomstick, a camel in a bureau drawer, a Bumble-Boat, or a jet – “Just GET!” Now the pressure is on as he is told to leave with a Boom by a Ga-Zoom: “Marvin, Marvin, Marvin! / Will you leave this room!” And now Marvin K. Mooney is flying through the air, arms spread with a big smile on his face.

Wondering how he will land, the page is turned and Marvin is riding peacefully in a contraption held by birds with rings around their beaks carrying him somewhere, doesn't matter where just as long as he goes now. And then with Marvin K. Mooney on the ground in the center of a rug, looking very surprised, the hand is saying with force:

I said

GO

and

GO

I meant...

And Marvin waves goodbye and leaves:

The time had come.

SO...

Marvin WENT.

A story of Marvin K. Mooney being asked to go; as he departs, enjoying the various ways to leave, having fun along the way, stalling the process. The hand gets more and more persistent until finally it is not asking but forcefully telling him to GO! Humor in it all. Sometimes in life, it is just time to go. Period. Self-actualization requires at times to close the door and move on; doesn't matter how the departure is, but go, wave goodbye cheerfully and move on.<sup>486</sup>

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<sup>486</sup> Honesty: A-1 Humor: fits the situation, laughing at the human condition, good natured at the silliness, ludicrous situation of the human situation; Theodor and Marvin K. Mooney, both had doors which needed to be entered, shut and then encouraged to continue on to the next experience in life – to GO! Theodor used humor in life with each “going” moment. Trust: D-2

Theodor, often in his life had to go, trying different experiences, like going to Oxford, but there was a time to go. And why not have fun in the going? After one year at Oxford and realizing it was not for him, Theodor, took the advice of his famous tutor, A. J. Carlyle, the nephew of the great, frightening Thomas Carlyle, and went and explored Europe before returning to America to begin his career in cartooning:

“He very correctly told me I was ignorant, and he was the man who suggested that I do what I finally did: just travel around Europe with a bundle of high school history books and visit the places I was reading about – go to the museums and look at pictures and read as I went. That’s what I finally did.” (Lathem 13, 14)

It was a serious time in Theodor’s life, like the hand that was serious and even expressed frustration, yet, like Marvin, Theodor enjoyed the coming and going and learned to know when it was time throughout his life to GO!

1973 - *DiD I Ever Tell You How Lucky You Are?*

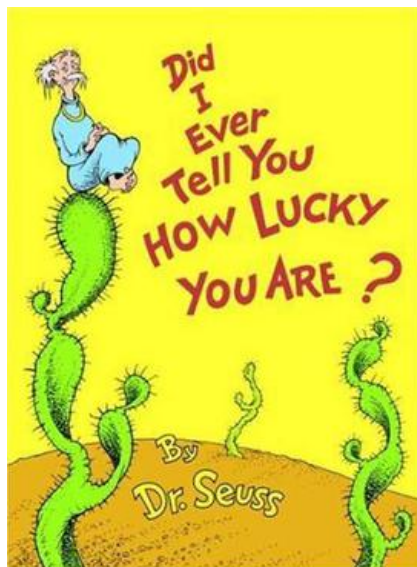


Fig. 41 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1973, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*Did I Ever Tell You How Lucky You Are* was published by Random House on September 12, 1973 and renewed publication in 2001; written in rhyme and dedicated: This Book, / With Love, / is for / Phyllis / the Jackson. Phyllis was Theodor’s agent for 30 years; she died four years later in March of 1977; Jackson was not only his agent but was a dear friend of Theodor’s and perhaps it was his way in this book to tell her how blessed he felt and much of his success was to her credit. *The New York Times* on March 22, 1977 wrote regarding Phyllis: “In dealing with publishers on behalf of her clients, Mrs. Jackson was remembered by an associate as ‘tough, but a lady.’ Her writers came to know her as a warm friend” (“Phyllis

Autonomy: dependent for their own development and growth; Theodor listened to wise people surrounding him; when they suggested that it was time for something else which was better suited for the journey, he listened; they resounded what was going on within already. Theodor was not tradition bound; leaving Oxford after a year to follow his own inner directedness; writing books for children rather than staying in the advertising industry; it was time to Go! and Go he did!



Jackson”).

The story begins in a desert; that’s it, no character in the picture yet there is a voice of a young boy named Duckie, who remembers a song, he will never forget, sung by an old man, sitting in a terribly prickly place, but with a sunny sweet smile on his face, in the Desert of Drize.

Page turned and there in the desert with cactus is Duckie standing on a tall rock and the old man sitting on a cactus who begins to tell him just how lucky he is:

When you think things are bad,  
when you feel sour and blue,  
when you start to get mad...  
you should do what I do!

Just tell yourself, Duckie,  
you’re really quite lucky!  
Some people are much more...  
oh, ever so much more...  
oh, muchly much-much more  
unlucky than you!

The old man begins to tell about various situations people can get into or are in: working on the Bunglebung Bridge, living in Ga-Zayt and getting caught in traffic on Zayt Highway Eight, living in Ga-Zair with the bedroom being far away from the bathroom, being Herbie Hart, who took his Throm-dim-bu-lator apart and now cannot get it together again, being Ali Sard who mows the grass but as he mows it, it grows faster and faster and the pay is only two Dooklas a day so he has to get another job on Sunday painting flagpoles in Grooz, and on and on the old man gives examples and stories of how much worse it could be. If you’re worried about your hair, well, there are the Brothers Ba-zoo whose beard is connected to their brothers’ hair on their head:

And the Brothers Ba-zoo.  
The poor Brothers Ba-zoo!  
Suppose your hair grew  
like theirs happened to do!

You think *you're* unlucky...?  
 I'm telling you, Duckie,  
 some people are muchly,  
 oh, *ever* so muchly,  
 muchly more-more-more unlucky than you!

Or if you live in that forest in France where there are pants-eating-plants, remember, “*your* pants are safe! You’re a fortunate guy. / And you ought to be shouting, ‘How lucky am I!’” All the time reminding Duckie, he is so, so, So lucky:

Thank goodness for all of the things you are not!  
 Thank goodness you’re not something someone forgot,  
 and left all alone in some punkerish place  
 like a rusty tin coat hanger hanging in space.

In conclusion, the last refrain in the song:

That’s why I say, “Duckie!  
 Don’t grumble! Don’t stew!  
 Some critters are much-much,  
 oh, ever so much-much,  
 so muchly much-much more unlucky thank you!”

To remember this song of the wise old man who sat on the prickly cactus telling Duckie to be grateful for how lucky he is, when looking at other people’s situations, how worse it could be – Dr. Seuss created an important stepping stone. Gratitude of the heart is a well-spring of joy, realizing the reality of the situation one is in, the good position. Self-actualization makes one aware of their surroundings and how lucky to have health, work, friends and live in a good place.<sup>487</sup> And if it is bad, to see that it could be even worse and not to grumble and complain.

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<sup>487</sup> Awareness: B-2 Freshness of appreciation: appreciating over and over the basic goods of life with awe, wonder and even ecstasy; the miracles of life are repetitive, the important things like a flower, a sunset, how cute a baby looks; Maslow in *Motivation and Personality* explained: “getting used to our blessings is one of the most important nonevil generators of human evil, tragedy, and suffering. What we take for granted we undervalue, and we are therefore too apt to sell a valuable birthright for a mess of pottage, leaving behind regret, remorse, and a lowering of self-esteem. Wives, husbands, children, friends are

Gratitude makes the heart strong, brings a brighter perspective on what is good; even if sitting on a cactus.

Theodor in his life was thankful he could help children learn to read:

He has a Pulitzer Prize (a special citation in 1984), three Oscars (for two documentaries he made in the 1940s and for the 1951 animated short subject, "Gerald McBoing-Boing"), an Emmy and a Peabody Award, and the adoration of millions of children. But the owner of these laurels is characteristically terse in assessing his life's greatest satisfaction: "I think I had something to do with kicking Dick and Jane out of the school system. I think I proved to a number of million kids that reading is not a disagreeable task. And without talking about teaching, I think I have helped kids laugh in schools as well as at home. That's about enough, isn't it? "Hmmp?" (Harper)

As Theodor was getting older, now 69 years old, life was shorter ahead; looking back there was much to be thankful for.

### 1973 - *The SHAPE of ME and OTHER STUFF*

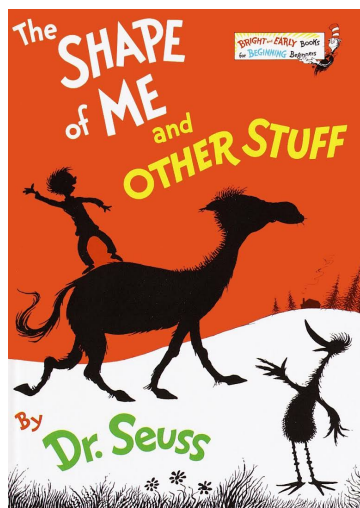


Fig. 42 Seuss. "Book cover."  
2001, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*The SHAPE of ME and OTHER STUFF* was published July 12, 1973 by Random House Children's Books, a division of Random House, and renewed publication in 2001; a book written in rhyme and playful rhythm for early readers just beginning to read.

The book begins simply with a provoking thought on thinking; words in rectangle colored shapes read:

You know...  
It makes a fellow think.

And in between these two rectangles there are black silhouettes of a boy, a girl, and a turtle walking down to a stream with

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unfortunately more apt to be loved and appreciated after they have died than while they are still available. Something similar is true for physical health, for political freedoms, for economic well-being; we learn their true value after we have lost them." (163 – 164)

Theodor and Maslow were both saying the same thing: to be aware and appreciative. Maslow stated that life could be much better if we would "count our blessings as self-actualizing people can and do, and if we could retain their constant sense of good fortune and gratitude for it" (*Maslow Motivation and Personality* 164).

reads. Makes one want to turn the page to find out what the fellow thinks.

The shape of you  
 the  
 shape  
 of  
 me  
 ...  
 the shape  
 of everything I see...

a bug...  
 a balloon  
 a bed  
 a bike.

No shapes are ever quite alike.

The boy and girl are in silhouette form, showing only their shape yet revealing surprise and wonder on their faces. Every object has a shape, a silhouette, a form: flowers, mice, strings, lips, ships, drips, peanuts, pineapples, noses, grapes...coming in all sorts and sizes, explaining to the very young that everything comes in different shapes. The boy and girl are given the idea of what it would be like to be shaped like a these, a those, a BLOGG, or a garden hose but in the end:

Of all  
 the shapes  
 we MIGHT have been...

I say, "HOORAY  
 for the shapes we're in!"

The book closes with the girl as a red silhouette and the boy as a green silhouette, arms out stretched, both wearing the shape of a big smile on their face and thankful to be who they are.

The theme in this book is to celebrate the uniqueness of who one is; much like Theodor's

last book, *Did I Ever Tell You How Lucky You Are?*, to be aware... of all the shapes around us and to be happy in the shape we are. Until one is happy with who they are, it is impossible to appreciate the beauty in all that surrounds a person. Learning to be happy in one's skin, one's silhouette, opens the eyes to shapes and forms in all sizes and that nothing is alike, not a thing or a person - all are unique. Realizing the uniqueness of each shape, living or non, brings self-realization of individual beauty.<sup>488</sup> Hooray!

Theodor was a man of uniqueness, his own shape. Trying to be the shape his father wanted or expected of him did not fit him. He was his own shape and expressed himself in who he was. Once he accepted this, he found the freedom and liberty to move in the silhouette with joy and success.

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<sup>488</sup> Trust: D-3 Acceptance: of self, others and of nature; can take the frailties, sins, and evils of human nature in the same unquestioning spirit which one takes the characteristics of nature. Maslow in his book *Motivation and Personality* wrote of the self-actualizing person regarding acceptance:

Our healthy individuals find it possible to accept themselves and their own nature without chagrin or complaint or, for that matter, even without thinking about the matter very much.

.....  
 As the child looks out upon the world with wide, uncritical, undemanding, innocent eyes, simply noting and observing what is the case, without either arguing the matter or demanding that it be otherwise, so does the self-actualizing person tend to look upon human nature in himself and in others.

.....  
 [T]he self-actualized person sees reality more clearly: our subject sees human nature as it *is* and not as they would prefer it to be. Their eyes see what is before them without being strained through spectacles of various sorts to distort or shape or color reality.

.....  
 They are able to accept themselves not only on the low levels, but at all levels as well; e.g., love, safety, belongingness, honor, self-respect. All of these are accepted without question as worthwhile, simply because these people are inclined to accept the work of nature rather than to argue with her for not having constructed things to a different pattern. (155 – 156)

Theodor in this book was expressing the importance of accepting the beauty of each individual and that each individual is unique - to change would to distort, take away, make less.

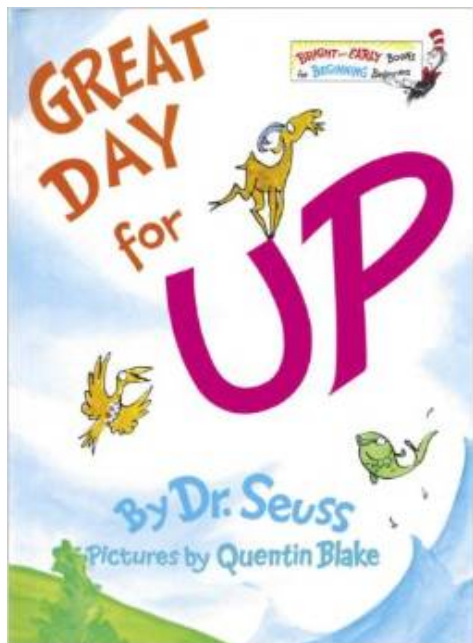
1974 - *GREAT DAY for UP*

Fig. 43 Seuss. "Book cover." 1974, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*GREAT DAY for UP* was published on August 28, 1974 by Random House Children's Books, a division of Random House, and renewed publication in 2002; a book written in rhyme for the early readers, A Bright and Early Book from Beginner Books; written by Dr. Seuss and illustrated by Quentin Blake.

The book is all about the word UP and what is the first thing to get UP in the morning? The sun!

UP!

UP!

The sun is getting up.

After the sun gets UP, everything and everyone are told to get UP!: ear number one, ear number two, heads, whiskers, tails...UP! UP!

Great day, today!

Great day

for

UP!

Now it's time to open up the eyes: you worms, frogs and butterflies...UP! Girls and women! Boys and men! Even the FEET need to get UP, left and right; the baseballs, footballs and kites are UP! Getting up in the morning is a good time to sing - up on a wire (birds are illustrated singing on wires), UP with the voices. Everything is doing Ups: on bikes, trees, buttercups, waiters, alligators, folks in elevators, monkeys climbing UP a giraffe's neck, seals balancing balls UP on their noses, ferris wheels going UP, and balloons going UP. It is a great day for UP so wake every person till EVERYONE on earth is up! Except:

Except for me.

Please go away.

No up.

I'm sleeping in today.

UP is the best way to experience life – with the senses and all that is living. But, it seems the end of the story, with a little boy in bed, and the word “up” in blue brings a truth to the story: sometimes everyone has a blue day and just wants to stay cozy in bed, even when the entire world and the creatures are singing, celebrating; it is normal to have the blues and perhaps bed is the best place to stay. Self-actualization is being aware of all the feelings within, celebrating with the others, aware of their joy and the need to be up while at the same time taking time for self, to not get up.<sup>489</sup>

Theodor was headed for a time of difficulty the following year. He was watching the world get UP but wanted to stay in bed, asking the person who was waking everyone UP to go away.

1974 - *There's a WOCKET in my POCKET!*

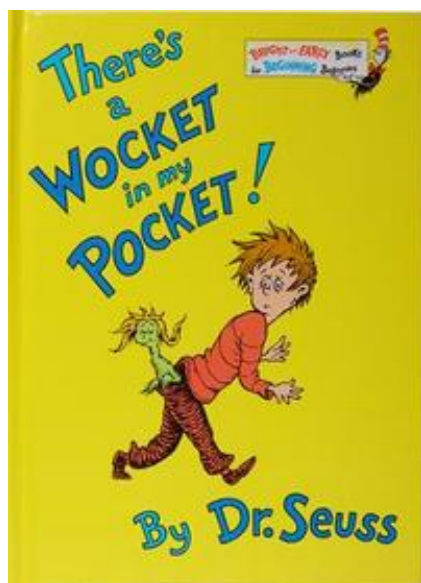


Fig. 44 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1974, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*There's a WOCKEY in my POCKET* was published September 28, 1974 by Random House Children's Books, a division of Random House, and renewed publication in 2002; a book written in rhyme for the early readers: A Bright and Early Book from Beginner Books.

The story is of a little boy going throughout his house explaining what lives with him: made up creatures rhyming with objects and places found at home.

Did you  
ever have the feeling  
there's a  
WASKET

<sup>489</sup> Honesty: to be your feelings, to trust your feelings: anger, love, inter-personal relationships and in this case having the blues, just wanting to stay in bed. Awareness: the ability to know what is going on inside and to be able to express this, while at the same time be aware of one's world, to see and to hear; to be aware of the magic moments, peak experiences that have special significance. Maslow and Theodor were in sync with each other in ideas on experiencing a full and healthy life - self-actualization.

in your  
BASKET?

...Or a NUREAU  
in your BUREAU?

...Or a WOSET in your CLOSET?

Some of the creatures are fun, some are nice, some are friendly, some are NOT, some he wishes were not there, some he could do without, like the NOOTH GRUSH on his TOOTH BRUSH; some are scary - the VUG under the RUG, some he doesn't like at all, and some make him nervous, but the YEPS on the STEPS – are great fun... All the friends he has found:

...Like the TELLER  
and the NELLAR  
and the GELLAR  
and the BELLAR  
and the WELLAR  
and the ZELLAR  
in the CELLAR

....

...and the ZILLOW  
on my PILLOW

I don't care  
if you believe it.  
That's the kind of house  
I live in.  
And I hope  
we never leave it.

Strange things, thoughts, and feelings come from home, from within. Learning to face these varying creatures in one's mind with the varying emotions they can evoke, brings a



contentment when in bed, at rest, contemplating - they are not so scary as once thought. Celebrating where one lives creates a host of imaginary friends that once may have been bizarre or frightful, now bringing warmth. Self-actualization makes a happy home in one's mind as the inside thoughts and ideas are faced and expressed.<sup>490</sup>

Theodor created a happy home in reality, his Tower, and with all the creatures and thoughts in his mind, no matter how bizarre or scary they were, he embraced them and shared them with the world. *The Saturday Evening Post* wrote of these inner thoughts:

The style of his words, as with most writers, reflects the man himself, for inside Ted Geisel there resides a full complement of wry, restlessly impish demons that help him view the world from a special, charmingly eccentric tilt. What is the Seussian wellspring, the source of his ideas? Geisel shrugs. "I get my ideas," he confides, mischievously, "in a little town near Zybliknov where I spend an occasional weekend." (Freeman)

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<sup>490</sup> Awareness: to know what is going on inside and to be able to express this; to be aware of one's world, to see and to hear; this awareness takes time to listen to the ideas and thoughts one has; at times these thoughts are scary and can be put under the bed as monsters, or they, the unknown, can be welcomed and understood, taking the monster away and finding peace within one's mind. B-3 Peak experience: that of an oceanic feeling, mystic feeling, limitless horizons that open the vision, giving a feeling of wonder and awe; Maslow studied this; Theodor experienced this and shared it with his readers hoping they would find courage and strength to deal with various creatures in their mind and after experience an open vision - to embrace the world and their ideas with awe and wonder.

1975 - *Oh, the THINKS YOU Can Think!*

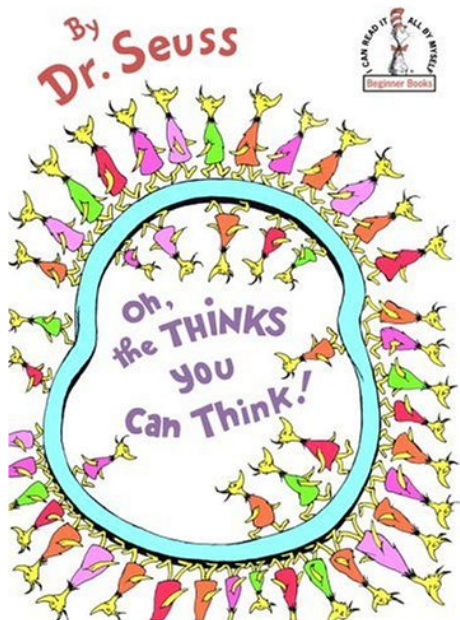


Fig. 45 Seuss. "Book cover." 1975,  
digital image photo: Coralee  
Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*Oh, the THINKS YOU Can Think!* was published by Random House Children's Books, a division of Random House on August 21, 1975, renewed publication in 2003 and written in rhyme. The book is about all the things one can think if they try hard enough and let their imagination play, wonder and go!

It starts off with familiar images: birds - yellow birds, blue birds and then going to colors and then back to an image - a horse. Getting the thinker warmed up, the imagination is getting ready to let loose and into the world of make-belief:

Oh, the THINKS  
you can think up  
if only you try!

If you try,  
you can think up  
a GUFF going by.

A GUFF is a fuzzy creature with a long tail that has five fuzzy balls evenly attached to it; behind the Guff is a man carrying the last fuzzy ball which is the biggest. Then there is the Schlopp, a fancy and fun looking dessert with of course a cherry on top. The imagination is asked to go on a journey with colorful and fanciful characters: with Kitty O'Sullivan Krauss as she swims in her big balloon swimming pool that is tied over her house; to think about a night in Na-Nupp where the birds are sleeping and the three moons are up - why not three moons!?

Once the thinker has begun to think, the idea of wonder is presented:

Think! Think and wonder.  
Wonder and think.  
How much water  
can fifty-five elephants drink?

You can wonder...

How long  
is the tail  
of a ZONG?

Who has ever heard of a Zong? But why not wonder? Now not only to think and wonder but to wish!

THINK! You can think  
any THINK  
that you wish...

The thinker is pushed to think left and to think right – of things that move left and right:

Think left and think right  
and think low and think high.  
Oh, the THINKS you can think up if you only try!

Thinking is where all great ideas come from. To wonder is to look at the norm and be amazed;<sup>491</sup> then to go further, beyond the norm and create new creatures, places, and events.<sup>492</sup> Mixing thinking with wonder and wonder with thinking, makes great things happen in the thinker.<sup>493</sup> To wish is to bring force, energy and life to the ideas thought about and wondered, creating what was once only an idea to reality. Self-actualization begins with the thinker, the wonderer and the wisher, if only one tries.

Theodor was a thinker. Starting at a young age the images played in his mind and he brought them out on paper, onto his bedroom wall, to the local newspaper, and into adulthood to cartoons, to the public, selling products, making Seussian characters that lived in books, and

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<sup>491</sup> Awareness: B-2 Freshness of appreciation: appreciating over and over the basic goods of life with awe, wonder and even ecstasy.

<sup>492</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creativeness: inventiveness, originality, an inventive person who every day is inventing; change the conception of creativeness to true inventiveness.

<sup>493</sup> B-3 Peak experience: limitless horizons that open the vision; feeling of wonder and awe, loss of time and space; a conviction that something extremely important and valuable has happened, a magic moment. Maslow saw this in self-actualizing people and Theodor illustrated and wrote of wonder in his books, which came from his personal life experiences.

these characters became a part of the American culture; images that created for Theodor a fortune and made him the Father of Children's Literature.

From *The Saturday Evening Post*, "Dr. Seuss at 72, going like 60", the mind of a genius, a thinker:

Unconcerned about his genius standing, Dr. Seuss's juvenile readers have responded through the years with their own brightly turned words of praise. "Dr. Seuss," wrote one admiring child, "you have an imagination with a long tail!" ("Now there," says Geisel, "is a kid who's going places!") "This is the funniest book I ever read in nine years," a nine-year-old wrote to Seuss. Another wrote about a Seuss book: "All would like it from age 6 to 44 — that's how old my mother is." An eight-year-old wrote the letter that Geisel finds most perplexing: "Dear Dr. Seuss, you sure thunk up a lot of funny books. You sure thunk up a million funny animals . . . Who thunk you up, Dr. Seuss?"

.....

The world of Seussiana, however, he thunk up only by that inexplicably mysterious process from which, over four decades, have flowed such classics as *And to Think I Saw It on Mulberry Street* and *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* and *The Cat in the Hat* and *Horton Hears a Who* and *I Had Trouble in Getting to Solla Sollew* and on and on and on to his latest, and one of his funniest, *There's a Wocket in My Pocket*.

The years have also brought from Seuss such wildly fanciful creatures as the Drum-Tummied Snumm, who can "drum any tune you care to hum," and Yertle the Turtle and Thidwick the Big-Hearted Moose and the sneetches and nerkles and nutches, "who live in small caves known as nitches for hutches," and the Hippo-no-Bungus from Hippono-Hungus, not to mention Mrs. McCave and her 23 sons named Dave and the Tufted Mazurka from the Isle of Yerka and the Scrooge of a beast known as Grinch who very nearly stole Christmas. And, with the Seussian juices turned to fierce invective, in his musical version of *The Cat in the Hat*, on TV, a goldfish named Karlos K. Krinklebein sings out with soaring, yeasty chunks of language: "I'm a groffulous, griffulous groo. I'm a schoosler! A schminkler! And a poop-poodler, too! I'm a horrendous hobject which nobody loves . . . I'm untouchable unless you wear antiseptic gloves . . . I'm a punk! A kartungulous schnunck. Nobody loves me — not one tiny hunk!" (Freeman)

Theodor thought left and thought right; he thought low and he thought high; children through his

books were also encouraged to think beyond the norm, to the wonder of thinking, wishing and trying. A stepping stone to create a colorful and imaginative life!

### 1976 - *The CAT'S QUIZZER*

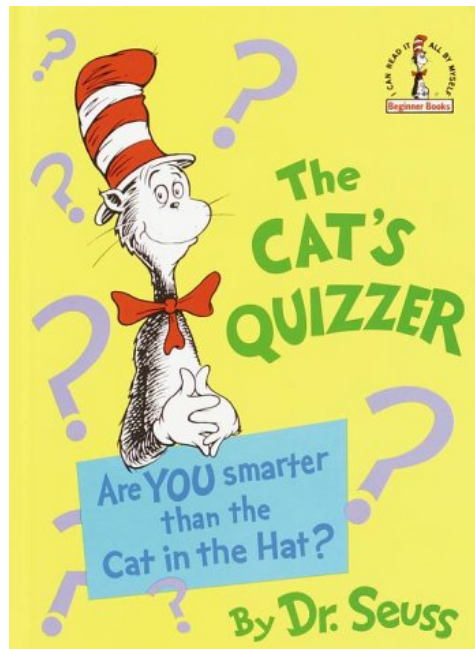


Fig. 46 Seuss. "Book cover." 1976, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*The CAT'S QUIZZER* was published by Random House Children's Books, a division of Random House, on August 12, 1976, renewed publication February 1993 and again in 2004.

The book is a fun book of questions about everything; on the left page across from page one, the Cat in the Hat is holding a sign that reads: "The ANSWERS / (if you need them) / start on page 58." Page one has two framed children, Ziggy Zozzfozzel and his sister Zizzy. It is noted that they got 100% on the questions, all WRONG. Then the Cat in the Hat asks the reader a question: "Are YOU / smarter than / a / Zozzfozzel?" (1). The quiz begins quite simply: "Which end of a bee stings you? Do elephants have uncles? Which grows faster? An uncle's eyebrows...? Or an uncle's mustache?" (2 – 3). Seems rather light and

easy. But on page seven there is a picture with all sorts of fun and funny images:

"Now...Look at this picture.

Look at it hard.

Then turn the page....

QUIZ about the page before.

How many wheels  
on the Cat's wagon?

Was there a  
flag on the house?

Was the Cat  
holding his umbrella?

Did the big  
yellow animal  
have blue dots?

If YOU  
owned the big  
yellow animal, what  
would you call it?

How are  
you doing?

So far,  
are YOU  
smarter than a Zozzfozzel? (7 – 9)

Fun! But hard. How old would you have to be to be... how long... which goes higher... true or false... who will go higher... what comes out of a... then a food quiz...; more and more bizarre and fun questions are presented; along the way the reader is asked:

Would you rather  
have more QUESTIONS  
or  
would you rather  
have the MUMPS?

Me? I'd  
rather have  
the MUMPS. (31)

...replies a frustrated looking dog. At the end after the questions have exhausted one's imagination the question is asked:

So...

How about it?

Are YOU

smarter

than

a

Zozzfozzel? (56 – 57)

Turning the page to 58, the answers are given through to page 62.

Someone to have thought up all these questions is a person who enjoys pondering, thinking and wondering. The mind is pushed to the limit with fun and zaniness. Self-actualization requires fun and humor in life, requires a mind that quizzes life and all the bizarre things that are possible, or not.<sup>494</sup>

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<sup>494</sup> Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: humor that is spontaneous, cannot be repeated, inventive, creative, fits the situation; laughing at the human condition, good natured silliness; doesn't hurt people but teaches people. Maslow explained the innocent humor and how it is tied in with being human: "It may also be called the humor of the real because it consists in large part in poking fun at human beings in general when they are foolish, or forget their place in the universe, or try to be big when they are actually small (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 169). Theodor disliked phonies and pompousness. He was about being real and giving children meaningful material, not sugar water. Theodor explained in *The Los Angeles Times*, November 1960, how writers were writing down to the children:

In those days, an appalling percentage of books for children were concocted out of inept, condescending, nature-faking treacle. They insulted the intelligence not only of a child, but also of the people who wrote them. They were batted out, hippity-hoppity, by amateurs and semi-pros with little or no experience and very tough-to-learn craft of writing. And, so, most good writers who had learned their craft stayed upstairs with the adults and pretended there were no children. (Seuss. "Brat Books on the March")

Theodor loved to laugh and also shared this innocence with his readers. He considered adults to be obsolete and lost to true humor. He explained years earlier in 1952, when he wrote an article in *The New York Times* titled: "But for Grown-ups Laughing Isn't any Fun"; Theodor was comparing the laughter of an adult to that of a child:

To be sure, in some ways you are superior to the young. You scream less. You burp less. You have fewer public tantrums. You ancients are generally speaking, slightly more refined. But when it comes to trying to amuse you...! Have you ever stopped to consider what has happened to your sense of humor?

Theodor was bizarre and he embraced it. Keeping the mind of a child, questioning, pushing the imagination, laughing at silly things, keeping childlike humor:

“Childhood is the one time in an average person’s life when he can laugh just for the straight fun of laughing — that’s the main reason I write for kids. As one grows older his humor gets all tied up and stifled by social, economic, and political rules that we learn from our elders, and before long our laughter gets all mixed up with sneers and leers. Kids react spontaneously to something ludicrous, so I have more freedom writing for them. They laugh at silly things their parents would feel embarrassed to be caught smiling at. I have a secret following among adults, but they have to read me when no one is watching.” (Jennings)

1978 - *I Can Read with My Eyes Shut!*

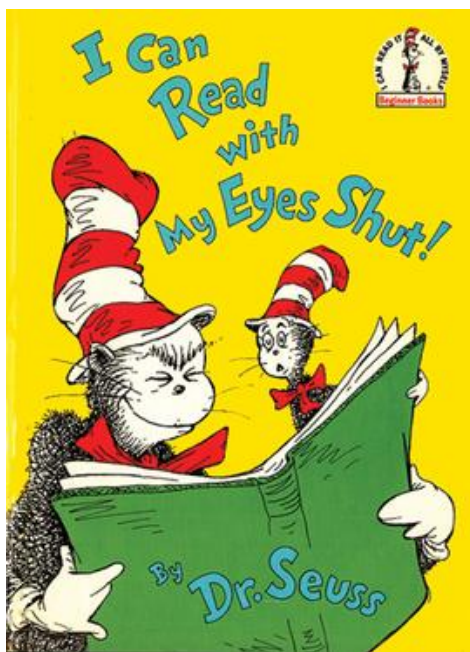


Fig. 47 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1978,  
digital image photo: Coralee  
Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*I Can Read with My Eyes Shut* was published by Random House on October 12, 1978, written in rhyme and dedicated to David Worthen, E.G. (Eye Guy), Theodor’s ophthalmologist. The story is about the Cat in the Hat taking Young cat on a lesson about all that one can learn when reading – and much more with the eyes open.

I can read  
in red.

I can read  
in blue.

I can read in  
pickle color  
too.

Reading can take place anywhere, in bed, in purple, in brown, in a circle and upside down!

The ophthalmologist makes an entry; the Cat in the Hat has his right eye covered, reading a card, then his left eye is covered reading another card; opposite page, the Cat in the Hat has



both eyes squeezed shut and he is reading a large card with Mississippi written on it; Young cat is observing the entire time.

I can read  
with  
my  
left eye.

I can read  
with  
my  
right eye.

I can read  
Mississippi  
with my eyes shut tight!

Mississippi.

The Cat in the Hat says he can read with his eyes shut, but it is very hard to do and that when he does it:

...it's bad for my hat  
and makes my eyebrows  
get red hot.  
so...  
reading with my eyes shut  
I don't do an awful lot.

Page turned, both cats have their eyes wide open, walking and reading a big green book; one can read with much more speed when the eyes are kept open, and there is so much to read, better to have a speedy reader. On the two go, learning about what there is to read: trees, bees, knees, knees on trees, and bees on threes.

Pushing a cart of books up a hill, the Cat in the Hat encourages Young cat:

Young cat! If you keep  
your eyes open enough,  
oh, the stuff you will learn!  
The most wonderful stuff!

You'll learn about...

And the hanging page turner, knowing there is something great on the other side of the page...more fun things to learn about!

fishbones... and wishbones.

You'll learn  
about trombones,  
too.

You'll learn  
about Jake  
the Pillow Snake

and all about  
Foo-Foo the Snoo.

So many things to learn about, but one will miss them if the eyes are kept shut.

The more that you read,  
the more things you will know.  
The more that you learn,  
the more places you'll go.

The Cat in the Hat is winking at the Young cat with the ending words:

SO...  
that's why I tell you  
to keep your eyes wide.

Keep them wide open...  
at least on one side.

A book on the love of reading and all that there is to learn and the places reading can take one. Keeping the eyes open in life keeps life going forward. In the book it states that if you have your eyes shut, “the place where you’re going is far, far behind”; eyes shut brings one backward. Self-actualization demands eyes open, the mind open, ever learning, taking one further and further into self-discovery and thereby giving back to the world.<sup>495</sup>

Theodor when writing this book had just gone through several years of eye problems and eye surgery, not being able to see clearly. For a man whose career and passion depended on the ability to see, when he could see again, it was like a new light shining on everything. It was with appreciation that he wrote this book, to express the greatness of reading; in reading there is learning and discovery - a person can go further.

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<sup>495</sup> Maslow’s four main characteristics of self-actualization: honesty, awareness, freedom and trust speak of the necessary components to self-discovery. Maslow said that once a person is self-actualized which is an on-going process, there is an even higher level, “*transcendence needs*”, going beyond: “refers to the very highest and most inclusive or holistic levels of human consciousness, behaving and relating, as ends rather than means, to oneself, to significant others, to human beings in general, to other species, to nature, and to the cosmos” (Maslow *The Farther Reaches* 269).

1979 - *Oh say can you Say? "Oh my brothers! Oh my sisters! These are TERRIBLE TONGUE TWISTERS!"*

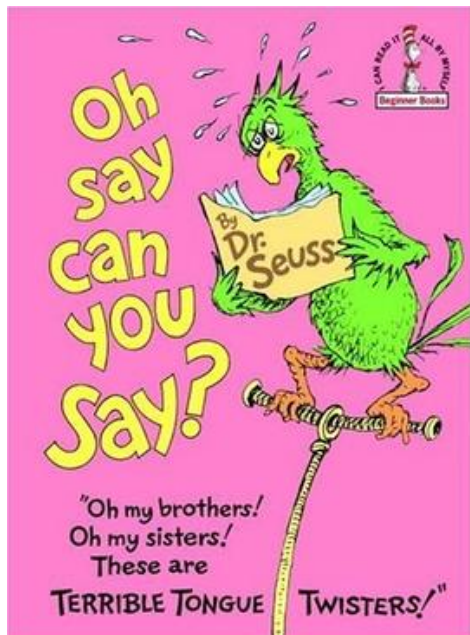


Fig. 48 Seuss. "Book cover." 1979,  
digital image photo: Coralee  
Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*Oh say can you Say?* was published by Random House in 1979, written in rhyme and dedicated to Lee Groo, the Enunciator, who was Theodor's youngest stepdaughter, Lea Grey. The warning below the title of the book is that there are terrible tongue twisters inside:

"Oh my brothers!

Oh my sisters!

These are

TERRIBLE TONGUE TWISTERS!"

The first page a parrot is looking at the book titled, *Oh Say Can You Say* and below it reads:

Said a book-reading parrot named Hooey,

"The words in this book are all phooey.

When you say them, your lips

will make slips and back flips

and your tongue may end up in Saint Looney!"

The book has many little stories made into tongue twisters; stories with the bizarre and zany: Fresh, Fresher and Freshest, about fresh fish at Finney's Diner; Dinn's Shin, telling a story about a dinosaur named Dinn, who doesn't have much skin on his shin; a bed spreader and a bread spreader; Ape Cakes and Grape Cakes:

As he gobbled the cakes on his plate,

the greedy ape said as he ate,

"The greener green grapes are,

the keener keen apes are

to gobble green grape cakes.

They're GREAT!"

After this story of the Apes, the reader is asked if they are having trouble saying this stuff. More tongue twister stories follow talking about money, eating at Skipper Zipp's, (a note

is added: “And if your tongue / is getting queasy, / don’t give up. / The next one’s EASY!”), the Fuddnuddlers, Quack Quack, West Beast East Beast, Pete Pats Pigs, Fritz Food, How to tell a Klotz from a Glotz, What would you rather be when you Grow Up?, More about Blinn, Rope Soap Hoop Soap, Merry Christmas Mush and But Never Give Your Daddy a Walrus:

A walrus with whiskers  
 is not a good pet.  
 And a walrus which whispers  
 is worse even yet.  
 When a walrus lisps whispers  
 through tough rough wet whiskers,  
 your poor daddy’s ear  
 will get blispers and bliskers.

At the bottom of the right page, opposite the story of the Walrus, there is the parrot exiting the page with a look of fatigue and sweat falling behind him:

And that’s almost enough  
 of such stuff for one day.  
 One more and you’re finished.  
*Oh say can you say?...*  
 “The storm starts  
 when the drops start dropping.  
 When the drops stop dropping  
 then the storm starts stopping.”

The last page, walking in water, the parrot looking more disheveled is holding a purple umbrella with large rain drops falling down and seemingly exiting the book.

Warnings and encouragement are given throughout the book: cautioned that the tongue may end up in Saint Looney and then encouraged to go on because the the next one’s easy! The tongue twisters are full of great imaginary situations one can find themselves in. Self-actualization can get difficult, making one slip and do back-flips; just as long as encouragement

is given to keep going and to know when it's enough for one day.<sup>496</sup>

Theodor experienced difficult situations but surrounded himself with people who encouraged him and kept him going. Often when he was writing he would come to a blank and not know what to write. He would fuss and fume or go outside and work in his rock garden. But he kept on working, knowing answers would come to his riddles and his pen would be able to write what was twisted inside; it would get easy! “If both writing and drawings are galloping along nicely, Geisel is apt to work all night, eventually seeing the sun come up on his pink-stucco hacienda. If not, he will sit and stare at the Pacific in controlled fury or throw himself on the nearest divan and groan” (Jennings).

### 1982 - *Hunches in Bunches*

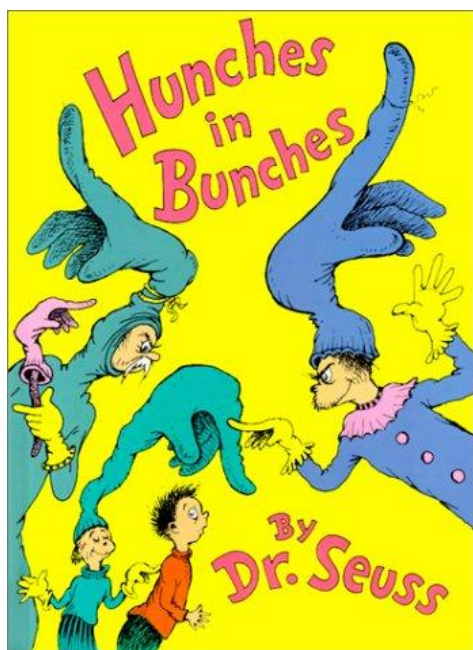


Fig. 49 Seuss. “Book cover.” 1982, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*Hunches in Bunches* was published by Random House on October 12, 1982, written in rhyme and the first big book since *The Lorax* in 1971. A hunch in a bunch makes for a little bit of fun and craziness for sure.

The story starts with a boy in a chair accompanied with his dog beside him; he is twiddling his fingers as he has the fidgets and can't make his mind up to what he wants to do. Turning the page, it is covered in blue and black squiggly lines moving outward away from the boy who is now very stressed, fingers crossed, eyes a little in despair, wearing a frown and even his dog seems worried:

It's awfully awfully awful  
when you can't make up your mind!

Do you want to kick a football?

Or sit there on your behind?

Do you want to go out skating?

<sup>496</sup> Honesty: in difficult times to trust your feelings; to keep humor, to continue to care for those in society, and to love those closest. Aware that the difficult times will not last forever; B-1, Efficient perception of reality is maintained to keep oneself balanced and encouraged when challenges come. B-4 Ethical awareness: is that of discriminating between ends and means; knowing right from wrong; having an inner supreme court which brings answers and strength.

Fly a kite? Or climb a tree?  
 Do you want to eat a pizza?  
 Take a bath? Or watch TV?

Oh, you get so many hunches  
 that you don't know ever quite  
 if the right hunch is a wrong hunch!  
 Then the wrong hunch might be right!

The hunches begin: a Happy Hunch says he should be outside; a Real Tough Hunch tells him to sit down and do his homework; a Better Hunch suggests to go meet his good friend James and play a few video games; a Sour Hunch spoils it by saying his bicycle is all rusty and to oil it; a Very Odd Hunch suggests he go to the bathroom... and before being able to answer, he is interrupted by a new voice:

“That mind of yours,” I heard him say,  
 “is frightful ga-fluppted.  
 Your mind is murky-mooshy!  
 Will you make it up? Or won't you?  
 If you won't, you are a wonter!  
 Do you understand? Or don't you?  
 If you don't, you are a donter.  
 You're a canter if you can't.  
 I would really like to help you.  
 But you're hopeless. So I shan't”

The hunches continue: a Spookish Hunch suggests to go four different directions leading only to some dead-end road in West Gee-Hossa-Flat; a Nowhere Hunch leads him only in circles; an Up Hunch leads him through a window for fresh air; a Down Hunch says to never trust an Up Hunch; a Wild Hunch is throwing crunchy hunching punches and a Super Hunch yells:

“Make your mind up! Get it done!  
 Only *you* can make your mind up!  
 You’re the one and only one!”

Realizing it is time to make his mind up, the boy decides he needs more than one of himself to help him; maybe one, two, three or four! Suddenly, there are replicas of the boy, a lot of them, all yelling, shoving, bargaining, selling, talking the hunches over - up and down, through and through, until he has decided... turning the page, the boy is smiling, his dog is smiling and both are walking in a specific and decided direction:

And I finally followed a Munch Hunch,  
 the best hunch of the bunch!  
 I followed him into the kitchen  
 and had six hot dogs for lunch.

Hunches. Everyone has hunches; not knowing what to do; a zillion ideas racing through one’s head. Which one is right? Which one is wrong? Some hunches give good feelings, others not so good feelings, even feelings of fear. Then after thinking for so long and so hard, one wonders if they have lost it; are they crazy or something is wrong with their mind? Self-actualization requests one to think, challenges one to look at different scenarios, at times it is very tiring; but then when it is time to make a decision, the right decision will be made; experience has given confidence, yet, with experience in life it brings an awareness that each decision has rippling effects.<sup>497</sup> At times this can remove the spontaneity one had in youth, a sad truth.

Theodor lived with hunches. At Oxford, his professor had a hunch he should travel Europe rather than study Shakespeare. Helen confirmed that hunch when she asked why he was at Oxford but should be a cartoon artist. Theodor created his characters with hunches, ideas, thoughts, and they lead to great places as well as helped children learn how to read and love

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<sup>497</sup> Trust: to trust oneself deeply, the mission in life; to trust others and nature. D-2 Autonomy: an inner directedness, responsible to themselves, not being weather vanes and not easily to be influenced; in thinking and making decisions, the self-actualized person has learned and gained the confidence needed to walk their own journey, to find the mission in life they were called to; Theodor’s choices had great rippling effects in his life and after.



learning. Theodor had a hunch that his marriage was not going well and fell in love with a younger woman. Hunches vary like the wind; it just takes time to find the right one to follow.

### 1984 - *The Butter Battle Book*

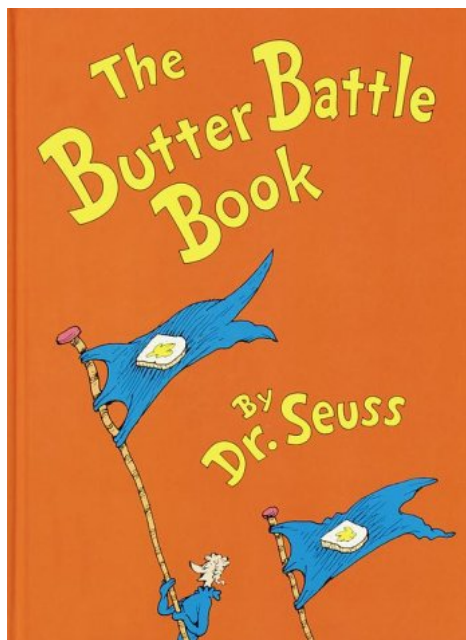


Fig. 50 Seuss. "Book cover." 1984, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*The Butter Battle Book* was published by Random House January 12 in 1984, written in rhyme and dedicated to Audrey, with love. The story starts out with two bird looking creatures, both wearing identical blue uniforms; the young bird is holding his grandfather's hand walking toward the large brick Wall that runs far along the countryside. The story is told by the grandfather who tells the grandson it is time he knows why the Wall is there.

Where they live, they are called the Yooks and on the other side of the Wall, they are called the Zooks. The Zooks do a horrible thing - they eat their bread with the butter side down! The Yooks of course eat their bread the honest way - with the butter side up. The Zooks cannot be trusted as they have a kink in their soul and must be watched at all times. The grandfather Yook explains that

when he was a youth, he signed up with the Zook-Watching Border Patrol as watching the Zooks was his goal.

Back then the Wall was not so high, the Zooks and Yooks could watch the other. He had a Snick-Berry Switch and dared the Zooks that if they came too close he would give them a twitch with his switch. It worked for a while until one day a Zook named VanItch came with a slingshot and broke the Snick-Berry Switch. Off to headquarters the grandfather went with great sorrow to report what happened. Chief Yookeroo, just smiled, said to wait a moment and ordered a fancier suit and a fancier slingshot to shoot with. With the Triple-Sling Jigger he felt much bigger and told the Zook, "I'll have no more nonsense...from Zooks who eat bread with the butter side down!" VanItch ran away quite sickly looking...but came back the next day and said:

"You may fling those hard rocks with your Triple-Sling Jigger.

But I, also, now have my hand on a trigger!

“My wonderful weapon, the Jigger-Rock Snatchem,  
 will fling ’em right back as quick as we catch ’em.  
 We’ll have no more nonsense.  
 We’ll take no more gupp  
 from you Yooks who eat bread with the butter side up!”

And so the grandfather and VanItch go back and forth getting bigger and bigger weapons: the Yooks create a newfangled kind of gun called a Kick-a-Poo Kid that was loaded with “Poo-a-Doo Powder / and ants’ eggs and bees’ legs / and dried-fried clam chowder”: then the Zooks invent the Eight-Nozzled, Elephant-Toted Boom-Blitz that shoots high-explosive sour cherry stone pits; the Yooks get a Butter-Up Band and sing, “Oh, be faithful! / Believe in thy butter!”

The grandfather was then promoted to general as the big war was coming and a great flying machine was made to fly over the Wall; it was called the Utter Sputter, frightfully new as it could sprinkle Blue Goo over the Zooks and gum up their upside-down butter as they chewed. VanItch came back with the same flying machine and said, “If you sprinkle us Zooks, you’ll get sprinkled as well!”

The grandfather flew back to Chief Yookeroo feeling despondent, disturbed and depressed. The Chief said everything was all right as a new gadget had been thought up, it was newer than new:

“It was filled with mysterious Moo-Lacka-Moo  
 and can blow all those Zooks clear to Sala-ma-goo.

THEY’VE INVENTED

THE BITSY

BIG-BOY BOOMEROO!

“You just run to the wall like a nice little man.  
 Drop this bomb on the Zooks just as fast as you can.  
 I have ordered all Yooks to stay safe underground  
 while the Bitsy Big-Boy Boomeroo is around.”

The Yooks all marched to an underground hole as his grandfather marched to the wall with the little bomb in his hand.

At the wall the grandfather found his grandson and told him he should be down in the hole but...:

“...perhaps this is all for the better, somehow,  
You will see me make history!  
RIGHT HERE! AND RIGHT NOW!”

His Grandpa climbed the high Wall and screamed: “Here’s the end of that terrible town / full of Zooks who eat bread with the butter side down!” At the same time, VanItch came with the same Big-Boy Boomeroo in his hand and said: “I’ll blow you... into pork and wee beans! / I’ll butter-side-up you to small smithereens!” Suspense high, the last page turned, the little boy up on a tree looking at the two on the Wall both holding their bombs and he shouts:

“Grandpa...Be careful! Oh, gee!  
Who’s going to drop it?  
Will *you*...? Or will *he*...?”

The grandfather responded, “Be patient...We’ll see. / We will see...”

The end of the story is open-ended; who will drop the Big-Boy Boomeroo? The theme of the story is concern with nuclear arms; written during the Cold War era between United States and Russia. Fighting can take place over the smallest ridiculous details, not only in war but also between people. Self-actualization gives voice to speak out against wrong; mankind is to be united.<sup>498</sup> Man versus man is killing one’s own brother, destroying the human race and usually over petty things.

Theodor in his life, used his voice in various mediums, mostly books, to speak out against what he believed to be wrong and issues of concern. During WWII he illustrated political cartoons for the magazine called *PM*. “His cartoons make fun of isolationists. They mock the leaders of the Axis powers — Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, and Hideki Tojo. They oppose fascism. They criticize discrimination against Jews and against African Americans, at a time when such discrimination was both legal and common” (“Biography”). Now with age,

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<sup>498</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: a deep feeling of identification, sympathy, and affection in spite of the occasional anger, impatience or disgust; Theodor as Maslow wrote, had a social interest, a sharing of humanness in this book, breaking through artificial barriers, which side of the bread to butter, in the desire to have love for one’s brother.

popularity, respect and success, Theodor had the platform and ears of the country, speaking against war, specifically nuclear war, the arms war.

1986 - *You're Only Old Once!*

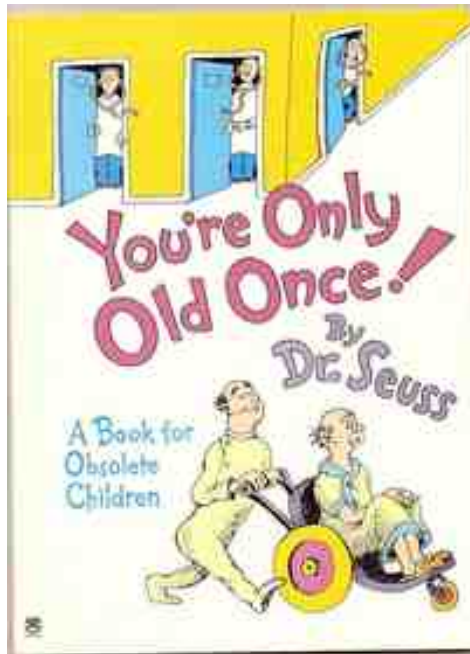


Fig. 51 Seuss. "Book cover." 1986, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

HAVE YOU ANY IDEA  
HOW MUCH MONEY  
THESE TESTS ARE  
COSTING  
YOU?

*You're Only Old Once!* was published by Random House in 1986, written in rhyme and dedicated: With Affection for / and / Afflictions with / the Members of the / Class of 1925, his graduation classmates the year he graduated from Dartmouth College. The book's cover at the bottom reads: "A Book for Obsolete Children" and the inside book jacket: "Is this a children's book? / Well...not immediately. / You buy a copy for your child now / and you give it to him / on his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday."

The story is about a man who spends a day in the Golden Years Clinic on Century Square for Spleen Readjustment and Muffler Repair as he is not feeling his best. He goes through a multitude of tests starting with an Eyesight and Solvency Test; reading on the wall:

Trying to escape the clinic, he gets caught at the Quiz-Docs where they ask many questions point blank:

...how your parts are all faring.  
And your grandfather's parts. And please try to recall  
if your grandma hurt most in the spring of the fall.  
Did your cousins have dreadful wild nightmares at night?  
Did they suffer such ailments as Bus Driver's Blight,  
Chimney Sweep's Stupor, or Prune Picker's Plight?

And describe the main cause of your uncle's collapse.

Too much alphabet soup? Or martinis, perhaps?

Necktie and vest removed, an Ogler is now checking his stomach and chest; next socks, pants, drawers and shoes removed, many Oglers ogle away.

What those Oglers have learned  
 they're not ready to tell.  
 Clinicians don't spout  
 their opinions pell-mell.  
 So you're back  
 with the vestibule fish for a spell.  
 Norval won't bring you  
 much comfort, you know.  
 But he's quite sympathetic  
 as Clinic Fish go.

Waiting several hours in the waiting room with a fish called Norval, he is finally beckoned by Miss Becker to a booth where a test of hearing called the Bellows and Candle is performed. Because his hearing is said to be murky and muddy, an intensified study is made; then again back to the waiting room with Norval; but he is bored as he has heard all these stories before.

Whelden the Wheeler arrives with a wheelchair, picks him up and off he rides past Stethoscope Row, where the doctors will see him after lunch, but now to see Dr. Pollen, an Allergy Whiz, who knows every allergy; checking for reactions from blue chalks to feathers of hawks. The next doctor is Van Ness who is a specialist in stress; who will stress him a little as he sits on a board with nails.

The Dietician Von Eiffel has a Diet-Devising Computerized Sniffer; "up on the Sniffer, good food passes his whiffer from cavier soufflé to caribou roast, / from pemmican patties to terrapin toast, / to find out what food he likes most... And when that guy finds out, he can bet it won't be on his diet."

More doctors are seen: Dr. Speckles specializing in the *Three F's* – Footsies, Fungus and Freckles; then Dr. Ginns, the *A and S Man* for Antrums and Shins; Doctors McGrews, McGuire,

McPherson, Blinn, Ballew, Timpkins, Tompkins, Diller, Drew, Fitzsimmons, Fitzgerald and Fitzpatrick whom all will prescribe a prescription. Off to Room Six Sixty-three where there is a Pill Drill given with instructions to repeat:

*This small white pill is what I munch  
at breakfast and right after lunch.  
I take the pill that's kelly green  
before each meal and in between.  
These loganberry-colored pills  
I take for early morning chills.  
I take the pill with zebra stripes  
to cure my early evening gripes.  
These orange-tinted ones, of course,  
I take to cure my charley horse.  
I take three blues at half past eight  
to slow my exhalation rate.  
On alternate nights at nine p.m.  
I swallow pinkies. Four of them.  
The reds, which make my eyebrows strong,  
I eat like popcorn all day long.  
The speckled browns are what I keep  
beside my bed to help me sleep.  
This long flat one is what I take  
if I should die before I wake.*

The last room he visits is the billing room to fill out a few paper forms to be sure he and his heirs are properly billed. Exiting the room, having found and put on his drawers, socks, coat, pants, shoes, and necktie, Norval the fish waves goodbye with his fin, wishing him Godspeed; he is in pretty good shape, for the shape he is in.

Aging, getting old, happens to all; not always fun and often with visits to the doctor as the body is tested, poked, prodded, to make sure all is in good working order. The tests are very expensive and be sure - the last order of the day is the billing. Self-actualization uses humor to

address and talk about difficult and not so fun realities.<sup>499</sup> Strength to be able to cope, walk through the halls of life, where tests are given, all sorts of tests from all sorts of people; many remedies given, like the pills, but the best remedy is to put the clothes on, shoes on and walk out with Godspeed being thankful<sup>500</sup> knowing one is in pretty good shape, for the shape they are in.

Theodor going through old age dealt with it using humor, though it was not fun or pleasant. He explained how he started this book for *obsolete children* and the cost for healthcare:

“I begin sketching what I thought was going to happen to me for the next hour and a half... I had a pinhead-sized cancer on the back of my tongue and they removed it, for which I was very grateful. They inserted some radium material to keep it clean and that impaired circulation in my jaw, and my teeth began to come loose, but they wouldn't pull them out because they were concerned the gums wouldn't heal. If I would go into an oxygen cylinder for several hours a day they would heal. But I couldn't. For this I received a bill of \$75,000.” (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 262)

Another political point to jab at, the concern and cost of medical care; Theodor Geisel, a man of vision, ahead of his time.<sup>501</sup>

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<sup>499</sup> Honesty: A-1 Humor: a sense of the spontaneous humor that cannot be repeated; laughing at the human condition of man, a good natured type of human, yet with honesty, often poking fun at oneself. This humor Maslow wrote, is a humor that doesn't hurt people but teaches people or just makes fun of the human species.

<sup>500</sup> Awareness: B-2 Freshness of appreciation: even in old age, appreciating over and over the basic goods of life, to be able to walk, to talk with friends, to breathe and celebrate another day; Maslow warned against taking for granted the small miracles of life; forgetting to count our blessings can lower man's self-esteem (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 163 - 164).

<sup>501</sup> A-2 Social interest: deep feeling of identification, sympathy, an affection in spite of the occasional anger, impatience or disgust; Theodor cared for the future of the children whom he wrote for, saw the errors in the medical system in America and was compelled to write and illustrate his third last book.

1987 - *I Am NOT Going to Get up Today!*

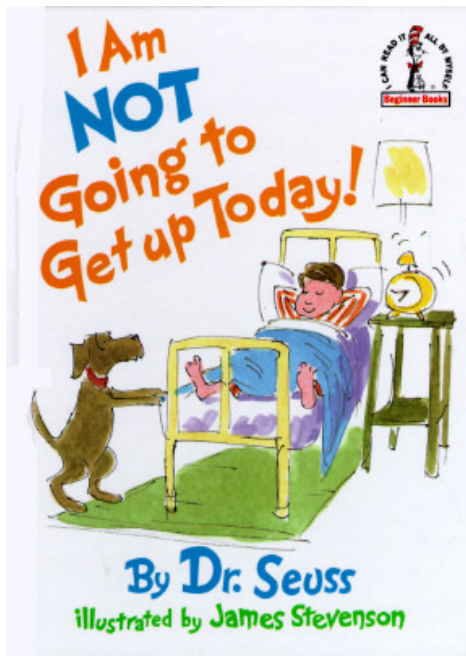


Fig. 52 Seuss. "Book cover." 1987, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*I am NOT Going to Get up Today!* was published by Random House on October 12, 1987, written in rhyme, illustrated by James Stevenson, and the last book Dr. Seuss would write for the Beginner Book series.

The story begins with a boy asleep in bed with his feet sticking out, a big fluffy pillow under his head, covered with a cozy blanket and his dog asleep under his bed. He says to let him be, go away because he is NOT getting up today!

The alarm can ring.

The birds can peep.

My bed is warm.

My pillow's deep.

Today's the day I'm going to sleep.

He doesn't care about the other kids all over town getting up and even over the world from Switzerland to Memphis, Tennessee; he is the kid who ISN'T getting up, but sleeping in. He has never been so sleepy - he can't remember when; not interested in his breakfast, the egg can go back to the hen. Even tickling his feet, shaking his bed, or pouring cold water over his head, it is a waste a time, so go away:

In bed is where I'm going to stay.

And I don't care what the neighbors say!

I never liked them anyway.

No matter what they do, scream, yowl, or yelp from now until Christmas, it isn't going to help:

My bed is warm.

My pillow's deep.

Today's the day I'm going to sleep.

He chooses not to walk, talk, but only lie there woozy-snoozing, asking all to go away kindly, he is NOT getting up today! Then the treats are used to tempt: a Strawberry Flip, a Marshmallow



Dip, or even a Pineapple Butterscotch Ding Dang Doo; but his tongue is asleep as well as his teeth. Dogs, roosters, goats, geese and the police, will not get him up! Newspapers with the news of him staying in bed does not work; he is staying down today. Shooting at him with peas, beans or bringing in the United States Marine...all on TV, not getting up today. Lastly, a big bass band, it's a waste of money to try to get him up, because he is NOT getting up today.

His mother walks into the bedroom carrying the boy's egg on a tray; his sister and brother beside her and a policeman as well. She says, "I guess he really means it." The last page the policeman is eating the egg and his mother says, "So you can have the egg."

Sleep, beautiful sleep. Sometimes there is nothing better than sleep. After working so long, the comfort of a cozy bed and a fluffy pillow beats all. Self-actualization knows when it is time to take a break; time to revive the body and mind. Taking time for one's self, no matter who or what calls, beckons, to really mean what you say and do it.<sup>502</sup>

Theodor was no longer dreaming about big parades, but thinking and writing about the comforts of rest, of relaxing in bed. He had given much, all that was within him; at the age of 83 when he wrote this book, it would be his next to last book; it was time to relax.

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<sup>502</sup> Honesty: to be your feelings, to trust your feelings. Awareness: the ability to know what is going on inside and be able to express this. Freedom: the ability to be spontaneous, to withdraw if that is what you wish; to be whatever one is at the moment, no matter what that is, but to trust that self, to be freely oneself. Trust: to trust oneself deeply; to trust others and nature. Theodor with this little book showed honesty, awareness, freedom and trust. He was tired and did not want to get out of bed; he was aware of the world around him, in all its beauty; he had the freedom to express this yet with no words (he had expressed himself in all the books before and in his life), and he trusted this moment to be quiet as he was not getting up today!

1990 - *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*

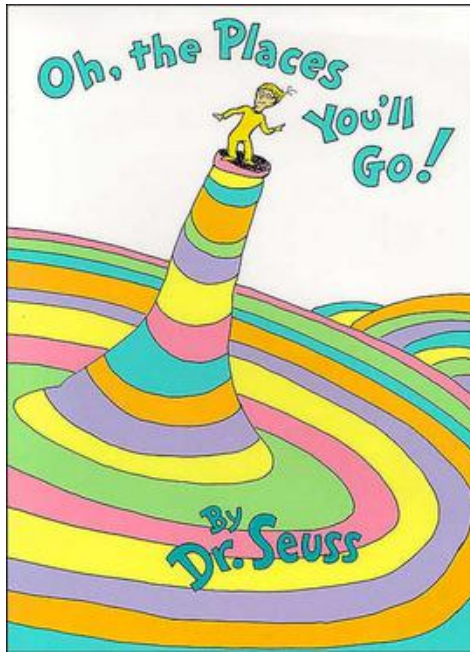


Fig. 53 Seuss. "Book cover." 1990, digital image photo: Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2017.

*Oh, the Places You'll Go!* was published by Random House on January 22, 1990, written in rhyme, in the second-person and in the future tense. This is the last book Theodor published in his lifetime, one year before his death.

The story starts off with a little boy walking; the narrator is the voice speaking to the little boy who is understood to be the reader:

Congratulations!  
 Today is your day.  
 You're off to Great Places!  
 You're off and away!

Walking in a town, down the street, the little boy is encouraged by the narrator:

You have brains in your head.  
 You have feet in your shoes.  
 You can steer yourself  
 any direction you choose.

You're on your own. And you know what you know.  
 And YOU are the guy who'll decide where to go.

Looking around the street, not knowing which way to go, he heads out of town for fresh air where things begin to happen. But not to worry and stew, just keep going as *You'll* start happening too. "OH! THE PLACES YOU'LL GO!"

He joins the high fliers and soars to high heights, taking the lead as he is the best of the best, he will top all the rest. Page turned and the boy and his balloon are caught in a tree and the other high fliers have passed him. The narrator tells him he is not always ahead:

I'm sorry to say so  
 but, sadly, it's true  
 that Bang-ups  
 and Hang-ups  
 can happen to you.

You can get all hung up  
 in a prickle-ly perch.  
 And your gang will fly on.  
 You'll be left in a Lurch.

Falling down from the Lurch, being in a Slump, which is not much fun, he must find his way to Un-Slump. Walking, he comes to a place where the streets are not marked, some windows are lit, though most are not, should he go in or should he stay out, turn left or turn right, it's not simple to decide.

Being confused, starting to race down wiggly roads and to weirdish wild spaces, he comes to a most useless place...The Waiting Place. All sorts of people are here doing nothing except waiting.

Quickly deciding that this is not for him, he escapes to bright places where Boom Bands are playing. With a banner in his hand and riding a big elephant, he is ready for anything under the sky. "Oh, the places you'll go! There is fun to be done!" Fun to be had, points to be scored, games to be won, he can be the winning-est winner achieving FAME! The entire world watching on TV.

Page turned and no one is watching, he is up on a big high house, alone, playing with a basketball throwing hoops, sometimes it gets lonely playing against yourself:

*All Alone!*

Whether you like it or not,  
 Alone will be something  
 you'll be quite a lot.

And when you're alone, there's a very good chance  
 you'll meet things that scare you right out of your pants.  
 There are some, down the road between hither and yon,

that can scare you so much you won't want to go on.

Having to go on, through foul weather, though enemies prowl, he continues onward by boat through a frightening creek, arms sore and sneakers a leak. Then hiking to face problems in the face whatever they are, sometimes getting mixed up but to take care:

So be sure when you step.  
 Step with great care and great tact  
 and remember that Life's  
 a Great Balancing Act.  
 Just never forget to be dexterous and deft.  
 And never mix up your right foot with your left.

And turning the page, the boy is pulling a mountain with wheels and a rope. The narrator asks a question and follows with an immediate answer:

And will you succeed?  
 Yes! You will, indeed!  
 (98 and  $\frac{3}{4}$  percent guaranteed.)

KID, YOU'LL MOVE MOUNTAINS!

Last page, same as the first page, a little boy walking and the narrator closes with these words:

So...  
 be your name Buxbaum or Bixby or Bray  
 or Mordecai Ali Van Allen O'Shea,  
 you're off to Great Places!  
 Today is your day!  
 Your mountain is waiting.  
 So...*get on your way!*

The journey of life - challenges, triumphs, good and bad, but encouraged and determined, the mountains can be scaled and to Great Places one can go. Self-actualization is this journey from beginning to end and beyond. Each person has their own mountain to move, Great Places to go...often alone to face one's fear, one's questions, having good times along the way as well as

bad times. It doesn't matter who one is, there are great places for each person...so get going.<sup>503</sup>

Theodor summed up his life with this book. Looking back at all he had done, it was his farewell to the world; and as only he could do, with humor and wit, encouraging everyone, young and old: *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* Jed Mattes, Theodor's agent said of the book: "He talks about the end of life's journey and then the journey we make beyond. It's a book very much about the passage from this life to the next. It really is Ted's valedictory... It was much more like a wise grandfather or father sitting down talking to a younger generation" ("Dr. Seuss' - Rhymes and Reasons Documentary", Part 9 of 9). He was once asked by a reporter if there was anything left to say, after all that had been said. Going home to think about it, getting a piece of paper he wrote this:

Any message or slogan? Whenever things go a bit sour in a job I'm doing, I always tell myself, "You can do better than this."

The best slogan I can think of to leave with the kids of the U.S.A. would be: "We can... and we've got to... do better than this." (Morgan, J. and Morgan, N. *Dr. Seuss* 287)

And then he crossed out three words, *the kids of*.<sup>504</sup>

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<sup>503</sup> Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: can see color differences, smell more efficiently, sharper vision, a true perception of reality. B-2 Freshness of appreciation: appreciating over and over the basic goods of life with awe, wonder and even ecstasy. B-3 Peak experience: the Great Places in life can be likened to the peak experiences: oceanic feeling, mystic experiences, limitless horizons that open the vision. This awareness Theodor was sharing in his last book was a summation of all that he had learned as he became truly self-actualized: becoming all that he was meant to be and in the end sharing himself with the children of the world, hoping for a better tomorrow, leaving stepping stones of encouragement for future generations.

<sup>504</sup> Transcendence needs - an even higher level, going beyond; Theodor understood this was his farewell and was reaching out to the individual in each person, in the cosmos, to not stop but to give one's best in life, to be encouraged and in this, reaching a higher level of being: "transcendence refers to the very highest and most inclusive or holistic levels of human consciousness, behaving and relating, as ends rather than means, to oneself, to significant others, to human beings in general, to other species, to nature, and to the cosmos" (Maslow *The Farther Reaches* 269).

## Conclusion Chapter II

There is a saying: “A merry heart doeth good like a medicine” (*The Bible* Proverbs 17:22). Dr. Seuss was indeed the good doctor serving up laughter in way of zany creatures in bizarre and outlandish stories. There was a reason why Theodor went for the laugh; he wanted to do it his way; he wanted to give pleasure to himself and to his audience; he understood the power of an open mind - here he could accomplish something.

In an imaginary and playful way, Theodor created specific stepping stones found within his books; following the path, one can see the author’s evolution to self-actualization: how he went from the need to know well how to imagine, to accepting himself, to know the balance of work and play, to see challenges as opportunities, to set boundaries, to appreciate the everyday miracles of life, to see the greatness in others, to be courageous and loyal, to see the need to speak out against wrongdoings politically, environmentally and socially and on until the last book where life is revealed as a journey each person must take, individually, that in the ups and downs, in each soul there is the power and potential for greatness.

In his own way, Theodor created a hierarchy of needs, like that of Maslow, specifically addressing children; with fun and interest, themes are repeated in the books, some more than others. The most repeated message is that of loving one’s self, self-acceptance and thinking one’s own thoughts. Challenges in life and rising to the occasion is what drove Theodor to become who he was; this is repeated in Dr. Seuss’s books over and over. The need to have fun and using one’s imagination are repeatedly the key messages in many of the stories. Politics and societal issues follow on the ladder of importance: *The Lorax* – environment and greed; *the Grinch* – capitalism and commercialism; *Yertle the Turtle* – dictatorship and bullying; *Marvin K. Mooney* – there is a time to go and shut the door; *the Sneetches* – accepting of others and respect; and *the Butter Battle* – arms and weapons. Back to that of individuality, each person is unique and important; and then as a whole, the human race, seeing the greatness in others and encouraging each other, the ying and the yang – individuality and collectivity. Theodor follows up with themes of playing hard and working hard; the importance of convictions and creating boundaries; being able to say sorry; keeping curiosity and courage in life; and life is much easier with humor and when shared with others.

Theodor used his books as a way of self-expression, self-discovery and self-actualization.

In these stepping stones, society can find a path to finding oneself in a fun, imaginative and interesting way. Going into Chapter three, The Reception, the Press reveals how Theodor through Dr. Seuss came onto the scene, creating a shockwave, then making a monumental impact on children's literature by the way he addressed children in respect to their place in society – that of equality and respecting their individuality and meeting their needs in order to encourage self-growth inwardly and outwardly. Rudolf Flesch, author of *Why Johnny Can't Read*, was asked a question about Dr. Seuss's books: "What exactly is it that makes this stuff immortal?" And Flesch responded: "There is something about it," ... "a swing to the language, a deep understanding of the playful mind of a child, an undefinable something that makes Dr. Seuss a genius pure and simple" (Cott 6).

## CHAPTER III: RECEPTION – DINOSAUR PRINTS

## Introduction Chapter III

Chapter three deals with the reception of Theodor Geisel, the man, aka Dr. Seuss, the illustrator and writer, and the books he created. When Theodor entered the field of children's literature, the world wasn't expecting nor prepared for what his imagination would create. It was a time when fantasy was presented through the viewpoint of adults for children; children's books were pretty and realistic, preparing children to deal with the real world as they, adults, saw it. Theodor came onto the scene with the imagination of a child to create children's imaginary worlds, for the purpose of laughter and delight. This would be a shock for the parents and a welcome relief for the children.

There are six repeating themes throughout chapter three: the perception of who Theodor Geisel and/or Dr. Seuss was, the mind of Theodor Geisel, the world of Dr. Seuss, the description of his books, the impact his work made, and the dinosaur print he left behind. In fact, Theodor kept with him wherever he lived, a real dinosaur footprint in the form of a slab weighing two-hundred-fifty-pounds showing three toes. It was given to him as a gift from his father.

The story goes that Theodor's father had a hero on the first Dartmouth football team that beat Harvard, the captain of the team, Cyril Gaffey Aschenbach. Living in New York, Theodor invited Cyril and his father over for dinner; that night his father kept asking Cyril how he scored the winning touchdown, and Cyril would respond, "Look at these sconces, they're two hundred and fifty years old." According to Theodor, all Cyril talked about was antiques and his father was sorely disappointed. In response to that night, Theodor's father said, "I'm going to send you an antique that will shut Cyril Gaffey Aschenbach up forever!" Thus, the dinosaur footprint! His father found the fossil of a dinosaur footprint near a shale pit close to Holyoke, Massachusetts. On the way to deliver it to Theodor in New York, he had the footprint appraised at Yale and found it to be a hundred and fifty million years old. "My father as you see, had an unusual sense of humor. And every time I've moved I've taken that footprint with me: It keeps me from getting conceded. Whenever I think I'm pretty good, I just go out and look at it. Half the people I show it to think I've made it myself" (Cott 16 – 17).

The apple did not fall far from the tree; if Theodor's father was sure to shut Cyril up with



his sarcastic sense of humor, well then, Theodor would even go many steps further – the impact he would make on the world of children’s literature and the lives of children would be far greater; using his imaginative powers he would create his own worlds for children to enter; in these worlds the reader would find excitement, respect, equality, relief, joy, play, individuality, fun and subversive thinking. Theodor’s mind understood more the child’s way of thinking and imagining than an adult’s, where over and over he said, “Adults are only obsolete children, so the hell with them!” His creations would also have a great impact on who he himself would become; considered at one time the class wit and least likely to succeed, his life mission and the steps he took created a legacy.

In Jonathon Cott’s book, *Pipers at the Gates of Dawn*, Theodor listed three men who inspired him: Jonathan Swift, 1667 – 1745, Irish born, political activist and author of *Gulliver’s Travels*; Voltaire, 1694 – 1778, French born and an Enlightenment writer, opposing the French government and church, in favor of freedom of speech and writing, and a man of many masks (Cronk); and Hilaire Belloc, 1870 – 1953, French born with an English mother, considered by Theodor, a radical (Cott 28). Each man, like Theodor, pushed the boundaries, thought their own thoughts, and expressed publically their convictions in many genres. Just as Theodor’s father was sure to shut Cyril up with a dinosaur footprint, Theodor Geisel through Dr. Seuss was destined to make a lasting print.

Chapter three is in chronological order as to work cohesively with chapter one and chapter two. Headlines from various sources: magazines, newspapers, journals, papers and books will be the starting point, looking then into the articles for further in-depth comprehension, with footnotes below to link Abraham Maslow and his characteristics, B-values and behaviors, revealing the realization from the audience that, Theodor Geisel through Dr. Seuss became self-actualized. E. J. Kahn, for *The New Yorker* wrote: “Somehow, the human race produces what it needs, spaceships or wonder drugs or a Dr. Seuss. It is common knowledge now that Dr. Seuss is the alias assumed by a shy, gentle man named Theodore Seuss Geisel...”

1929, March – Young Geisel Making Good as Writer and Illustrator<sup>505</sup>

*The Springfield Republican Daily* newspaper wrote:

The current issue of *Judge*, known as the Jungle Number, has particular interest for Springfield residents<sup>506</sup> as the cover illustration and one entire inside page, both drawings and articles, are by a Springfield young man, who is now on the staff of the well-known comic magazine.

Theodor S. Geisel, son of the president of the Park Commission, Theodor R. Geisel and Mrs. Geisel, is the young man, who under the name Dr. Seuss, has won his spurs and is making rapid strides to the front among those to draw and write for the humorous magazines.<sup>507</sup>

He has been a frequent contributor to *Judge* and other magazines in New York, and some months ago became a member of the staff of *Judge*. He has been living in New York for the last two years, devoting himself to illustrating and satirical writing, for

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<sup>505</sup> Trust: D-1 Life Mission: a task to fulfill; at 25 years of age the public recognized in Theodor his life mission, all that he would put most of his energy and life into as writer and illustrator.

<sup>506</sup> Awareness: the Press, specifically, *The Springfield Republican Daily*, Theodor's hometown paper, people who had known him as a boy growing up, declared publically, acknowledging him as a writer and illustrator and in this giving him encouragement and hope. People around him helped to realize his creativity C-2: a process of recognition and then realization.

<sup>507</sup> The Press saw a man who was moving, going forward in his work, with energy; to win spurs implies a competition, and for competition there is preparation; *The Springfield Republican Daily* was well aware of the Geisel family, having the father, Theodor R. Geisel, president of the Park Commission; the influence of the time he spent at the zoo where his father worked was in great part the preparation for Theodor's future work:

When young Geisel was growing up in Springfield, his grandfather was running the Kulmbach & Geisel Brewery, known to tavern tosspots as "Come back and guzzle." But fortunately for Ted, his father was more partial to monkeys than malt. "Come on, son, let's go over to Forest Park and count the animals" was the sort of invitation Ted remembers best. Eventually, his father, now 85, became supervisor of parks in Springfield, which gave him blissful dominion over the zoo. (Jennings, C. R. "Dr. Seuss: What")

Making rapid strides presents the idea of progress, great energy, as in the life mission, great energy is required, a fascination that gave Theodor the power to move forward with force into a life of writer and illustrator. He lacked this force at Oxford; though he thought he would like to be a literature professor, the interest, the calling was not present.

The humorous magazines, later humor, would be the theme in which Theodor would work, to make people happy. In the end he said he made people laugh, wasn't that enough? "And without talking about teaching, I think I have helped kids laugh in schools as well as at home. That's enough, isn't it?" "Hmmp?" (Harper, H).

which he shows a decided flair.<sup>508</sup>

He is a graduate of Central High School and of Dartmouth College in the class of 1925. After leaving college Mr. Geisel studied for a year at Oxford and then made a 10-month tour of European countries, making studies and observations with a view to entering the journalistic field. On returning to this country he began work in New York and soon discovered that he had a humorous vein in his writing that appealed to such magazines as *Judge*. The result is that he has continued in his field and is fast becoming recognized as a clever illustrator and writer.<sup>509</sup>

His pen name he takes from his mother's family, Mrs. Geisel was the daughter of the late George Seuss, one time member of the Board of Aldermen. ("Young Geisel Making Good as Writer and Illustrator")

1937, October 3 – Crazy Doings On Mulberry Street Told in Book That is Hard to Beat

Ted Geisel of Our Little City Makes a Hit with Foolish Ditty – Dr. Seuss, the Witless Dope, Gives His Creations Lots of Rope.<sup>510</sup> *The Springfield Republican Daily* newspaper wrote:

If you see a crowd of frantic men and women in front of Johnson's bookstore on Main Street early tomorrow morning you can make a safe bet that they live on Mulberry Street!

What will bring them there? Just a more or less routine window display of a new book. But the book is "And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street." The author is a

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<sup>508</sup> Trust: D-2 Autonomy: Theodor revealed devotion to his work, writing and illustrating in the form of satire, with a "decided flair"; he had chosen what he wanted to do, going against the normal track of professorship; in deciding, Theodor's talents were self-actualizing, creating flair, his own style.

<sup>509</sup> The Press in his own hometown realized and recognized in their own words that Theodor aka Dr. Seuss was indeed a clever illustrator and writer.

<sup>510</sup> Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: the Press gave Theodor credit for his good natured sense of silliness; the citizens of Springfield showed curiosity and to their relief and pleasant surprise, found good natured humor in Theodor's first book, *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*. Freedom was seen and observed in Dr. Seuss, "the Witless Dope, Gives His Creations Lots of Rope"; when one thinks of someone giving something lots of rope it automatically spells freedom, room to explore; in the case of Theodor, it was observed he had freedom in creativity C-2, and spontaneity C-3; both Ted Geisel and Dr. Seuss were mentioned in the headline; Theodor found freedom in Dr. Seuss releasing his inventive mind which held spontaneous creations within. The Press recognized the two dichotomies working together, Theodor and Dr. Seuss, giving strength to each other.

former Springfield man and might well have seen what transpired on Mulberry Street. He is Theodor S. Geisel, more familiarly known as Dr. Seuss.<sup>511</sup>

The vanguard of Mulberry-street residents who want to know what Dr. Seuss saw made a skirmish on the bookstore last night. The display was in the process of being arranged when two men beat furiously on the door. There was no ignoring them. Admitted into the darkened store, they declared they just had to have two copies of the book to take home right away. It could not be determined whether these men were motivated by nervousness or mere curiosity. The opening lines of the book however, must have reassured them a trifle at least:

When I leave home to walk to school, Dad always says to me;  
 “Marco keep your eyelids up  
 And see what you can see.”<sup>512</sup>

What Marco saw, or more exactly what he preferred to see, is then described in lilting verse, illustrated, of course, with hilarious Seuss cartoons. (“Crazy Doings On Mulberry Street”)

1937, November 28 – Gay Menagerie of Queer Animals Fills the Apartment of Dr. Seuss

Sister of Ted Geisel Says Park Avenue Home of Artist-Author Gives Her a Nightmare, There Are So Many Models Around – Relates Anecdotes About Her Brother and Says He Is Now Collecting Hats – Former Springfield Boy Loves Good-Natured Jokes and Has Talent for Entertaining in Costume. *The Springfield Union Daily* newspaper wrote:

One of Springfield’s native sons to achieve fame recently is “Dr. Seuss.” Noah became famous by saving the animals for posterity. But “Dr. Seuss” goes Noah one better by creating new and marvelous animals that never were on land or sea.<sup>513</sup> He held a

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<sup>511</sup> A-3 Interpersonal relations: the relationship between Theodor and Dr. Seuss revealed an obliteration of ego boundaries within the man himself. Through Dr. Seuss, Theodor filled a deficiency of love within. The Press saw the relationship and remarked on it by acknowledging the two which worked side by side, bringing out the freedom, the life mission D-1, in the man.

<sup>512</sup> The Press was foreshadowing to the public to keep their eyes on Theodor Geisel aka Dr. Seuss, what would he, like Marco, see and share with the world?

<sup>513</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creativity: being compared to Noah, Dr. Seuss was held in high creative esteem, a creativity that was true inventiveness, which Noah could not have done alone but had the help of God with complete directions when building the Ark, (not to say God wasn’t with Theodor either). Trust: D-2 Autonomy: there was an inner directness which did not keep

taxidermy show in New York this fall entitled, “The Seuss System of Unorthodox Taxidermy.” It consisted of purple elephants, red turtles and pea green camels, all modeled to look uncannily like the people one knows. Some of these same animals have been used for the illustrations of his just published children’s book “And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street.”

Those Springfield residents to whom the name “Dr. Seuss” means nothing may recall him as Ted Geisel who went to Forest Park school and then to Central High, where he made his first bid for fame by contributing to the Recorder.

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Recently he was interviewed by proxy through his sister, Mrs. Margaretha Dahmen of Fairfield street. She was very willing to talk about her brother and related several incidents which he would probably have been too modest to tell.

*First appearance of “Dr. Seuss”*

“Ted has always drawn,” she said. “Mother used to say that he sat up in his crib and drew pictures but he declares he can’t remember anything of the kind. I suppose you want a short sketch of his career.” ... “Ted went to Dartmouth college where he was editor-in-chief of the Jack O’ Lantern. That was where he first adopted his pseudonym. It was mother's maiden name, you know. As editor he had to provide fillers for odd places in the magazine, so he put his little sketches merely to fill up space, and not wishing to be identified with the drawings,<sup>514</sup> signed them ‘Dr. Seuss.’”

... “they have a charming apartment on Park avenue, New York, but it is so filled with animals that I am apt to have a nightmare whenever I visit them.”

“He traveled on the continent for a year and then came home, rather undecided as to what to do. Ted had never taken his drawing seriously,” Mrs. Dahmen said smiling, “and I think that he expected to teach English literature. But now it didn’t appeal to him so he started sending sketches to *Judge* and *Life*. They all came back and he sent them out

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Theodor tradition bound with the design of his animals. He was independent and followed his own star when creating new and marvelous animals.

<sup>514</sup> It is true, Theodor did not want to be associated with his drawings at the time because he was banded as editor of *The Jack O’Lantern*, due to the incident in his dorm room which involved a bottle of gin during Prohibition. But could there early on be an unconscious knowing or desire to have a pseudonym; one to find liberty and freedom within?

again. Finally, he decided that he would never get anywhere in Springfield so he went to New York, rented a room and began the rounds of the art editors. Eventually some drawings were accepted and they were the very ones the magazine had previously rejected. Since then he has come along steadily.”<sup>515</sup>

.....

He is a freelance and has done a mural for the Dartmouth club of New York. He also decorated a play room and bar for a Kentucky gentleman. “That was funny,” laughed Mrs. Dahmen. “Ted had decorated the walls with his animals in full color. When the old colored mammy saw them for the first time she had hysterics and nearly fainted. Declared she wasn’t going to stay in any house where animals would chase and bite her. They had a terrible time of persuading her to stay.”

#### *Uses Animals as Models*

“How about these animals. What does he do with them?”

“Oh, he uses them as models for his drawings,” his sister explained, “or else sells them as decorations for taprooms and bars. They are his main hobby. He makes them out of some pliable material which, after modeling, becomes set and hard. He picks up real horns and puts them onto heads where I am positive horns never grew before. Then he paints them all colors of the rainbow.

“Ted has another peculiar hobby. That is collecting hats of every description. Why, he must have several hundred and he is using them as a foundation of his next book, ‘The Five Hundred Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins.’ I have seen him put on an impromptu show for guests, using the hats as costumes. He is good at entertaining that way. He has kept a whole party in stitches just by making up a play with kitchen knives and spoons for the actors.”<sup>516</sup>

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<sup>515</sup> Theodor thought he would like to teach English literature, but fate had something else in mind, something deeper was calling him, his Life Mission D-1: a search for self in his life’s work; something that suited him better. He had to search for it; determination was required; when something didn’t feel right or did not work, effort was made to search further until results came and they were from doing what he had been doing all his life, writing and drawing.

<sup>516</sup> Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: Theodor could entertain on the spur of the moment, with a drop of a hat. This humor his sister recognized is the same humor Maslow described: humor that cannot be repeated, is inventive, creative, fits the situation. Theodor enjoyed making people

“This ability of his to dress up and act as been helpful in Ted’s work,” Mrs. Dahmen pointed out. “One of the great oil companies makes a marine oil for ships and yachts. They have campaigns and displays for motor boat shows and Ted as an admiral, in full dress uniform, has full charge. He plans the whole show with scenery and action and then, standing on a realistic bridge, reels off a speech which combines advertising and humor.

*Likes to Play Jokes*

“He loves to play good natured jokes on people,” she continued. “Once he sent us an important telegram written in slangy German. The telephone girl had to spell it out and we had a terrible time deciphering it. Even as a little boy in grammar school he was playing jokes. Not long ago we had this house repaired which necessitated stripping the walls. In every room on the bare plaster was a cartoon done by Ted many years ago. It had one good result. The workman hurried through their stripping so as to get to the next room and see what it contained.

“I think his ability to see humor everywhere in everyday life is one reason why Ted is so well and enjoys life so,”<sup>517</sup> commented his sister. “He works very hard. He has a studio of his own in the apartment and sometimes for a rush order has to work all day and all night. But he takes a short walk every few hours and indulges in handball and squash whenever he has a chance so he hasn’t put on surplus weight. He is as tall and slim as ever and his hair is still dark. There, I think that I have told you everything I can think of,” she finished. Then as her visitor rose to go she added, “You might say that Ted’s ambition is to do children’s books, writing rhymes as well as drawing the pictures.”<sup>518</sup>

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laugh; he enjoyed pretending and acting as children do - laughing at funny silliness, not hurting people.

<sup>517</sup> A-1 Sense of humor mixed with B-2 Freshness of appreciation was noted here in Theodor; finding humor in the basic goods of life.

<sup>518</sup> At this point, Theodor had just written four books; his career as a child’s author was relatively new; the aspiration was apparent and known to his family and now becoming known and appreciated in the public.

The children have something to look forward to.<sup>519</sup> (“Gay Menagerie of Queer Animals”)

1939, November – Readers’ Choice of BEST BOOKS, A Monthly Selection

Title: Dr. Seuss

When an illustrator plunges into writing only to implement his primary talent the end-product is seldom more than run-of-the-mill. Dr. Seuss, however, has not only a glibly creative brush and an eye for potential imaginative ingredients but just enough earlier literary experience to make for real finesse.<sup>520</sup>

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Last year he published *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*. And his two most recent hilarities are *The Seven Lady Godivas*, written not only to correct the ageless belief that there was only *one*, but to escape the monotony of writing about nothing but “men folks and children, dragons or fish”; and *The King’s Stilts*, a breezy juvenile about a willful monarch who had the reassuring habit of bathing himself with his left hand and always keeping his right hand dry for the signing of important papers of State. (“Dr. Seuss.” *Readers’ Choice*)

1943, February 23 – War Stresses Reading Aloud as Recreation

Leone Garvey for the *Berkeley Daily Gazette* encouraged parents to read to children, Dr. Seuss books cited as hilarious. The *Daily Berkeley Gazette* wrote:

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<sup>519</sup> Theodor’s sister foretold a great truth; she had recognized his gifts of drawing as a child, playing jokes as a youngster; now she saw this talent going into print and realized before Theodor did, that indeed, the children had much to look forward to; she was prophetic.

<sup>520</sup> Three elements are listed: a glibly creative brush, potential imaginative ingredients and literary experience; these three combined brought finesse to Theodor’s writing. Finesse is defined as refinement or delicacy of workmanship, structure. Synonyms for finesse are: skill, subtlety, expertise, flair, knack, panache, skillfulness, adeptness, artistry, virtuosity, mastery, and genius. At the age of 35, with only four books in print, Theodor was given recognition for what he was placing out for the world to see and read; it was his life mission D-1: defined as the fascinating thing out there that becomes worthwhile in itself. His inner drive was the force that gave him worth in and of itself; his books, the characters and the messages within fascinated him and those who indulged in reading them.



There is probably no shared family diversion which lingers longer in the memory than that of reading aloud. These little private jokes and expressions which for years are the spark which set off members of a family into gales of laughter and streams of reminiscences, very often, have their beginnings in a book which was read aloud in the family group.

Reading aloud is one of the finest means of establishing intellectual and emotional bonds within a family. If there are adults who still think that a child's book is a hodge podge of mediocre writing and infantile happenings, there is a surprise in store for them in the children's rooms of the public libraries and the book shops.

Humorous books lend themselves especially well to reading aloud. The hilarious picture story books of Theodor Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, have proved favorites with many families.<sup>521</sup> Fantastically funny are his "And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street," "The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins," and "Horton Hatch the Egg." (Garvey, Leone. "War Stresses Reading")

1949, July 9 – Radio Held Enemy of Poetry at U. of U. Writer's Meet

*The Salt Lake Tribune* wrote:

Earlier Friday, Theodor Seuss Geisel, expert on juvenile literature, urged those attending a workshop on children's stories, not to "write down to children and insult their intelligence."<sup>522</sup>

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<sup>521</sup> Memories can be either sad or happy; during the WWII, Leone Garvey encouraged parents to read to their families; to create happy memories, contrasting to the horrors of war; Theodor and Dr. Seuss were cited as a surprise to be found at the public library; with his books, memories of laughter and intellectual and emotional bonds were to be had. Hope during war was given through the work of Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss. His life mission D-1, was to bring laughter and closeness within the family unit. He was here "for such a time as this" (*The Holy Bible*, Esther 4:14).

<sup>522</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: a deep feeling of identification with a desire to help the human race, considering all to be members of a single family; Maslow used a word invented by Alfred Adler, "gemeinschaftsgefühl" to describe this feeling for mankind: benevolence, affection and friendliness. A-3 Interpersonal relations: these people "have an especially tender love for children and are easily touched by them. In a very real even though special sense, they love or rather have compassion for all mankind" (Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* 165 – 166). Theodor explained well his feelings and thoughts regarding the importance of writing for children and never to write down to them; five years later in a letter to *The Los Angeles Times*, November 1960 he wrote:

I think that writers have finally realized that Children's Reading and Children's

.....  
 Mr. Geisel also cautioned the group not to moralize in stories.<sup>523</sup> (“Radio Held Enemy of Poetry At U. of U. Writer's Meet”)

1955, June 13 – Dartmouth Honors Dr. Seuss Known in City as T. S. Geisel

Former Local Cartoonist Gets Degree Along with Joe Martin and Other Celebrities; *The Springfield Union* newspaper wrote:

Theodore S. Geisel, the local man, who has achieved fame as one of the country's top cartoonists under the name “Dr. Seuss,” was among 11 celebrities who received honorary degrees' yesterday from Dartmouth College.<sup>524</sup>

Mr. Geisel, son of Supt. Theodor R. Geisel of the Springfield Park Department, was honored by Dartmouth along with such dignitaries as Robert Frost, four time winner of the Pulitzer Prize for poetry, and representative Joseph W. Martin, Jr., former speaker

Thinking are the rock bottom base upon which the future of this country will rise. Or not rise.

In these days of tension and confusion, writers are beginning to realize that Books for Children have a greater potential for good, or evil, than any other form of literature on earth.

They realize that the new generation must grow up to be more intelligent than ours. They realize that if the boy doesn't learn about good reading before he can shave, the chances are he will grow up to find himself shaving an empty head.

The writer is beginning to see the challenge of the field... and its awful responsibilities. He can help children to think clearly. Or he can stuff their heads with mush. He can inspire children with the fire for learning. Or he can discourage them from reading and contribute to their illiteracy and, often, to their delinquency.

He can help them to love. Or he can help them to hate.

He can steer children upwards, downwards or sideways... and build in them basic attitudes toward living that will influence their patterns of thought and action throughout every year of their lives. (Seuss. “Brat Books on the March”)

He never thought of himself higher but had great respect for children; the Press recognized this.

<sup>523</sup> Early on in Theodor's writing, he cautioned on not preaching to children to but to incorporate morals in a sideways fashion, never talking down to his audience, children.

<sup>524</sup> Theodor Geisel, the local man, with Dr. Seuss, the top country's cartoonist, the two identities were honored as one, recognized by the Press and his alma mater, Dartmouth. The process of becoming who he was meant to be, an illustrator and writer, was being recognized by his audience.

Desire for self-fulfillment, namely, to the tendency for him to become actualized in what he is potentially. This tendency might be phrased as the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming. (Maslow *A Theory* 7-8)

and present minority leader of the House of Representatives.

One of the nation's best-known cartoonists and authors of juvenile books, Mr. Geisel first achieved renowned with his "Quick, Henry the Flit" series of advertising cartoons for the Standard Oil Company.

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Among his most successful books for children were "Bartholomew and the Oobleck" and "Gerald McBoing-Boing," which won an academy award as the best motion picture cartoon of 1950.

Most of his books have been adopted in dramatic form for radio, screens and photo graph records.

He is now principally engaged in the producing of animated cartoons for television at La Jolla California. ("Dartmouth Honors Dr. Seuss")

1957, July 6 – The Wonderful World of Dr. Seuss

*The Saturday Evening Post* interviewed Theodor three specific times in his life, at ten year intervals, this being the first by Robert Cahn.

Theodor Geisel, alias Dr. Seuss, has captured the imagination of millions of children with his fanciful spoofs; Gerald McBoing-Boing, the Drum Tummied Snumm, and other creatures from a world of happy nonsense.<sup>525</sup>

For a man whose mind is inhabited by such creatures as a Mop-Noodled Finch, a Salamagoox, or a Bustard – "who only eats custard with sauce made of mustard" – Theodor S. Geisel looks disarmingly rational. As the renowned Dr. Seuss (rhymes with "goose"), he is not, as a few children have pictured him, a wizened old man with flowing white beard. He is whiskerless, has a standard number of arms and legs, and lives quietly with his wife and dog on a hill overlooking La Jolla, California.

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<sup>525</sup> A world of happy nonsense was in the mind of Theodor Geisel; it began long before, as his mother told he and Marnie bedtime rhymes, as his father took him to the zoo to explore and become acquainted with animals and with these, his imagination began to grow, coming out later in his books, cartoons and movies to capture the imagination of young children, just as he once had been captured. It was his sense of humor A-1 and honesty that allowed Theodor to find his path. As a child, he said he could not draw realistically the animals, putting elbows in the wrong places, so he decided to go for the laugh. He knew himself well and was honest with himself and those around him - honesty.

Yet for the past thirty years, under the protective alias of Dr. Seuss, Ted Geisel has been an apostle of joyous nonsense. He has fathered a whole martyr mythology of bizarre creatures...<sup>526</sup>

His annual output of picture books, like *Horton Hatches the Egg*, *Thidwick the Big Hearted Moose*, and *On Beyond Zebra*, have become a part of the basic children's literature of the country.<sup>527</sup> They are in constant use at the overseas libraries of the United States Information Agency and have been translated into several foreign languages, including Japanese.

In suburban La Jolla, however, Geisel's madcap alter ego is completely obscured. Here he gives up his chair when the ladies are standing.

The first impression of conservatism is emphasized by his polite attentiveness, ... And he speaks in the terse hesitations of a painfully shy man.

But beneath this outer austerity beats a wildly impulsive heart. Even with the most serious intentions, the mind of Ted Geisel is so fanciful that he has never been able completely to subdue it.<sup>528</sup>

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Into the impasse stepped Geisel.<sup>529</sup> He offered his services to one of the nation's

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<sup>526</sup> Theodor Geisel, the rational as compared to Dr. Seuss, the apostle of joyous nonsense, the protective alias of Dr. Seuss had given Theodor free reign to let the inhabiting creatures in his mind come out to create a complete mythology of bizarre creatures. Freedom: the ability to be spontaneous, to create, to be whatever one is at the moment; this freedom was given through Dr. Seuss to Theodor Geisel. C-2 Creativeness: to true inventiveness; he invented a mythology from the imagination in his mind - brilliant, a genius with finesse.

<sup>527</sup> The basic children's literature of the country, giving children recognition and respect: the view of children and their importance in society for the present and the future was given prominence by Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss, the Press took note.

<sup>528</sup> Austerity defined as plain, simple, stern or serious quality, this word used to define Theodor's outer person was then compared to a person with a wildly impulsive heart and a fanciful mind that was unable to be subdued. The contrast of serious to untamable, sharp opposites, like Theodor and Dr. Seuss; yet, the two working together worked in perfect harmony.

<sup>529</sup> Impasse defined by Merriam-Webster as "a predicament affording no obvious escape; a deadlock: an impassable road or way." This blocked road was referring to the Dick and Jane basal readers used in the public school system in United States and Canada from the 1930s to the 1970s; John Hersey on May 24, 1954, wrote an article titled: "Why Do Students Bog Down On the First R?" He began the article asking this question: "All over the country, this month and next, most of the 28,000,800 pupils in the public schools are being given standardized year end achievement tests. A question that both educators and parents will want to see answered by those

leading textbook publishers and was assigned to prepare a book that six-year-olds could read themselves...

.....

*The Cat in the Hat* was published last spring by Houghton Mifflin as a supplementary school text for first graders, and in a popular addition by Random House. It already has been greeted enthusiastically by parents and educators...

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“In our books there is usually a point, if you want to find it,” says Geisel. “But we have discovered that the kids don’t want to feel you are trying to push something down their throats. So when we have a moral, we tried to tell it sideways.”<sup>530</sup>

.....

Occasionally these days, Doctor Geisel runs into someone who slaps him on the back and says, “Geisel, with all your education, you should be able to do better. There must be some way you could crack the adult field.”

Geisel raises an eyebrow, then smiles. “Write for adults?” he replies. “Why, they’re just obsolete children.”<sup>531</sup> (Cahn)

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test is, are our young citizens learning to use our language well enough?” (136). Hersey continued:

“Must they not look closely to see why many children resist the textbooks they are given? Is not revulsion against namby-pamby school readers perhaps a reason why they like lurid comic books so much? ... It is evident, however, that both the reading texts and the manuals used in our schools do tend to encourage uniformity and discourage individuality.” (Hersey 138 - 139)

This was the impasse Theodor Geisel stepped into, to write books that children had a desire to read; books that encouraged individuality and imagination. His book, *The Cat in The Hat*, was the book that opened the deadlock, made a roadway for children to learn the English language well and with joy and laughter. This was Theodor’s life mission D-1: his vocation, calling, constitutional inward duty.

<sup>530</sup> Theodor said he looked through the telescope from the wrong end; he knew what worked best for himself; he trusted who he was; he was honest; yet this trust had taken time, trials and effort; likewise, telling stories to children, he understood how they thought, what they would accept, and if it was a moral, it needed to be told sideways. The Press highlighted the self-actualizing process in Theodor according to Maslow’s theory.

<sup>531</sup> Cahn was reusing Theodor’s own words which were published on November 16, 1952 in *The New York Times*; in it Theodor was writing about laughter and humor, comparing a child’s humor to an adult’s humor and explaining why he preferred to write for children. In it he wrote:

1959, February 4 – Dr. Seuss Gets His Inspiration by Expanding His Idle Doodles

Edward S. Kitch for *Clearfield Progress* newspaper predicted American humor in a decade would jump forward with Dr. Seuss:

If in another decade or so the American sense of humor takes a ridiculous jump upward, admirers of Theodor Seuss Geisel won't be surprised.

They are delighted with the zany blend of hilarious image and simple language

“Your imagination, they told you, was getting a little bit out of hand. Your young unfettered mind, they told you, was taking you on too many wild flights of fancy. It was time your imagination got its feet down on the ground. It was time your version of humor was given a practical, realistic base. They began to teach you *their* versions of humor. And the process of destroying your spontaneous laughter was under way.

A strange thing called conditioned laughter began to take its place. Now, conditioned laughter doesn't spring from the juices. It doesn't even spring. Conditioned laughter germinates, like toadstools on a stump.

And, unless you were a very lucky little Willy or Mary, you soon began to laugh at some very odd things. Your laughs, unfortunately, began to get mixed with sneers and smirks.

This conditioned laughter the grown-ups taught you depended entirely on their conditions.

.....

And by the time you had added that accomplishment to your repertoire, you know what happened to you, Willy or Mary? Your capacity for healthy, silly, friendly laughter was smothered. You'd really grown up. You'd become adults ... adults, which is a word that means obsolete children.

.....

That, I think is why we maverick humorists prefer to write exclusively for children. (Seuss. “But for Grown-ups”)

“Adults are just obsolete children and the hell with them” would become one of Theodor's well known quotes. Theodor did not want to lose the joy of laughter, nor have conditions placed on his laughter - he never did. He stayed honest and true to his inner person: honest, aware, freedom and trust in himself. Theodor refused to become an adult in many ways. Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: Theodor valued good natured silliness; he continued to laugh at the human condition yet with using satire and humor wrote about the realities of mankind, keeping a serious note between the lines and illustrations.

which has become the trademark of “Dr. Seuss,” Geisel’s pseudonym. There are sure developing senses of humor that will benefit as much as young vocabularies.<sup>532</sup>

Dr. Seuss’ latest addition to a family of illustrated children’s books is *The Cat in the Hat*...

A word and picture tale of a mischievous feline, “The Cat in the Hat” has been hailed by educators, librarians and parents as a significant achievement in the field of books for beginner readers. The tale is told with only 223 words, most of them as simple as “cat” and “hat.” But it’s fun to read and has sold 300,000 copies already.

The kids have installed Dr. Seuss (it’s rhymes with goose) as a literary giant. For adults, he displays a constant wit...<sup>533</sup> (Kitch, E. S.)

1959, April 4 – Local Boy Who Made Good, Dr. Seuss Credits Forest Park ‘Friends’ for Success as Cartoonist and Author – *The Springfield Daily Union* wrote:

The current issue of a leading national magazine contains a picture feature on the eminently successful work of Theodor Seuss Geisel, the cartoonist and children’s story book author, better known as “Dr. Seuss.”

The famed artist and writer, credited with bringing a new and effective approach to the production of youngsters’ reading material, is a city native, the son of Theodor R. Geisel, superintendent of the Park Department.

The magazine credits the animals of the Forest Park zoo with providing Dr. Seuss with his first inspiration in the drawing of his weird, befuzzed and bespangled creatures. Though they are obviously not the same beasts that live at Forest Park, at least the artist’s proximity to the zoo encouraged him to turn to the drawing of animals.

“My animals look the way they do because I can’t draw,” the cartoonist told the interviewer.

“But,” says the article, “because his drawing and imagination are so outlandish

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<sup>532</sup> The Press recognized and realized the force behind Theodor Geisel’s aka Dr. Seuss’ work: advancement in humor (A-1 Sense of humor) and developing vocabulary (A-2 Social interest) were predicted; they were correct indeed, and with force – “ridiculous jump” with the zany blend of hilarious image and simple language, the trademark of Dr. Seuss - genius, finesse. The audience was applauding already the self-actualization of Theodor Geisel through Dr. Seuss.

<sup>533</sup> The Press was predicting the fullness, far-reaching effects of Theodor’s work; his Life mission D-1. This book, *The Cat in the Hat*, changed Theodor’s life as well as millions of children’s lives around the world.

the weird menagerie of potbellied, strangely name creatures... has put Geisel in a class by himself as the creator of children's books and a wacky world."<sup>534</sup>

.....

The viewpoint which has carried the Springfield native to fame is defined as a high regard for children, who, he said, "have as much right to quality as their elders," or in the immortal words of Horton the elephant, "a person's a person no matter how small."<sup>535</sup> ("Local Boy Who Made Good")

1959, April 6 – The Wacky World of Dr. Seuss Delights the Child – and Adult – Readers of His Books

Peter Bunzel in *Life* magazine wrote about how Dr. Seuss delights children and adults:

... A successful cartoonist, he hit national fame with his "Quick, Henry, the Flit!" ads in 1927. Ten years later he started a long line of children's books capped by last year's best selling *The Cat in the Hat* (Random House). Restricted to a vocabulary of 225 words, it has launched him into a project called Beginner Books, designed to make first reading "a bit more entertaining" than present primers...<sup>536</sup>

If you should ask Ted Geisel how he ever thought up an animal called a Bippo-no-Bungus from the wilds of Hippo-no-Hungus or a tizzle-topped Tufted Mazurka from

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<sup>534</sup> C-2 Creativeness: Theodor changed the concept of creativeness to true inventiveness; he created his own wacky world for children to enter bringing "a new and effective approach to the production of youngsters' reading material"; this was his life mission, D-1, something greater than himself, requiring most of his energy; it began as a child. He was in a class unlike any other, and as well, the children of the world by him would enter to a new class of humor and newness in the love of reading, unparalleled.

<sup>535</sup> This was Theodor's success and key, he respected his audience and saw them as equals; A-2 Social interest, an identification with the human species, no matter the age.

<sup>536</sup> *The Cat in The Hat* was the beginning point where he would make "first" reading "a bit more entertaining"; Theodor had written previous successful books that were indeed entertaining, but this book began with a challenge, from John Hersey, to help the American young readers to learn to read; with it began Beginner Books, a department in Random House, writing books specifically for beginner readers. This was noted by the Press as a project, but in truth it was his life mission, to entertain and make learning to read fun, enjoyable and doable; like the Cat in the Hat, who entered Sally and her brother's home, to bring fun and excitement, when before the Cat in the Hat entered, they were just looking out the window, waiting for their mother to come back home...watching and waiting. Likewise, with Theodor and Dr. Seuss, children could learn to read on their own, to discover new and exciting adventures.



the African island of Yerka, his answer would be disarmingly to the point: “Why, I’ve been to most of these places myself so the names come from memory. As for the animals, I have a special dictionary which gives most of them, and I just look up the spellings.” Helen Geisel, Ted’s chief editor, chief critic, business manager and wife, has another explanation. “His mind,” she says of Ted, “has never grown up.”<sup>537</sup>

Mrs. Geisel goes on: “Ted doesn’t sit down and write for children. He writes to amuse himself. Luckily what amuses him also amuses them.” Her husband emphatically agrees. “Ninety percent of failures in children’s books,” says he speaking with authority of 16 successes, “come from writing to preconceptions of what kids like. When I’m writing a book I do it to please Helen and me. But then it finally comes out I take one look and think ‘Oh, my God!’”<sup>538</sup>

.....

The Geisel’s have no children of their own. But he once dedicated a book to a girl named “Chrysanthemum-Pearl (aged 89 months, going on 90).” His wife explains: “Ted got tired of hearing friends describe bright things their children said and did. At first he’d

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<sup>537</sup> Awareness: B-2 Freshness of appreciation: appreciating over and over the basic goods of life with awe, wonder and even ecstasy, like that of a young child where everything is still new, experiences are filled with learning and newness, the mind of a child; Theodor was said to have the mind of a child, meaning he did not let conventions of adulthood hamper his creativity. Maslow wrote about spontaneous behavior C-3 in a self-actualizing person: behavior that is marked by simplicity, naturalness, lack of artificiality or springing for an effect; Maslow noted that his outer behavior is not unconventional but rather his inner:

“...impulses, thought, consciousness that are so unusually unconventional, spontaneous, and natural... this conventionality is a cloak that rests very lightly upon his shoulders and is easily cast aside can be seen from the fact that the self-actualizing person infrequently allows convention to hamper him or inhibit him from doing anything that he considers very important or basic.” (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 157)

These conventions would be an adult looking at another adult in their behavior, thoughts, and actions, expectations that would be placed on adults; Helen confirmed that Theodor thought with the newness, appreciation, and imagination of a child. He did not let convention tie down his ideas or imagination. Maslow stated that self-actualizing people have a superior awareness to their inner impulses, desires, opinions, and subjective reactions in general, like a “child-like acceptance and spontaneity” (158).

<sup>538</sup> “Oh my God!” as expressed with delight; it was an awareness of what he had just created, likened to freshness of appreciation B-2, over a new book; B-3 peak experience: a feeling of ecstasy, wonder and awe came over Theodor as he read what had normally taken him a year to create.

say, ‘The child who would have been a fool not to.’ Then he invented Chrysanthemum-Pearl. She became so real that he repeated her bright sayings, though they were really quite stupid. But people fell for it. Some even sent her presents. There were times when we believed it.”<sup>539</sup>

Geisel, now 55, has long since admitted to the hoax. To his pink stucco home, remodeled on an old watchtower overlooking the Pacific and Mexico, the postman brings him testimonials from a legion of various offspring, his real-life fans.<sup>540</sup> “Dr. Seuss has an imagination with a long tail,” said one child. (“That fellow will go places,” says Geisel.) A nine-year-old once wrote, “It’s the funniest book I’ve ever read in nine years.” But the accolade Geisel cherishes above all is a single word set down in a childish hand, “Whew!”<sup>541</sup> (Fensch, Thomas. *Of Sneetches* 11-13)

1960, December 17 – Children’s Friend

E. J. Kahn, wrote for *The New Yorker* to describe the kind of man Theodor Geisel aka Dr. Seuss was:

The face of Theodor Seuss Geisel—an arresting one, with soft eyes and a long, beaky nose—is not nearly as familiar as that of Santa Claus, yet its owner is an equally

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<sup>539</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creativeness: true creativity, inventiveness; Theodor did not pity his situation of not being able to have children, but created Chrysanthemum-Pearl; like that of a child having a make-belief, imaginary friend.

<sup>540</sup> Theodor’s children were all those who would pick-up one or many of his books and learn to read with joy, imagination, and fun, and at the same time be instilled with the ideas he believed to be important and essential for living: principles and morals presented in a sideways fashion. Theodor and Dr. Seuss became the father to many. His true audience, children, loved him.

<sup>541</sup> This “Whew” from a child, could be compared to freshness of appreciation B-2 : with awe; and also peak experience B-3: where the horizons open; there is a feeling of wonder and awe. Theodor cherished this simple word the most; 27 years later, Theodor himself expressed almost the same feeling when having gone back to his boyhood home, Springfield, after 60 years, parades of people lined the streets welcoming him home and catching a glimpse of the man who had created a world of zany characters which gave pleasure back into reading:

Finally, his hosts from City Library gently ushered the tall, grey-bearded author back into the bus, and a line of people about 20 yards long waved wildly and, using the titles of two of his books, began chanting, “Yes, we like your ‘Green Eggs and Ham,’ thank you, thank you, ‘Sam I am.’”

A loud “Wow” and a deep sigh came from deep in the throat of the 82-year-old author. (Osterman)

“Wow” and “Whew”, from the audience and the creator himself.

formidable contender for the adulation of many children. Santa Claus brings them presents. Geisel makes them laugh, and, what is more, he's real. Since 1936, under the alias of Dr. Seuss, Geisel, a plain and gentle man who is now fifty-six, has written and illustrated nineteen humorous books for children, all but three in galloping verse. Being shy, tense, and serious-minded, he tries to avoid the popping eyes and clutching hands of his disciples, but on the rare occasions when he is harried into making a personal appearance at an autographing bee, he attracts crowds that would cause a Western television hero to sway in the saddle with envy.<sup>542</sup> There have been many attempts, some of them jocular, to define the age groups for which the Dr. Seuss books have the greatest appeal. Random House, which has published practically all of Geisel's books, conservatively catalogues his works in the five-to-nine-year-old bracket. A Bowling Green, Kentucky, reviewer, however, once estimated the age of the audience for "How the Grinch Stole Christmas," a Geisel variation on the theme of Scrooge, to range from two to ninety-two; a Houston, Texas, critic put it at three to ninety-three. And in *Junior Reviewers*, a seven-year-old junior reviewer wrote of "Scrambled Eggs Super!", a Geisel variation on the theme of scrambled eggs, "All ages would like it from 6 to 44—that's how old my mother is."

There has been a great deal thought, said, and written about the quality of contemporary children's books, much of it in high-flown psychological and sociological jargon. Geisel's own approach to the topic is down-to-earth. "If a book pleases me, it has a chance of pleasing children," he says. Many of the elders whom he also pleases are faithful to him because they feel that they can read, and reread, and re-reread a Dr. Seuss book to a child without imperiling their own mental balance or—by skipping paragraphs or whole pages—impairing their integrity. This is not to say that Geisel has no detractors.

There are those who think his pictures and words are plain silly—a few of the

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<sup>542</sup> Santa Claus and a Western hero were used to bring Dr. Seuss into the ranks where he belonged, concerning a child and their world of heroes. He had more fans and admirers than could be possibly counted and still does to this day. Yet the Press notes that this hero, Dr. Seuss aka Theodor Geisel was a shy, gentle, plain and serious minded man. He did not seek fame; Theodor created what he saw in his imagination; he created a world of fun and laughter for the children to enjoy. He became their friend as stated in the headline, "Children's Friend." This was deep inside him as a child, the humor, the laugh, never did he let it go and in sharing it, he became the friend of many; it was his life calling, his life mission D-1.

leaders of this faction would just as soon seek to divert their children with the exterior of a cereal box—but most guardians of the young mind, it would appear, are willing to go along with the *Bulletin* of the Parents League of New York, which has enthusiastically endorsed Geisel's books. The League classifies them as "read-alouds." He himself fancies the description "*logical insanity*."<sup>543</sup> The reading aloud of logical insanity, appropriately illustrated by its creator, has always been fun,<sup>544</sup> but between Edward Lear's day and Dr. Seuss's the pickings, few people would deny, have been slim.

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Geisel's tastes are simple. "Ted has no extravagances," his wife says. "I can't think of anything he likes except cigarettes and rocks." ...

La Jolla is an upper-bracket community, and the relative austerity of the Geisels' way of life confounds their neighbors. Geisel and his wife have only one car, only one maid—part-time, at that—and only one swimming pool. After thirty-three years of married life, they are an uncommonly devoted couple, and they see no reason to have a second car, since they are rarely apart...<sup>545</sup> At the end of 1957, Random House announced that in the previous twelve months he had received nine thousand two

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<sup>543</sup> Theodor explained his "logical insanity" in that where there is something insane, there needs to be logic to explain it, melding of the logical with the ludicrous. "If I start out with a concept of a two-headed animal," says Geisel, "I must put two hats on his head and two toothbrushes in the bathroom" (Jennings, C. R.). Theodor could not be explained nor did he have the need to be explained; he was in his own world with a mission to fulfill, greater than himself. Maslow wrote that self-actualizing people are "like spies or aliens in a foreign land and sometimes behave so" (*Maslow Motivation and Personality* 158); they are alienated from "ordinary conventions", they are alienated from "accepted hypocrisies, lies and inconsistencies of social life" (158).

<sup>544</sup> Fun, how important is this word fun? What connections does it have to self-actualization? Honesty with the three areas according to Maslow: humor that is spontaneous, social interest that cares for people, and interpersonal relations which let go of the ego boundaries; doesn't that sound like when one was a child; the cares of the world were not pressing on one's mind; the conventions of right and wrong were not yet deeply instilled in one's behavior or reactions. Fun where the efficient perception of reality is of the real world, not that of manmade concepts, beliefs and stereotypes; fun where every day the appreciation for the little things are still kept in awe, where there are moments of great ecstasy, of wonder, of awe, and right from wrong was just that, not grey; less questioning, more clean fun, like with *The Cat in the Hat*.

<sup>545</sup> The Press noted that Theodor lived a simple life with his wife, unlike the conventions or expectations one would think of for a famous writer. He kept himself alienated, detachment C-1: the need for privacy, undisturbed and unruffled; as well independent of culture and environment, autonomous D-1: not tradition bound, resistance to enculturation. To the audience and the Press, Theodor and Dr. Seuss's life was logical insanity.

hundred and sixty-seven pounds of it [mail].<sup>546</sup> No up-to-date statistics have been released, but whatever the avoirdupois of Geisel's current mail, it amounts to thousands of letters a week. Geisel's policy is to have his wife answer letters from teachers, librarians, sick or crippled children, and entire school classes. (Mrs. Geisel signs some of the replies "Mrs. Dr. Seuss.") The rest of his fan mail hardly ever gets to La Jolla. It is mercifully intercepted and screened by Random House, which sends the bulk of his correspondents a printed form letter that he has written and illustrated. The form letter in use until just recently explained that Dr. Seuss's mail service was unreliable, because he lived on a steep and inaccessible precipice and because his correspondence had to travel by Budget, an ungainly Seuss beast, driven by Nudget, a Seuss Budget-driver. Most children were satisfied with this reply, but now and then a persistent correspondent would grumble. "Did you get a letter from a girl named Olive or a boy named Bud?" an Oregon schoolchild wrote Dr. Seuss a year or so ago. "They are both in my classroom. Did you get their letter? I don't think you did the way your roads are but they will write to you again and then are you going to write to them again about the Budget and the Nudget? I want a letter from you again but not about the Budget and Nudget again." Geisel sought to curtail laments of this sort by fashioning a new illustrated form letter, which thanks the correspondent on behalf of Dr. Seuss himself and a friend—the Three-Muffed Apfel Moose.

It is only within the last couple of years that Geisel's fan mail and sales figures have soared into the literary stratosphere... Not only does he write a new book or two every year but the sales of each book on his back list grow larger every year.<sup>547</sup> All his old books are current best-sellers. An early one, "The King's Stilts," which was published in 1939, sold 4,648 copies the first year. By 1941, its annual sales were down to 394. In 1958, the last year for which figures are obtainable, they were up to 11,037. "The King's Stilts" has been a more sluggish "mover" than any other Dr. Seuss book; its cumulative sales have climbed nearly to the 75,000 mark. Another early Dr. Seuss, "Horton Hatches

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<sup>546</sup> The audience was responding with adoration and force by writing mail to their creator of zany creatures and imaginary tales.

<sup>547</sup> Self-actualization was being recognized and realized by the audience and in turn the creator, Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss; the force and strength of the present gave newness and appreciation for the former creations.

the Egg,” which has had total sales of more than 200,000 and is still briskly hatching profits, sold 5,801 copies in 1940, the year it came out. It, too, fell off—to 1,645 the following year. In 1958, it sold 27,463 copies. What appears to have given all the Dr. Seuss books their recent boost was the publication, in 1957, of “The Cat in the Hat,” which seems likely to achieve a total sale of a million copies by the end of this year. Since the book is priced at a dollar ninety-five, this would bring its retail gross to nearly two million dollars—equivalent to the gross on six million copies of a thirty-five-cent paperback. Only two works of fiction, “God’s Little Acre” and “Peyton Place,” have sold as well as that in paperback form. And “The Cat in the Hat” is aseptic.<sup>548</sup>

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Since “Mulberry Street,” Geisel has had just about every triumph conceivable for a writer of children’s books except one—he is largely without honor outside of his own country. It may have been easy for Deems Taylor to convert “Mulberry Street” into music, but there have been obvious difficulties in translating the bulk of Dr. Seuss’s work—most of which not only rhymes but deals with creatures called Nizzards, Ziffs, Zuffs, and Ham-ikka-Schnim-ikka-Schnam-ikka-Schnopps—into foreign languages. In Polish, for instance, a cat in a hat becomes a *kot w kapeluszu* and a drum-tummied snumm a *brzuchaty snumm* — there evidently being no Polish word for “snumm.” In “The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins,” Geisel, who likes hats and once collected them, had some magicians chanting, “Winkibus, Tinkibus, Fotichee, Klay! Hat on this demon’s head, fly far away!” The Japanese translation of this book omitted the passage entirely. In Germany, a translator came up with “*Winkibus, Pinkibus, Lupf um die Eck. Hut von dem Hexerich, Fliege weit weg!*” The chant hasn’t yet been tried in Poland. A few Dr. Seuss books have been published in England, but they haven’t done especially well there. One reason may be the British have no word for “snumm,” either.

Geisel is a high-principled man, and most of his books have a moral—usually served up, like children’s medicine, in mild and palatable doses. In his books, might

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<sup>548</sup> “God’s Little Acre” centered around women’s sexual identity, with themes of sexuality, incest, abortion, lust, and murder, and “Peyton Place” about a family obsessed with sex and wealth; both best sellers were amongst another best seller, *The Cat in the Hat*, a cheery bright eyed cat that brings adventure to Sally and her brother in their little home; not only clean adventure but pages that grabbed the imagination of the children for their good.

never makes right, the meek inherit the earth, and pride frequently goeth before a fall—usually a pratfall. When his “Horton Hears a Who!” came out, in 1954, the *Times* called it “probably the most moral tale since the first ‘Elsie Dinsmore,’” and the Des Moines *Register* characterized it as “a rhymed lesson in protection of minorities and their rights.”<sup>549</sup>

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Geisel has produced only one book— “The Seven Lady Godivas”—that was aimed at an unequivocally grownup audience. It was an unequivocal flop. An enhancement of the old legend, it dealt with seven Lady Godivas, all sisters, and seven brothers named Peeping (one, of course, was Tom), who courted them. It was published by Random House in 1939, and Geisel clearly had some misgivings about it beforehand; nailed to the Godiva family tree, which he drew for the end papers, was a small bucket of sap labelled “Bennett Cerf.” One trouble was that all the Godivas were shown in the nude, a situation with which Geisel feels he did not cope adequately. “I tried to draw the sexiest-looking women I could,” he explains, “and they came out just ridiculous.” Although a review in the *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* called the book “a particularly triumphant job,” only twenty-five hundred copies of a first printing of ten thousand were sold. “I think maybe it all went to prove that I don’t know anything about adults,” Geisel says.<sup>550</sup> (Kahn, E. J.)

1962, November 11 – 25 Years of Working Wonder with Words

Helen Renthal for the *Chicago Tribune* explained the wonder of words used as only Dr. Seuss could:

From Mulberry Street to the habitat of the Sneetches, from the earth’s highest river to the haunts of the Cat in the Hat, lies the mad, revolutionary world of Dr. Seuss. It came into being 25 years ago, and no theory about children’s books has been safe ever

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<sup>549</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: Theodor had a feeling of identification with the human species; often he spoke up for the “little person,” children and minorities.

<sup>550</sup> 8-B Finding out who one is, what one is, what one likes, what one doesn’t like, what is good for one and what is bad, where one is going and what is the mission; Theodor was himself learning his strengths and weaknesses.

since.<sup>551</sup>

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Somehow, the human race produces what it needs, spaceships or wonder drugs or a Dr. Seuss.<sup>552</sup> It is common knowledge now that Dr. Seuss is the alias assumed by a shy, gentle man named Theodore Seuss Geisel, upon whom, in 1957, Dartmouth College conferred the honorary degree of Dr. of humane letters.<sup>553</sup>

Nothing could have been more appropriate. What Dr. Seuss brought to children's literature were qualities that are rare in any literature and that children especially need, cherish, and too rarely find: a genuine comic spirit and a sense of the power and joy of language.

This quarter-century, this Age of Dr. Seuss, has seen a new kind of methodology appear... No more bizarre and a winged horse or a fire-breathing dragon, *they are only funnier*. Viewed as a whole, the work of Dr. Seuss looms among contemporary children's books like one of his own whale-like species, unlike anything else in shape, size, or function.

After 25 years and 21 books, it seems reasonably clear that Dr. Seuss has been making one long, joyous assault on the prosaic world of orderly disorder, of people who hear only the obvious, see only the superficial, believe only the commonplace... - all

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<sup>551</sup> Mad and revolutionary, Theodor created something new; the two words work together; madness seems to interpret different and opposite of what seems to be "normal"; Theodor's characters were defined as zany; he truly created his own world: from new words, to new shapes of creatures, to new ways of thinking about children and their needs and ways of learning. Theodor and Dr. Seuss revolutionized children's books, for his way of thinking about children was different; he shocked the publishing industry and the world of children's literature; he revolutionized the theory of how to write for children.

<sup>552</sup> Theodor Geisel aka Dr. Seuss was born for a mission; there was a very real and present need for a person at this time to break through barriers and speak up for the children and with the children. It was his life mission D-1: a calling, constitutional duty to create imaginary animals and worlds where they interacted, creating fun and laughter, teaching morals and values; what interested him as a child, what fascinated him, kept his attention and took up his energy and time, was a cause outside himself which paradoxically became the defining characteristic of who he became: a man who worked wonders with words and illustrations, creating worlds of humor and joy for children and adults.

<sup>553</sup> The Press declared the self-actualization of Theodor Geisel through Dr. Seuss; the two were dichotomies 4a-V: working hand in hand; proof declared by the honorary doctorate given to him from his alma mater, Dartmouth College.



express a kind of freedom from conventional ways of thinking and acting.<sup>554</sup>

It is this spirit that makes the world of Dr. Seuss uproariously comic and it explains why children love him. Children regard themselves as superior to adults, storytellers who honestly agree. “Grownups,” he has ruefully remarked, “have lost their sense of humor.”

All ages, all tastes, even a child indifferent to all books, are swept up in the Dr. Seuss merriment. Those who have outgrown picture books cling to him in an ashamed joy... They delight in his rollicking rhythms, his unexpected rhymes, in sounds they can feel and taste on their tongues, in hearing his whip crack over the galloping syllables. His drawings are bold and vivid and full of outrageous surprises.<sup>555</sup> Words and drawings are inseparable, each illuminating the other. And at the heart of his fantasy there is always reality curled like the worm in an apple.<sup>556</sup>

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Nevertheless, such fresh and exuberant books as *McElligot's Pool*, *Horton Hatches the Egg*, and *If I Ran the Zoo* are not only wildly funny but irrepressibly hopeful.

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<sup>554</sup> Making an assault, a joyous assault, that is, on the superficial, the commonplace, was Dr. Seuss; he has done this through his own freedom from conventional ways of thinking and acting; Freedom: is the ability to be spontaneous, to withdraw if this is what you wish, to create, to be whatever one is at the moment, no matter what that is, but to trust that self, to be freely oneself – to accept one's self. This freedom was given to Theodor as a child from his mother; she constantly was his biggest fan and encourager; this was Theodor's ability to be free in who he was: detached, creative, and spontaneous; his awareness to know what is going on inside, to have an efficient perception of reality B-1: to the real world as opposed to the manmade mass of concepts, abstracts, beliefs and stereotypes that most people confuse with the world. The Press was repeating what Maslow observed in self-actualizing people. With this mindset Theodor assaulted the commonplace books written for children, using comical drawings and an obvious sense of power: one could say authority and joy in the English language, used as powerful weapons.

<sup>555</sup> Outrageous surprises – who doesn't like a good surprise? A page-turner! This could be referred to as a freshness of appreciation B-2, or if a really good surprise, a peak experience B-3: when there is loss of time and space, a magic moment experienced in a book. Theodor shared the magic that was deep inside of him and the world recognized it and rejoiced with him and in them.

<sup>556</sup> Theodor presented reality, disguised in humor: A-1 Sense of humor: fitting the situation, laughing at the human condition, not hurting people but teaching people. Theodor behind the pen of Dr. Seuss used satire to touch on human frailty, acting as teacher, philosopher and loving father.

In steadily growing numbers parents have found that Dr. Seuss books will bear reading repeatedly without going stale, and that they and the children may discover in them the experience of uninhabited laughter together.<sup>557</sup>

It no longer is fashionable to speak of the moral of the book. The tales of Dr. Seuss not only are full of shrewd insights but have brought back the old-fashioned fairytale moral that unequivocally takes sides between right and wrong. Can it be that in this relativistic world a child needs a Dr. Seuss? What makes his moralizing something rare is the way children takes sides with him, elated at each triumph, seized by every setback. When that amazing winged elephant emerges from the egg Horton has hatched, Dr. Seuss speaks for the heart of every child who has been following his logical insanity:

For Horton was faithful, he sat and he sat  
And it should be, it should be, it SHOULD be like that! (Seuss, Dr., 1940)

Clearly, Dr. Seuss has an unfeeling instinct for what should be, in the depths of the seat or on a speck of dust.<sup>558</sup>

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Possibly in an unguarded moment, Dr. Seuss told something about his secrets for creating deliriously funny creatures. “I don’t draw animals,” said Dr. Seuss, “I draw people.” On their faces may be seen expressions of arrogance and smugness and foolishness. Whatever else a Sneetch, and Obsk or a Yuzz-a-ma-Tuzz may be, Dr. Seuss is dealing with human follies and frailties as well as possibilities.<sup>559</sup>

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<sup>557</sup> Laughter and humor, these words were repeated over and over again when referring to Theodor’s/Dr. Seuss’s work; one can go back to the article he wrote in 1952 titled: “But For Grown-Ups Laughing Isn’t Any Fun”, in it he explained why he wrote for children and stated that as one grows up, adults put shutters on children, teaching them what is funny and what is not. Theodor wrote that the juices of laughter stop flowing; there is cynicism and rules for laughter. In truth, no one really likes rules, especially children, and even adults.

<sup>558</sup> B-4 Ethical awareness: as if these people know what is right and wrong; worked out for themselves ethically; it is like they have an inner supreme court which they refer to. Theodor at this time period was filling a need in the lives of the children, showing through humor - morals: right and wrong.

<sup>559</sup> Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: laughing at the human condition, good natured at the silliness, ludicrous situation of the human situation. This is exactly what the Press stated concerning Dr.

If there was doubt about Dr. Seuss's genius, the *Cat in the Hat* went a long way toward dispelling it...<sup>560</sup>

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...The mind trembles – in our age of scientific revolution, the need to speed up a learning of mathematics is urgent, and if anyone can bring life, excitement, laughter to calculus... perhaps Dr. Seuss is working on it. (Fensch, T. *Of Sneetches* 37 - 39)

1962, November 11 – “Then I Doodled a Tree”

Lewis Nichols wrote for *The New York Times Book Review* about Dr. Seuss's first book written 25 years earlier:

It was just twenty-five years ago this fall that bookstore browsers, looking for something to read to Johnny, could have picked up a thin book with a bluish jacket... If the browser bought it and held on, he now has a collector's item for the grandchildren, the first edition of *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*, first book by the author, *one Dr. Seuss*.

Statistics are pretty lifeless companions for such as Yertle, the turtle, and Thidwick, the moose, but those about the Seuss library of people and animals are astounding... Sales of all twenty-two Seuss books are in the neighborhood of 7,250,000 copies, give or take.

Just how many readers there are in the Seuss Circle lies completely outside conjecture, even by Dr. Seuss, himself. Parents read the books to children, children read them to other children and – wryly pleasing to the pedagogue that still lurks within him – Dr. Seuss is studied in school... What effect this one [speaking of his book, *Dr. Seuss's Sleep Book*] might have on the world if read during a violent meeting of the United Nations also lies outside conjecture. But it's the sort of thing you think of after an hour or so with Dr. Seuss.

...Part Dr. Seuss is the humorist, part is a humorist-moralist, part is the

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Seuss's creatures - they are people, with human follies and frailties. Theodor saw the truth of mankind and used humor to expose it.

<sup>560</sup> Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss working together were “genius.” They needed each other.

pedagogue...<sup>561</sup>

“I’d say that the most useful of the books is *The Cat in the Hat*.” He replied the other day when asked about his favorites. “That had a different purpose, to help reading, and it goes back to my old ambition to be an educator. The happiest book, I would think, is *Horton Hatches the Egg*. And I remember I did the last three pages just as Paris was falling, and all around us was isolationist talk.

“The Favorite animals – this is a little hard. The most popular with the kids are the weird ones. My own choices – the cat, probably, and Horton, and a very odd one, the pair of pants in the story ‘What Was I Scared Of?’ in *The Sneetches and Other Stories*. I think there’s more life in the pair of green pants with no one inside them than a good many of the others.

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There is no wish to annotate Dr. Seuss here, as they do *Alice in Wonderland*, but it might be noted that various academic big brothers are watching him. There have been a couple of doctoral dissertations written about him, and a number of masters’ thesis. This pleases Dr. Seuss, quite naturally, but it also somewhat amuses him. When Seuss was still Geisel, he went from Dartmouth (class of ’25) to Oxford and the Sorbonne – aim, scholarship and teaching. What pushed him away from them was the suggestion he might make a real name for himself as a scholar if he made a study for a few years in the life of Swift – the years when Swift wrote nothing. Geisel promptly came home, began sending drawings around, became famous for “Quick, Henry, the Flit!” ads, and finally took his walk along Mulberry Street.

Which comes first, the drawings for the story? Dr. Seuss is weary of answering that one.

“I get a plot, start off with words. But words are deceptive things, and I get stuck with them, and when fully stuck try drawings. ‘Horton’ came one day when I drew a picture of an elephant, a sort of doodle. Then I doodled a tree, and in an accidental shuffle, the transparent paper showed an elephant in a tree. Then all I had to do was

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<sup>561</sup> Theodor as humorist, A-1 sense of humor; Theodor as moralist, B-4 ethical awareness; Maslow said “it is like they have an inner supreme court which they refer to...they look within for the answers to the ethical questions” (Shostrum 24:33-26:33/54:22), and Theodor as teacher, his life mission D-1: to teach through children’s books and humor.

figure out why an elephant would be sitting in a tree. There are millions of figures – drawings, kids, clothes – which haunt me because I can't seem to do anything about them, dozens of ideas which never have jelled. Sometimes I can take chunks and drop them in somewhere, but the rest just floating around waiting.”<sup>562</sup>

Doodles for a time were pretty much doodles, but now they are being saved, again by the academic world with which Dr. Seuss seems unable to avoid contact. The manuscript of *Mulberry Street* is at Dartmouth, the rest—along with such peripheral material as doodles—have been given to the University of California at Los Angeles. There's a course there for the study of a work of art from the doodle through the script and the plates to the book, as so Dr. Seuss, if *in absentia*, finally is teaching. Teaching there as well as in the *Beginner Books*.<sup>563</sup>

One further note, this directed to those writers of dissertations and thesis on the subject of Dr. Seuss. On the table of his hotel room the other day were these objects: One copy of *Live and Let Live [sic]*, by Ian Fleming; one folder of delicacies offered by Room Service; six partly use folders of matches; two bars of chocolate; one large pear. Dr. Seuss could make something of this. Can the scholars?<sup>564</sup>

Fan mail? Dr. Seuss naturally gets it, and since it comes from the young, it is good mail. Often school classes make projects on Seuss, one arriving at 45 feet in length. Had to unroll it in the backyard to read it.<sup>565</sup> (Fensch, T. *Of Sneetches* 41 - 43)

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<sup>562</sup> As a young boy, Theodor doodled on his bedroom walls, at Dartmouth he doodled at *The Jack-O-Lantern* and at Oxford he doodled on his books while studying Shakespeare; he would doodle and then figure out where the doodle was leading him; these doodles were from ideas in his head, waiting to come out; it was an awareness to his inner interests, what was going on inside himself and his ability to express these ideas that gave him freedom to create C-2, and be spontaneous C-3, with his thoughts and doodles.

<sup>563</sup> As a young man, Theodor went to Oxford with the idea of becoming a professor of literature; but this was too small for what was inside; the self-actualizing of Theodor demanded greater freedom and space to create that which would become great, genius – not only were his doodles being studied at universities, these doodles created *Beginner Books* which published millions of books for children.

<sup>564</sup> The Press realized the interest in Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss; how he was becoming a person of interest and study – a self-actualizing person.

<sup>565</sup> Theodor's audience, children, loved him. The university classroom would have been way too small and restricting for this giant of children's literature.

1965, October 23 – Dr. Seuss: ‘What am I doing here?’

This is the second of three interviews with *The Saturday Evening Post*; C. Robert Jennings interviewed Theodor and talked about how he got to where he was.

A painfully shy former screenwriter and unsuccessful novelist named Geisel has become America’s best-known children’s writer – and he still can’t quite believe it.<sup>566</sup>

“Dear Dr. Seuss,” an eight-year-old wrote one day. “You sure thunk up a lot of funny books. You sure thunk up a million funny animals. Now this I want to know. Who thunk you up Dr. Seuss???”

The sordid truth is that the extraordinary Dr. Seuss was thunk up by a nervous, shy, ordinary-looking man who constantly worries about living up to his own creation. “I always have the feeling that people will take one look and recognize me as a fraud,” says 61-year-old Theodor Seuss Geisel. “Kids come to my door and say, ‘I want to meet Dr. Seuss.’ “I say, ‘I am Dr. Seuss,’ and they simply refuse to believe me. Sometimes they will just sit and stare until my wife passes the cookies and eases them out. If your nose doesn’t light up and you don’t look like a baggy-pants comedian, or at least have a bifurcated beard and horns, they are disappointed.”<sup>567</sup>

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In 29 years, Dr. Seuss has had 26 bestsellers, all but three in rollicking verse and every one still in print. Since its appearance in 1957, his *Cat in the Hat* has grossed more than \$3 million and become the most influential first grade reader since McGuffey. His manuscripts and illustrations are of such historic monument that they can be viewed only in a special collection of the UCLA library. In the archives at the library at Dartmouth College are original manuscripts by Sinclair Lewis, Booth Tarkington, Robert Frost, and Dr. Seuss’s *500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*. Seuss books have been dramatized on the air, put to music, and performed in Carnegie Hall. He receives 500 letters a week, and

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<sup>566</sup> Theodor’s life mission D-1: was greater than himself, a problem outside himself, greater than his shyness; it became the cause which defined who he was – a shy man becoming America’s best-known children’s writer.

<sup>567</sup> Even with success, the fear of disappointing others, especially his audience, occupied Theodor’s mind; he did not want to disappoint nor appear to be a fraud. Dealing with self-actualization is an on-going process. When one looks back from where they came from, it can be daunting; perhaps looking back over time, it made Theodor question how he came so far and where he would be going. It was a time of reflection.

Random House, his publisher, receives up to five tons of Seuss mail in a single year. The passion for Seuss unites such varied readers as Princess Grace's children and Clifton Fadiman.<sup>568</sup>

The phenomenal appeal of Dr. Seuss lies partly in his fresh melding of the logical with the ludicrous... "If I start out with a concept of a two-headed animal," says Geisel, "I must put two hats on his head and two toothbrushes in the bathroom. A child will accept a tuttle-tuttle tree [the "T" in Dr. Seuss's ABC] as a fact and a non-fact simultaneously. He knows you're kidding, but he goes along with it." It's all what Geisel calls "logical insanity."<sup>569</sup>

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Still, for all of the anguish, Geisel wouldn't trade places with anyone... "Childhood is the one time in average person's life when he can laugh just for the straight fun of laughing – that's the main reason I write for kids. As one grows older his humor gets all tied up and stifled by social, economic, and political rules that we learn from our elders, and before long our laughter gets all mixed up with sneers and leers. Kids react spontaneously to something ludicrous, so I have more freedom writing for them.<sup>570</sup> They laugh at silly things their parents would feel embarrassed to be caught smiling at. I have a secret following among adults, but they have to read me when no one is watching."

Geisel often wonders where Seuss will go from here, having worked more or less backward from older children's books to phonetic primers like his latest, *Fox in Socks*, *Hop on Pop*, and his *ABC book*... "I've done everything but prenatal books," says Dr. Seuss. "Now I'm trying to figure out a good alphabet soup for expectant mothers, where

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<sup>568</sup> The world recognized the greatness in Dr. Seuss's books and in Theodor himself; he was associated with great names and places worldwide.

<sup>569</sup> "Logical insanity" to Theodor it was logical; it made sense to him. What was insane to the world, made perfect logical sense to him; he had an efficient perception of reality B-1: clear eyes seeing directly, able to leap to a right conclusion.

<sup>570</sup> Theodor treasured the straight fun of laughing: "kids react spontaneously to something ludicrous, so I have more freedom writing for them." The Press honed in on the reality that Theodor wrote for children because they are natural, they laugh just for fun; children react spontaneously C-3: naturally, simply, lack of artificiality or springing for an effect, just because something is ludicrous; Theodor guarded his ability to write freely; writing for children gave him this freedom to be spontaneous, to create, to be whatever he was at the moment, to be freely himself. Three notable words are laughter (A-1 Sense of humor), spontaneously (C-3 Spontaneity), and freedom.

a child is born saying ‘Cat in the Hat.’ If that doesn’t work, I may become a gardener, and in my spare time study the heartbeat of whales.”<sup>571</sup> (Jennings)

1968 – Geisel, Theodore Seuss

*Current Biography 1968* wrote about Theodor Geisel:

The best-selling author on the lists of Random House is Theodor Seuss Geisel, who writes and illustrates zany children’s books, usually in verse, under the name of Dr. Seuss.<sup>572</sup> Over a period of thirty years Geisel has produced some twenty-six bestsellers, all of which are still in print... he founded Beginner Books Inc., a publishing enterprise devoted to the proposition that children will learn to read more quickly if their texts are entertaining... the total of all his books approach the 10,000,000 mark. In 1957 Geisel began a revolution in the field of reading primers with his low-word-count supplementary first-grade reader *The Cat in the Hat*, and in the following year he founded Beginner Books Inc., a publishing enterprise devoted to the proposition that children will learn to read more quickly if their texts are entertaining... In Geisel’s books, a fantastic menagerie of bizarre, golliwog-eyed creatures conduct themselves with what he has called “logical insanity,” which means, as Geisel has explained, that if an animal has two heads, he must have two toothbrushes.

...Geisel developed his strange, unrealistic drawing style entirely on his own, without a lesson in art or anatomy, by doodling the products of his fancy on his schoolbooks.<sup>573</sup>

In 1939 Random House also published Geisel’s only book for adults ever to reach print, *The Seven Lady Godivas*... It was a failure commercially and, Geisel admits, artistically. “I tried to draw the sexiest babes I could” ... “but they came out looking absurd. I think maybe it went to prove that I don’t know anything about adults – beyond

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<sup>571</sup> Theodor always used a sense of humor A-1, for a response to a question.

<sup>572</sup> *Biography* thus far for Theodor Seuss Geisel described him as a best-selling author, aka Dr. Seuss, writer and illustrator of zany children’s books written in verse - complete and exact.

<sup>573</sup> Words such as: strange, unrealistic (one could say unconventional), style of his own, doodling what he fancies, this described a man who was honest with himself and who was self-made; Theodor Geisel, a man who was aware what was going on in the world around him and in himself, a man autonomous, who was following his own star, independent of the century and culture, defined this logical insanity: a best-selling author who made his own path by what he fancied, what he liked and what kept his attention.



the fact that they're obsolete children.”

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When he is finished with a book, Geisel delivers it in person to Random House in New York, where he haunts the production department, making certain, for example, that the precisely right shades of color are used in this or that illustration. “Just to keep Geisel pacified,” E. J. Kahn Jr. wrote in his *New Yorker* article, “his publisher spends twenty-five percent more on the paper in his books than on any other author’s, and two or three times as much as the norm on preparing his color plates for the press.” Sales of any Dr. Seuss books are so certain that Random House sets the first printing of any one of them at a minimum of 100,000 copies.<sup>574</sup>

..... (*Current Biography* 138-141)

1970, March 19 - TV special – “Horton Hears a Who” TV guide announcement by Cecil Smith, for *LA Times*.

Second Dr. Seuss / Special on Tonight

Once when he was staying in Vancouver, his hostess served Dr. Seuss green eggs and ham. How were they? “Revolting,” he said.

A lithe, tanned, athletic man in his middle 60s, Dr. Seuss, or Theodor Seuss Geisel, his true name, has the sort of tweedy, scholarly look of the college professor he always wanted to be.

He first signed his feathery, fantastic drawings “Dr. Seuss” because he felt cartooning lacked the proper professional dignity. It is rather poetic justice that his drawings and the children’s books they illustrate have heaped upon him honors from the academic world, including three doctorates from universities.

He’d driven up from his home in La Jolla to check the answer print of the second of his books that has been transformed into an animated TV special by Chuck Jones, “Horton Hears a Who,” which CBS will offer tonight (Channel 2 at 7:30). The first

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<sup>574</sup> Awareness - the Press, Random House and Theodor Geisel recognized the energy placed into every book and foretold and knew the results would be positive and productive; there became an efficient perception of reality B-1 built around Dr. Seuss’s books; the color differences, the sharper acuity on press runs, paper quality and how many to print; all had a perception of the reality of each books’ demand. Theodor’s eyes saw more perspicuously: clearly and with precision.

Seuss-Jones collaboration resulted in that phenomenally successful perennial, “How the Grinch Stole Christmas.”

“I’d rather foresworn Hollywood until Chuck did the Grinch,” said Ted Geisel. “I can’t really draw – that is, I can’t make a representational drawing, and that rather hampers an animator. I was never happy with my work in animation before Chuck took over.

### *Two Movies for Army*

“We worked together during the war. I was here with the army making training movies and documentaries and Chuck and I did the Snafu series. I was around Hollywood as a writer after the war. You see two of the movies I did for the army won Oscars – there was a great deal of talk about the second one, ‘Design for Death,’ which used a lot of confiscated Japanese film.

“Jerry Wald had me trying to make a drama out of a sociological text, ‘Rebel Without a Cause,’ but I got nowhere with it. After 35 writers, it finally got made.

“But I could see the postwar population exploding. I thought the time was ripe for children’s books. Before the war, you couldn’t sell them. My first book, ‘And to Think I saw it on Mulberry Street,’ was turned down by 29 publishers before it was finally brought out in 1937. It’s still selling. I think over the last 30 years, it’s sold more than any book except the Bible.”<sup>575</sup>

The fallout of the population explosion leaped on the Dr. Seuss books. He turns out about one a year – “We’re steadily getting younger.” He said. “We had books for children in the early grades of school; then the big thing was the preschooler; now I’m doing a book dealing with sounds, ‘Mr. Brown Can Moo, Can You?’ that’s really for infants. What’s next? Pre-birth books?”

### *Ex-Political Cartoonist*

A lot of the parents of the postwar population explosion discovered Dr. Seuss on their own in the ‘30s – in the ads. He drew the famous “Quick Henry, the Flit!” ads for

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<sup>575</sup> Theodor was a visionary. He saw beforehand needs of humanity: A-2 Social interest: a deep feeling of identification with the human species, an easy sharing of humanness; with this interest and care, Theodor addressed social and human issues; he had an efficient perception of reality B-1: a knowing of a coming need for the children – the time was ripe.

an insecticide. He says it was the toughest job he ever had – “Over 17 years I did 8,000 drawings for the same caption.” A few also remembered his brief stint as a political cartoonist immediately before the war for Marshall Field’s short-lived, leftish tabloid, *PM*. Hitler was marching across Europe and Geisel wanted him stopped,<sup>576</sup> but *PM* editors were amazed their political cartoonist had no other interest in politics.

“Horton Hears a Who,” said Ted Geisel, “is one of the few Seuss books with a sociological theme. I got to worrying about whether big countries were listening to little countries...”<sup>577</sup>

Horton, a soft-hearted elephant, hears the who cry from Whoville, which is so small its world is a speck of dust.

Dr. Seuss has, of course, become a legendary figure. Bobby Russell in his wondrous love song, “Little Green Apples,” equates Dr. Seuss with Disneyland and Mother Goose. I hate to say this because the song is marvelous – but the rhyme is off. Geisel pronounces his pen name “Sauce.” (Smith)

1971, September 12 – Children’s Book Has Message

ENVIRONMENT PLEA BY ‘DR. SEUSS’, wrote Ursula Vils in *The Springfield Republican* newspaper:

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<sup>576</sup> Theodor had an awareness that many others did not have; he was aware of the world; he saw and heard the vibrations of the war and Hitler; he was not fooled but had clear eyes to see directly where WWII was directed: Efficient perception of reality B-1.

<sup>577</sup> “Horton Hears a Who”, delivered a political message: “A person’s a person. No matter how small.” The post-war population was exploding, little wee ones walking on planet earth was one of the results of the war; Theodor had a message to deliver and no better place to be instilled than in the future, the children, in hopes that another war would not result; he feared that little countries were not being heard by big countries and like many of his books, children, the little people, needed to be heard by the big people, adults. His deep conviction for the equality of all mankind, big and small was the energy that fueled him on. A-2 Social interest: is that which comes from negative emotions that come from hypocrisy, cruelty; a reactive anger at a situation, usually cruelty and pomposity. Theodor’s righteous indignation drew and wrote through social, artificial, and trivial boundaries. He had a desire and compulsion to do something to help, to be involved; he did, Dr. Seuss wrote books for the young children, the future generation; at the moment he was working on a book for the very young, the preschoolers. Age was not a contender for what burned within him. He realized the importance of getting the truth into the children, sooner than later.

La Jolla Calif. – The signs on the gate says ‘Beware of the cat.’

Inside, the only pet is an irrepressibly affectionate Yorkshire Terrier named Samantha. Yet this is cat country: the headquarters of Theodor Seuss Geisel, alias Dr. Seuss, the beloved artist author of children’s books.

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His latest book, *The Lorax*, already has solicited some interesting comment. “I know my grandchildren will enjoy it,” wrote former President Lyndon Baines Johnson in response to an advance copy, “but no more than will I.”

The new book features such typical Seussism as “Grickle-grass,” “Truffula trees,” “Thneeds” and of course, the Lorax, “who speaks for the trees.” It seems more an adult book than one for children. Its message is serious: clean up the environment before it’s too late<sup>578</sup> (Vils).

1971, *Seuss for the Goose Is Seuss for the Gander*<sup>579</sup>

*Down the Rabbit Hole: Adventures and Misadventures in the Realm of Children’s Literature*; a book written by Selma G. Lanes, analyzed and critiqued Dr. Seuss and his literary works.

And on a day that I remember it came to me that “reading” was not “Cat Lay on the Mat”, but a means to everything that would make me happy. RUDYARD KIPLING, *Something of Myself*.

Dr. Seuss, born Theodor Seuss Geisel, has won a formidable book-buying-public by providing anxiety-filled diversion for listeners and readers at precisely the “Cat Lay on the Mat” stage of development. As it often is in life, this anxiety is disguised and

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<sup>578</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: continued with Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss; the audience seemed to be both little and big – even a former President endorsed the book; Theodor was using his platform as a beloved artist and author to spread a message of hope in that it was not too late to clean-up the environment.

<sup>579</sup> “What is good for the goose is good for the gander”; a familiar English saying referring to accepting what is good for oneself as it has been given to others; a difficult lesson to learn. Yet, this title, “Seuss for the Goose Is Seuss for the Gander” gave a hint that what is good for adults, may not be good for children. Lanes wrote clearly of the power of Dr. Seuss in a child’s world; it was not to give rest but to give happiness. Perhaps adults read to relax, children read for the fun of it.

controlled by laughter. While his books are a far cry from what Kipling meant by “everything that would make me happy,” Seuss has managed, almost single-handedly, to provide a safety valve<sup>580</sup> for the overscheduled, overburdened and overstimulated child of modern civilization. In recognizing that children’s craving for excitement, in their books as in their lives, is often merely the means for releasing pent-up anxiety, Seuss cannily manages to magnify and multiply the sense of suspense in his stories, not so much by the ingenuity of his plots as by a clever and relentless piling on of gratuitous anxiety until the child is fairly ready to cry “uncle” and settle for any solution, however mundane, that will end his at once marvelous, exquisite and finally unbearable tension... Seuss simply releases his grip and all tension, like trapped air, is freed.

... his first book for children, in 1937, *And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street*, was a prototype, low-key version of all Seuss plots and characters to follow. The hero, Marco, is – like his creator – a varnisher of truth. Despite his father’s stern warning to:

Stop telling such outlandish tales

Stop turning minnows into whales

(precisely the talents that have won the book’s author a firm place beside Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll is one of the inspired creators of nonsense in the English language), he cannot. Left to his own devices on a walk down Mulberry Street, Marco finds it impossible to suppress his gift for brightening up reality...<sup>581</sup>

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<sup>580</sup> Theodor’s books were compared to a safety-valve, a place to release steam; here it is for children who are overscheduled, overburdened and overstimulated; sounds much like an adult’s world. Dr. Seuss created an exciting place where laughter is experienced with suspense. Laughter is said to be as good as medicine: “A cheerful heart is good medicine” (*The Holy Bible Proverbs 17:22*).

<sup>581</sup> Theodor brightened up children’s reality with his books of hope and imagination; along with it he delivered truth, morals in a sideways fashion. Like his real father, Marco’s father warned him from telling outlandish tales; but Theodor like Marco had an imagination that made reality into a great parade. In everyday life there was fun and wonder to be had: Freshness of appreciation B-2; and appreciating over and over the basic goods of life with awe and wonder: Peak experiences B-3: limitless horizons that open the vision; especially through the mind of a child. Helen said that Theodor never grew up; he kept the mind of a child; rightfully so and thankfully so for all the children and adults who have benefited from Dr. Seuss and his outlandish tales!

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Why does Marco grow “red as a beet?” Because adults, alas, are incapable of understanding what gives children deep pleasure, and it is always embarrassing to be forced to lie, even to keep the peace. The anxiety in Seuss’s books always arises from the flouting of authority, parental or societal. It is central to the Seuss formula that the action of all his books with children as protagonist take place either (1) in absence of grownups, or (2) in the imagination.<sup>582</sup>

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Seuss’s books are obsessed with having “lots of good fun.” What Seuss means by fun, however, is the sort of thing which, if it took place in real life, would place an anxiety burden on most children impossible for them to bear. Genuine fun to small children - like squeezing all the toothpaste out of inviting new tubes or taking apart Aunt Zelda’s gift alarm clock - is always accompanied by anxiety because retribution is sure to follow. Only on rare occasions in life, therefore, will a sensible child yield to such temptation. But when the Cat in the Hat says, “We can have lots of good fun that is funny” (by which he really means fun that is forbidden), the child can sit back and experience genuine pleasure, knowing that anxiety building up in him is vicarious and that no punishment will follow Seuss’s forbidden pleasures.

Every detail in a Seuss illustration is calculated to add its bit to increasing the child’s vicarious anxiety. Nervous projections and curlicues wriggle about everywhere. No drawing detail seems to be at rest... It is just the sort of world no child’s mother would put up with for one instant. The greatest pleasure in Seuss is derived from the sense of having a season pass to utter chaos with no personal responsibility for any of it.

Seuss has a perfect understanding of grownups’ love of order and the rule of their

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<sup>582</sup> Back to the title with the words associated with Dr. Seuss: goose and gander; Lanes was pushing the point that children are different than adults and need different relief forms of fun. Why do children lie? To please an adult. Utter chaos to an adult seems like confusion and there is enough in an adult’s world, why would they want to read books like this? But children do! It brings excitement and adventure with no rules from adults; therefore, the absence of grownups and the imagination are noted in Theodor’s books, one is free to be a child, to be detached C-1, from the battle of adulthood, to be creative C-2, to be spontaneous C-3: to be free – whatever one is at the moment; that moment is called childhood.

laws – and of the enormous anxiety burden this places on small children everywhere.<sup>583</sup>

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It is a language children instinctively understand and appreciate for its honesty... He is not afraid of contractions or inelegant phraseology. It is living language he uses to rich effect. Yet Seuss can turn a phrase with the best of authors. Consider his Grinch, a character unflinchingly mean because “his heart was two sizes too small.”<sup>584</sup>

There is a sameness of rhyme, occasionally even of ideas, in Seuss now that the number of his books is pushing into the thirties, his audience has not dwindled because the good Doctor’s inventiveness of language and zany hyperbole never flags. There are few places where a child can get a better sense of richness of language, the infinite possibilities it offers a lively imagination.<sup>585</sup>

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It’s hard to resist watching for what will spring next from the mind of a man who would feed and “obsk” a vegetarian diet of “corn on the cobsk.”

In a day when children’s books are almost all unrelievedly beautiful and elevating, his are intentionally rough-drawn, tough-talking and almost downright ugly.

They have no need to insinuate their way into our affections. A thing of beauty may be a joy forever, but Seuss is always a joy for whatever moments we choose to devote to him... Seuss’s guaranteed audience, of mass-market proportions, keeps production costs down and the price of his books reasonable. We not only get our money’s worth, but are left with a reservoir of sane thoughts and an appetite for his next outlandish invention. Long live Theodor Seuss Geisel, physician into the psyche of the beleaguered modern child!<sup>586</sup> (Lanes 79 – 89)

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<sup>583</sup> Message: let a child be a child, in imagination and thought.

<sup>584</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: a deep feeling of identification out of compassion; Theodor was honest with himself regarding his heart and was aware of the social condition of humanity, a heart too small. Honest with his feelings allowed Dr. Seuss to create books on touchy issues, all packaged with humor A-1.

<sup>585</sup> True inventiveness from Theodor’s creativity C-2. His love and power of the English language was and still is shared with the children, giving hope that with their imagination, if left to dream and fly, will see the realm of infinite possibilities.

<sup>586</sup> Lanes gave hope to children through Theodor Seuss Geisel: the Seuss - not the goose.

1972, September 17 – Top Children’s Author ‘Dr. Seuss’ Tells How

In *The Springfield Republican* newspaper, Digby Diehl, in the Books section, interviewed Theodor Geisel and asked where did all his ideas come from.

Who would guess that the wizard behind the bizarre world of Sneetches, Grinches, Loraxes, Ooblecks, multiplying hats, strange cats, flying elephants and Bartholomew Cubbins would turn out to be an adult? Yes, Ted “Dr. Seuss” Geisel - the world’s best-selling children’s author – is a witty, sophisticated 68 year-old English literature scholar who chain-smokes, drinks “bullshots” (a mixed drink using beef bouillon) and has a wry sense of humor. His 38 books, written under the nom de plume of Dr. Seuss, have sold more than 50 million copies, outdistancing Lewis Carroll, Beatrix Potter, the Grimm Brothers and Hans Christian Andersen and the fantasies of children. “The Cat in the Hat” alone has grossed over \$4 million.

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Question: You’ve written 38 children’s books, where do all your ideas come from?

Geisel: That’s the \$60 million dollar question I’ve never been able to answer. Some of them are accidents. For example, “Horton Hatches the Egg” was a lucky accident.<sup>587</sup> I was in my New York studio one day, sketching on transparent tracing paper, and I had the window open. The wind simply took a picture of an elephant that I’d drawn and put it on top of another sheet of paper that had a tree on it. All I had to do was figure out what the elephant was doing on that tree.

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Q: Some years ago, the theory was advanced that children should be taught to read much earlier than primary school. Do you agree with that?

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<sup>587</sup> Throughout Theodor’s life, accidents seemed to guide his way: an accident to go to Oxford in that he told his dad he won a grant to go; an accident in walking on the right side of the street in New York, in 1937, when he met Mike McClintock, a friend from Dartmouth who had just become juvenile editor of Vanguard Press and who published Theodor’s first book; accidentally the wind blew the elephant on top of the tree on his desk. Theodor had an inner compass which he listened to well and trusted: Autonomous D-2: an inner directness; it is an intangible quality; sense of these people being their own bosses; not being a weather vane; their own invention; he followed his own star.



Geisel: No. I agree that children can be taught, some more than others, to read at a young age. But I think that the proponents of that theory are counting too heavily on science. About as far as I want to go is to give kids the opportunity to have books if they are excited about them and want them. They should be allowed to find the joys of reading. But I would never try to teach it.<sup>588</sup>

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Q: I know you once wrote a novel that has not yet been published. Do you have any ambitions remaining in that direction?

Geisel: No, I think that I'm finished with adults. I did have an adult book published once, in 1937, called, "*The Seven Lady Godivas*," but it was a fantastic failure. Possibly that was due to the fact that I can't draw naked women. I get the knees in the wrong places."<sup>589</sup> (Diehl)

1974, June – Dr. Seuss and the Naked Ladies: Blowing the Lid Off the Private Life of America's Most Beloved Author

Carolyn See, for *Esquire* wrote about sex and how it "has played a key part in his life, his work, his failures and success; although his youth was comparatively austere."

In March 1969, ... Theodor Seuss Geisel, the celebrated "Dr. Seuss," creator of grinches and hippogriffs, foxes in socks and cats in hats, wrote a five-page outline for a dirty book. He sent it to Robert Bernstein, successor of Bennett Cerf, and Seuss's own editor at Random House. Bernstein blanched, it is to be supposed, made emergency phone calls and called emergency meetings, all to discuss this more than dangerous aberration to which one of their leading, and certainly most wholesome, writers had succumbed. Dr. Seuss stayed home, meanwhile, didn't answer the phone, and laughed himself sick.<sup>590</sup>

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<sup>588</sup> How young is too young to teach a child to read the question was asked; Theodor encouraged finding the joy in reading; that is the key. Joy in life is a great power. Theodor created with the purpose of entertaining himself; he told how: finding joy in reading – as he did as a young boy.

<sup>589</sup> Theodor was comfortable with himself; he trusted himself and the life mission within, to draw for children, not adults.

<sup>590</sup> Honesty: A-1 Sense of humor: ludicrous situation of the human situation; Theodor used humor constantly to poke fun at himself and the expectations of those around him.

“I finally called Bernstein, after about a week, and let him off the hook. He’d caught on by that time anyway.”

Dr. Seuss lives in La Jolla, one of the most elegant and affluent beach resorts in Southern California, in an old observation post at the very highest point in the community. He has transformed it into a dwelling both Italianate and cozy. A miniature fountain tinkles in his richly furnished living room; a dozen or so “Seuss-Hepplewhite” chairs – each one with a unique Seuss character carved into a medallion at its back - cluster in the dim and formal dining room. A swimming pool, blue as the banks of the voraciously blooming petunias which surround it, awaits a pleasure of the master of the house.

Dr. Seuss is having lunch – a perfect soufflé, bleached Belgian asparagus with a soupçon of capers. He uses a gold fork. When from time to time his attention wanders, he looks out his window, which commands a view of the entire Pacific.

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It was then that sex first revealed its hydra head to Dr. Seuss, leading him down a primrose path to the “most expensive failure” of his career. Seuss was inspired to right an ancient wrong, to set the world straight about what really happened to the Lady Godiva, and thus, in 1939, wrote his third (and first adult) book, *The Seven Lady Godivas*, which took the position that there were seven Ladies Godiva... there was not one Peeping Tom... but that Peeping was the old family name of a respectable English family.

.....

“The book failed,” Dr. Seuss recalls, pensive, “because for one reason, I can’t get their knees right.” There is something left undone in the chest area of the Ladies Godiva too, but in 1939, and to a child, the ladies were racy fare indeed. Librarians across the country, conditioned to think of Dr. Seuss as a children’s writer, put *The Seven Lady Godivas* next to *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*. Across the nation there was a rash of veritable tiny riots as thousands of genuine peeping toms scrambled to check out the book.

Grown-ups, on the other hand, were far from crazy about it. In 1939 America was feeling too blue to be cheered up by pictures of silly ladies with no nipples and funny knees. The book had an ignominious end; it was remaindered in the then famous chain of

Schulte's Cigar Stores across New York City. Dr. Seuss turned his brooding genius to the burgeoning war effort.

Few people know the part that Major Seuss played in that worldwide drama... He was then placed "in charge of malaria," and finally, "promoted to syphilis." Again, sex—and its consequences—dealt Seuss a crushing blow.

"They wanted me to make an anti-V.D. film... one that the men wouldn't laugh at. It was, I believe, an impossible task... The film made no sense whatever. As far as I know it was never shown."

In 1945, the war almost over, Major Seuss made a last contribution to the war effort by "...inventing the atomic bomb. It was during the period after V.E. Day and before the Japanese surrender. The problem was to keep soldiers interested in the entire project. My assignment, together with a team of other artists and writers, was to make a film which would motivate American boys to stay in the Army. The previous Sunday, leafing listlessly through *The New York Times*, I had come across an article which mentioned a 'source of energy so strong that the amount contained in a glass of water might wipe out Minneapolis!' My colleagues and I sat down and wrote a scenario around this then hypothetical but certainly interesting statement." Seuss sent the script to the Pentagon, for what he thought would be routine approval. Instead, he was contacted by some of the highest and most hysterical brass in the nation. They swore Seuss to secrecy and directed him "to destroy his source of information" instanter [instantly]. Seuss got together a platoon of enlisted men stuffed the offending Times in a wastebasket and ceremoniously lit it, his men meanwhile holding their guns in their left hands so that they might give the Boy Scout salute with their right.<sup>591</sup>

Exhausted by the stresses of wartime life, the newly civilian Dr. Seuss decided to move to La Jolla, California, a peaceful resort on one of the most beautiful of our Western shores, where he bought that deserted observation tower on the highest point of land in the community. He planned to devote the rest of his career and his life to writing children's books; in those days, let us remember, a peculiar modest enterprise. There was

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<sup>591</sup> Theodor again used his sense of humor A-1: to laugh at a good natured accident of wit; the cartoons were not meant to hurt people or the government, yet they, Theodor with the other artists and writers, had no idea of the direness of the situation and its forthcoming reality. Again, the visionary, Theodor, predicted a foreboding future.

fun in writing children's books, of course, and prestige enough – if they were literate. But it was impossible to make a living writing children's books, simply because there weren't enough children.

Sex, again, changed the good doctor's life– sex and the G.I. Bill. Thanks to that generous legislation, every returning war veteran could get married and have all the kids he wanted. Moreover, each new father could afford to go to college, thus developing a respect for books which he might then pass onto the next generation. This happy combination of social history and the mass indulgence in fleshy desire made Dr. Seuss rich. He began to build on his modest observation post, room by stately room, until it became the kindly palace it is today. His industrious pen turned *Thidwick the Big Hearted Moose*, *Bartholomew and the Oobleck*, *Horton Hears a Who!*, *On Beyond Zebra!*, *Yertle the Turtle*, and many, many, many more.

As television contracts rolled in, and invitations from Presidents, and book awards and film awards and fascinating people calling on the phone, Dr. Seuss forgot about such things as his melancholy first novel which continually lapsed into Italian, or the days when he invented the A-bomb concurrent with a dedicated man at Oak Ridge. He even forgot about sex until that recent, unchecked whim which prompted him to write the five-page outline.

Dr. Seuss says now that he can't remember the plot of that five-page outline and wouldn't tell me if he could.

“It was awful,” he says “outrageous. The worst you can imagine.” ...

“I told Bernstein to destroy that outline,” Seuss says, ... “I told him that the outline must never get out of his hands.”

One only hopes that Bernstein had enough *éclat* to destroy the outline in something approaching the manner that Seuss destroyed his A-bomb documents. One hopes as well– shall we say it? – That Bernstein had the *savoir-faire*, the *sens commun*, to keep a carbon copy.<sup>592</sup> (Fensch, Thomas. *Of Sneetches* 53 – 56)

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<sup>592</sup> The humorous tale of how life works, oddly yet strangely for one's good; everything working together for Theodor's good. Life had a mission D-1, for him to complete and with the circumstances of life, his path was laid out before him, the good and the bad - to write children's books, not adult books.

1976, February 15 – And, Dear Dr. Seuss, the Whole World’s in Love with Yeuss

George Kane for the *Rocky Mountain News*, on Valentine’s Day wrote why the world loved Dr. Seuss.

Once Upon a Time in the mythical kingdom of Standard Oil of New Jersey there lived a writer/artist named Theodor Geisel.

He struggled and struggled and one day his dreams, ensconced in the ethereal but necessary world of corporate advertising (which is what he wrote for a living), came closer to reality.

His telephone rang. It was an inside line, Direct from “upstairs.” The voice of The Director said: “Ted. It is up to you to design our corporate Christmas card. It must have an appropriate message.”

Being Dec. 1, Ted hurried but still took the time to do His Best. Because the reality of Real Writing loomed. Do Good and Good will be done unto you.<sup>593</sup>

.....

Dr. Seuss is a legend—even around the kingdom of Standard Oil of New Jersey. For it was Standard which produced Flit, a bug-killer, and Geisel who produced for Standard to slogan “Quick! Henry! The Flit!” which carried the ad campaign for 17 years.

.....

Dr. Seuss/Geisel (he holds a doctorate of humane letters from Dartmouth) is unpretentious to the point that he seems totally underwhelmed by, if not oblivious to, his own talents. For he is a spinner of tales which occupy two levels – a writer of allegories

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<sup>593</sup> Summarized by Kane, writing for the *Rocky Mountain News*, on Valentine’s Day, a brief story told how Theodor Geisel had a dream, to write and illustrate; one day the dream came true when he received an “inside” call, Direct from “upstairs” (The Director – in caps); he was told to write an appropriate message and to do his Best because good writing was imminent, on the horizon. If he would do this good, good would come back to him. Kane wrote as if it was a message, a forth telling. As Theodor with Dr. Seuss took on his life work D-1, good was granted: he received his doctorate from Dartmouth (he would be given eight honorary doctorates and many other awards to follow) and was weighed in with the greats: Hans Christian Andersen, Aesop and Jonathan Swift.

who has had possibly only three equals: Hans Christian Andersen, Aesop and Jonathan Swift.

.....

For Random House, he has produced the books which have made him famous world-wide (with the exception of his only adult book), and he has been called upon to ghost-write occasionally for that publishing house when another children's author failed to meet deadlines.

.....

It takes him a year, as an average, to write a book – seemingly a very long time for a man to put simple rhyming words together. But the impact of those words is unmistakable.<sup>594</sup>

At his autograph session in Denver, adults in their mid-40s kept him at his cramped station 2 ½ hours overtime. He loved it. Denver, he said, it's like Cleveland – “a book town.”<sup>595</sup>

.....

The most successful writer of children's books in the world (Dr. Seuss has sold 50 million copies and has been translated into a dozen languages), Geisel has no formula for writing other than his own.<sup>596</sup>

.....

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<sup>594</sup> “Unmistakable impact”, Theodor's life mission D-1: required much of his energy, touching society with not just funny stories with zany characters but with lifelong messages. A year to create a message, must be taken seriously as Dr. Seuss aka Theodor was a visionary man.

<sup>595</sup> Theodor was a Brat Book author but now adults were also embracing Dr. Seuss; they comprehended the depth that lay within the humor, in the man and his creations.

<sup>596</sup> “Other than his own”: his own was who he was, the truth that lay within came forth in his own style, his own formula. Theodor was comfortable with who he was: he was honest; he was aware; he was free; and he trusted himself. It took time for this to develop, an ongoing self-actualization.

Theodor Seuss Geisel, the gentle genius who has brought delight to three generations of children, ironically had no children of his own...<sup>597</sup> (Fensch, Thomas. *Of Sneetches* 57 – 60)

1976, April – The Beginnings of Dr. Seuss: A Conversation with Theodor S. Geisel

Edward Connery Lathem, ED. interviewed Theodor in an article for the *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*, the alma mater of Theodor:

“Dr. Seuss” is of course a pseudonym, one known to millions upon millions of adults and children alike, in the United States and throughout the world.<sup>598</sup>

.....

In 1955 Ted Geisel returned to Dartmouth in order that his alma mater might, fondly and proudly, bestow upon him an honorary degree. President John Sloan Dickey’s citation on that occasion proclaimed, in part:

“You’re an affinity for flying elephants and man-eating mosquitoes makes us rejoice you were not around to be Director of Admissions on Mr. Noah’s Ark. But our rejoicing in your career is far more positive: as author and artist you single-handedly have stood as St. George between a generation of exhausted parents and the demon dragon of unexhausted children on a rainy day... As always with the best of humor, behind the fun there has been intelligence, kindness, and a feel for humankind.”<sup>599</sup>

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<sup>597</sup> Just like many stories, there is often a happy ending; Theodor, a gentle genius, did as “The Director” ordered and illustrated and wrote allegories for children, making him the most successful writer of children’s books in the world; and he did it in his own style, taking the time to do his best. He listened to his inner voice, found autonomy D-2 and brought delight to generations of children.

<sup>598</sup> A pseudonym known to millions and millions, children and adults, the world over; Theodor Geisel better known to these millions as Dr. Seuss; the two dichotomies worked together to fulfill the destiny within Theodor; to bring joy and a love of reading to children.

<sup>599</sup> President John Sloan Dickey, of Dartmouth College placed on Theodor great honor in giving him his first honorary doctorate (1955) and saying he was a man who went in the great divide between adults and children, as well he was a man who had the best of humor A-1, and behind the fun, intelligence, kindness, and a feel for humankind, social interest A-2.

1976, November 18 – DR. SEUSS: Fanciful Creatures, Nonsensical Rhymes

Jeanne Lesem, UPI Family Editor, wrote for *The Springfield Morning Union* about how Theodor preferred to stay at home rather than go out in public appearances and his opinion on illiteracy in the public schools.

When he was about 25 years old, Theodor S. Geisel was scared off the speakers' podium by a group of first graders who had come to a Cleveland bookshop to hear him talk about his newest book and drawing pictures for them.

#### Rhymes With Goose

Today, at 72, Geisel is probably the world's favorite doctor with millions of children all over the world.<sup>600</sup>

.....

A tall, handsome, gray-haired, gray-bearded man, his immensely popular books are published in a variety of languages in the Orient as well as the western world. They are landmarks in children's literature, full of fanciful creatures and joyous, sometimes nonsensical rhymes with a very serious purpose: teaching children to read and learn and use their imagination.<sup>601</sup>

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<sup>600</sup> Time and making wise choices are essential elements in self-actualization; it is an on-going process. Maslow wrote in *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*:

Let us think of life as a process of choices, one after another. At each point there is a progression choice and a regression choice. There may be a movement toward defense, toward safety, toward being afraid; but over on the other side, there is the growth choice. To make the growth choice instead of the fear choice a dozen times a day is to move a dozen times a day toward self-actualization. Self-actualization is an ongoing process; it means making each of the many single choices about whether to lie or be honest, whether to steal or not to steal at a particular point, and it means to make each of these choices as a growth choice. This is movement toward self-actualization. (44)

Theodor, now 72, had been making these choices toward self-actualization and the result was he became the "world's favorite doctor with millions of children all over the world."

<sup>601</sup> Teaching children to read, to learn and to use their imagination, mixed with nonsensical rhymes and joyous and fanciful creatures, created a landmark, signed by the one and only Dr. Seuss. The serious mixed with the fun, like Theodor Geisel mixed with Dr. Seuss, two opposites working together to become the world's favorite doctor - brilliant, self-actualizing.



He is such a relaxed, delightful conversationalist that it is hard to believe that story about the bookstore audience. It was his first public appearance as a writer...<sup>602</sup>

.....

So it was back to the drawing board, a place he obviously prefers to any other occupation.<sup>603</sup>

### War Against Word Lists

“I’m having a war against kids learning by word lists,” he said. He thinks one major reason for illiteracy is schools’ removing children from the phonics system entirely. “I think children can read anything if you take the trouble to write clear sentences.”

.....

Geisel said he uses long words deliberately. It gives a child a chance to ask, “Mama, what’s a Zacharias?” Then they stop and have a discussion about it.

“Not enough mothers are doing that,” he said. “Down in New Zealand where I have gone twice, there is no illiteracy. They are all middle class English, they are in the habit of reading, and they still read to their kids at night.”<sup>604</sup>

“I don’t know how much television is at fault (in children’s reading problems). It consumes so much time when they could be reading.”

One thing saddens the good Dr. Seuss. “There are an awful lot of children we are not reaching because of the price of books.”

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<sup>602</sup> Time was needed for Theodor to become relaxed and accepting of himself.

<sup>603</sup> His drawing desk, a place where Theodor could be truly himself: honest, aware, free and trusting what he created – self-actualization.

<sup>604</sup> Theodor was and still is going into the homes, via his books, and encouraging parents to read to their children; it was not enough just to create the books, his message was serious as was he; he wanted to be sure children were learning, reading and using their imagination; television was his concern, that it was replacing reading; parents read to your children! A-2 Social interest: he had compassion and wanted to do something to help.

Geisel aims to teach not just reading skills but respect for the world around us. In *The Lorax* it “definitely started out to make a point about environment.”<sup>605</sup> (Lesem)

1977, March 1 – Dr. Seuss’s at 72 – Going Like 60

This is the last of the three interviews by *The Saturday Evening Post*; this time Donald Freeman interviewed Theodor, looking back at the last forty years since his first book, *And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street* – 1937, and to what the future held for Theodor:

The Who behind Who-ville is busier than ever, hurling papers and tossing drawings like a tormented Grinch, until he has wrought his next 50 pages of spellbinding magic.

With his crinkly-soft eyes, his grandly equine nose, and the loping mooselike walk, he looks for all the world as though he had sprung full-blown from his own drawing board. When you see Theodor Seuss Geisel plain, all that seems to be missing is his signature below, two words warmly familiar to millions of children the world over and their grateful parents. The two words are – Dr. Seuss.<sup>606</sup>

.....

As he looks back on a lifetime of creativity, Ted (Dr. Seuss) Geisel, a perfectionist with every stroke of the pen, sums up the body of his work with characteristic humility. “I just wish it were better,” he says. “But it’s all as good as I could do.”<sup>607</sup> Is there anyone who could have done better, this side of Who-ville, not far

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<sup>605</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: over the environment; Theodor was again using his platform to address pollution and caring for the environment.

<sup>606</sup> Theodor Seuss Geisel alone, was missing Dr. Seuss. Maslow wrote that self-actualization is: ...desire for self-fulfillment, namely, to the tendency for him to become actualized in what he is potentially. This tendency might be phrased as the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming. The specific form that these needs will take will of course vary from person to person. (Maslow *A Theory* 7-8)

The form for Theodor to self-actualize was under the pseudonym Dr. Seuss. The two were inseparable.

<sup>607</sup> Humility, a great characteristic to keep pride from blinding honesty, awareness, freedom and trust. One of the Being-values self-actualizing people search for all their lives is 7-V perfection: nothing superfluous, nothing lacking, everything in its right place, just-rightness, just-so-ness. Theodor was known for his perfection, with colors, each word written, each stroke of the brush, the printing process, the paper, the price... each rock in place in his garden. He gave his best, just as The Director, with the Inside line had directed Theodor years ago.

from the River Wah-hoo, near the wilds of Hippo-no-Hungus, on the way to Solla Sollew? (Freeman).

1978, May 12 – Dr. Seuss’s Green-Eggs-and-Ham World

Judith Frutig, wrote for *The Christian Science Monitor*, about the lessons learned from Theodor’s tales of adventure:

La Jolla, California - Just about the time sleeping children climb into bed, sober-minded adults from here to New Zealand can be heard nightly reading such logical absurdities as: “I like to box ... so every day I box a gox. In yellow socks I box my gox. I box in yellow gox box socks.”

Anatomically outrageous, bursting with adventure and humor, rhymed with repetitive wit, and laced with imagination and a gentle moral, there are Nerkles, Sneetches, and Nutches (“who live in small caves known as nitches for hutches”).

.....

These are the cuddly – sometimes creepy – creatures of Dr. Seuss, whose 40-odd books have sold 85 million copies around the world.

Forty years of imaginative verse – set off by his own quixotic illustrations – have firmly implanted Theodor Seuss Geisel... in the reluctant role of grandfather to the saucer-eyed set.<sup>608</sup>

Along the way, it has established him as king of the kids, made him a multimillionaire, bestowed on him an honorary degree as doctor of humane letters and... built his airy glass-enclosed house atop the highest hill in this flower-festooned southern California resort community.

It also has left him to sit through countless well-intentioned breakfast of green eggs and ham. “Deplorable stuff,” he says. “The worst time was on a yacht in six-foot seas.”

If that is not enough, Dr. Seuss is branching out. In addition to television, records, and Seuss toys, there is a new book out in September, and the Children's Theater in Minneapolis is preparing to put on the first stage production of *The 500 Hats of*

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<sup>608</sup> Theodor, though he had no children of his own, other than Chrysanthemum-Pearl (a fictional child of the Geisel’s who did receive birthday cards and gifts), was now considered a grandfather. A great honor was bestowed.

*Bartholomew Cubbins.*

At the undisputed top of his profession, Mr. Geisel remains a charming unassuming man, tense in an interview, often apologetic, frequently asking his questioner whether he is providing the proper material.<sup>609</sup>

.....

His children's books come to life along the expansive and cork-lined walls of his study overlooking a cool, blue Pacific Ocean, where Mr. Geisel is even now preparing his newest assault against dull children's literature.<sup>610</sup>

In story-board form, he traces his drawings, first in black-and-white, then with colored pencils, fashioning the words and pictures into one idea, then fastening them with tacks as they progress. His desk is cluttered with colored pencils; he is an artist first, a writer second.

The new book is another adventure of the cocky Cat in the Hat. The title: *I Can Read with My Eyes Shut*. Scheduled for publication in September, the book is being finished with scrupulous detail for the printer, with each color carefully labeled and numbered on every inch of page.<sup>611</sup>

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<sup>609</sup> King of the kids, eating green eggs and ham, top of his profession, multimillionaire, still Theodor was a charming, unassuming man, shy in interviews, asking himself if he could do better; there was something inside this man that pushed him, drove him to excellence; never sitting on his laurels, not boastful or proud. His life mission D-1: was indeed a constitutional duty, a calling that when he found Dr. Seuss, made him happiest and albeit very successful. Humility kept Theodor Geisel's feet on the ground.

<sup>610</sup> Children's books coming to life – blue Pacific Ocean – assault against dull children's literature: a strong picture was given by Judith Frutig, the author of this article. The blue ocean waters moving along with the characters being drawn on the desk, placed upon the wall, with words that interact with the drawings, to give life, all in an assault against dull children's literature. The article further went on to talk about television and Theodor's thoughts on it:

“I personally don't think that television is the great evil demon it's made out to be,” he says. “The average kids know more geography, more politics than their parents did at their age. The trouble is they can't spell.

“Teaching a child to read is a family setup,” he says. “It's the business of having books around the house, not forcing them. Parent should have 20 books stacked on tables or set around the living room. The average kid will pick one up, find something interesting. And pretty soon he's reading.” (79 – 80)

Theodor wanted to write the books that were interesting, not dull, thus his assault.

<sup>611</sup> The entire process of Theodor's books was described, from conception to print; he was a master of precision, every step of the way Theodor was involved with; he truly did his best. The

.....  
 The secret of his success, he says, is overwriting. “For a 60-page book, I’ll probably write 500 pages,” he says— and toss out 90 percent or more of his drawings. “I think that’s why it works. I winnow out.”

.....  
 With a deep and growing interest in the reading habits of children – his books are available on four continents – a major Geisel concern is learning how to interest youngsters in reading.<sup>612</sup>

..... (Fensch, Thomas *Of Sneetches* 77 - 81)

1979, May 21 – Dr. Seuss at 75: Grinch, Cat in Hat, Wocket and Generations of Kids in His Pocket

Cynthia Gorney, for *The Washington Post* wrote of a man whose target was for perfection.

.....  
 Geisel looks up from his drawing board and smiles – just a little, because a man is taking his picture and he is never gotten used to people who want to take his picture.

Dr. Seuss, American Institution, wild orchestrator of plausible nonsense, booster of things that matter (like fair play, kindness, Drum–Tummied Snumms, Hooded Klopfers, and infinite winding spools of birthday hotdogs), detractor of things that don’t (like bullying, snobbery, condescension, gravity and walls), is 75 years old this year.

As usual, he is somewhat embarrassed by all the fuss.

“It’s getting awful,” Geisel says, “because I meet old, old people, who can

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B-values Maslow wrote of were blatant in Theodor’s life and work: 3-V Beauty: rightness, form, richness, wholeness, perfection, completion; 7-V Perfection: nothing lacking, everything in its right place, just-rightness; 7a-V Necessity: it must be just that way, not changed in the slightest way, and it is good that way; 8-V Completion: it’s finished, nothing missing or lacking, fulfillment of destiny; 9a-V Order: perfectly arranged; and 11-V Richness: complexity, totality, intricacy.

<sup>612</sup> A-2 Social interest: Theodor had a desire to help children read; he was writing books but now was even more interested in their habits and how to grab their interest to read; he was involved and passionate about reading and children. He acted as a grandfather, passionate about his grandchildren; concerned about their future - even though he often said he felt uncomfortable around children.

scarcely walk, and they say, ‘I was brought up on your books.’ It’s an awful shock.”

There is probably not a single children’s book author in America who has matched the impact, popularity and international fame of spare, bearded California prodigy who signs his books Dr. Seuss.

Since 1936, when Ted Geisel the advertising illustrator first wrote *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*, his books have sold 80 million copies in this country alone.<sup>613</sup>

.....

The late Bennett Cerf - at a time when his Random House writers included William Faulkner and John O’Hare – is on record as having called Geisel the only genius of the lot.

The drawings, manuscripts, and half-formed doodles of Dr. Seuss... are kept in locked stacks of the Special Collections Division of the UCLA library... his books are published in about 45 countries outside the United States, including Brazil, Japan, the entire British commonwealth and the Netherlands, where “There’s a Wocket in my Pocket” translates to “Ik heb een Gak in Myn Zak!”

On his last visit to Australia, his plane was met by reporters, television cameras, person-sized Cats in Hats, small children with “I love you, Dr. Seuss” badges, and a newspaper headline that read “Dr. Seuss Is Here.” An official in the Afghan embassy sent him a collection of brilliant blue sculpted animals with mysterious shapes and corkscrew necks, all made according to traditional design in a tiny Afghanistan town whose name Geisel could never pronounce, but which he says has been unofficially renamed Seussville. “Somebody discovered they were stealing my stuff 3000 years ago,” Geisel says, gazing down admiringly at a small sort of yak. “They’re pretty good Seuss though.”

.....

He is a private, engaging, intensely driven man, with a lean and sharp nosed look

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<sup>613</sup> American Institution, referring to Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss, the creator of nonsense and things that matter; this man was in shock at the generations who had read his books; yet, he was still humbled by having his picture taken. How does one keep humility so close while at the same time fame becomes you? It was a mission greater than himself; he was the instrument through which greatness flowed; he was humbled with his humanity; this was a key to his self-actualization.

that gives him an air of severity at first. His house is scattered with his own paintings and busts of creatures unlike anything anybody ever saw before, and as he leads visitors through the halls he makes congenial introductions, as though presenting boarders: “This is a green cat in the Uleaborg, Finland ... this is a cat who was born on the wrong side of town ... this is my religious period. This is Archbishop Katz ... this is called, ‘Good god, do I look as old as that?’”

He will not wear conventional neck ties – only bow ties. He reads paperback books – history, biography, detective novels – so voraciously that his wife makes regular bookstore runs (often to a certain store that saves new books for him in the special Geisel cubbyhole) and then stashes the paperbacks away so she can hand him new ones in the evening, one at a time. He reads for distraction. He needs it. When he is at work, the names, the verse, the story line, the colors, the shapes and sizes of his extraordinary characters all press upon him.<sup>614</sup> He tapes the working drawings to the wall and stares at them, rearranging, reading aloud to himself, feeling the rhythm of the words.

.....

Once in a while there is an echo of something like anguish in Geisel’s accounts of the workings of his own imagination – some constant, furious homage to the 1902 rifle target, its bullseye perforated by his father’s exacting shots, that Geisel keeps mounted on the wall.

“To remind me of perfection,” he says.

He will sometimes work late into the night, or break off into an entirely different project, when some flaw in the book begins to gnaw at him. He spent a full year struggling over the smallest gopher-like creature called the Lorax. “Once he was mechanized. That didn’t work. He was big at one point. I did the obvious thing of making him green, shrinking him, growing him.”

And then? “I looked at him and he looked like a Lorax.”

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<sup>614</sup> Trust: D-1 Life mission: a task to fulfill, a problem outside themselves that requires much of their energy; Theodor’s life mission, to help children read, to teach children to learn, to use their imagination, to write interesting, not dull literature pressed upon him, was constant; it became the defining characteristic of who he was. And yet, at times, he needed a rest, a break, to breathe, to regain energy for the task that compelled him to keep drawing and writing.

But the bulk of Geisel's audience will always be children. "Writing for adults doesn't really interest me anymore," he said. "I think I found the form in writing for kids, with which I can say everything I have to say a little more distinctly than if I had to put it in adult pros."<sup>615</sup>

He pulls from a file some typewritten pages from his new book. "You want to try reading one?" Geisel asks.

His visitor, reading slowly, makes a stab at it:

One year we had a Christmas brunch  
 With Merry Christmas Mush to munch.  
 But I don't think you'd care for such  
 We didn't like to munch mush much.

There is a rather bad moment of tongue-twisting at the end, and Geisel looks delighted. "These things are written way over the ability of first grade kids, and I think it's going to work," he said. "They're stinkers, (the tongue-twisters, not the children.)"

"I think one reason kids are not reading up to their potential is a lack of being urged – you can't urge them with a big stick, but you can urge them with competition."

Well, now, demands his visitor, Geisel has to read one.

"Not wearing the right glasses," Geisel says quickly. "I can't." (Fensch, Thomas. *Of Sneetches* 83 – 89)

1982, May – How the Grinch Stole Reading: The Serious Nonsense of Dr. Seuss

Warren T. Greenleaf, a school administrator wrote for *Principal* saying Dr. Seuss was the Rice Krispies of children's literature and reasons why:

They snap. They crackle, And also pop. If the books of other, more staid authors are the oatmeal of children's literature – solid, nourishing, and warm, but not much fun—those of Theodor Seuss Geisel are its Rice Krispies, blending nutrition with a happily explosive morning racket.<sup>616</sup>

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<sup>615</sup> "I can say everything I have to say..." said Theodor. He had something to say, many things to say; it was through children's books where his message came out the clearest and loudest. He found his place, his mission, his calling D-1.

<sup>616</sup> Theodor's books are full of Snap! Crackle! and Pop! They are fun, unlike his contemporaries, yet at the same time they, as is the creator, are serious in that children are learning to read,



There has been a lot of such pleasant noise since 1937, when the first Dr. Seuss - *And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street* - appeared...<sup>617</sup> His fan mail is of such proportions that, abandoning any attempt to count it, Random House weighed it instead; one year it totaled 9,267 pounds.

But the books of Dr. Seuss are not simply popular. They are written in dead earnest, with a serious though sketchy theory of reading behind them, and they have been recognized as important contributions to children's literature by people who do not equate best sellers with worthwhile reading. Three of Geisel's books have won the Caldecott Honor award, television specials based on them have won a Peabody and an Emmy, and in 1980, the American Library Association gave Geisel its Laura Ingalls Wilder Award.

How come? What makes these books so special? Why – in view of the hundreds of authors competing for the attention of children – has Theodor Geisel won a place in their hearts that other generations have reserved for Hans Christian Andersen, the Brothers Grimm, and Lewis Carroll?

Part of the answer was suggested by Elaine Banks, and NAESP President, when she gave Geisel the association's first Special Award for Distinguished Service to Children at the Atlantic convention. "Few authors have created so much delight for young children as Mr. Geisel," she said. "Since a critical part of helping children achieve literacy is to prove to them that reading can be a source of deep pleasure, we think he deserves credit for having launched millions of youngsters on a lifetime of exploration through books."<sup>618</sup>

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happily. The literate fans were sending mail to thank him. Adults were also saying thank you through awards one after the other. The explosive morning racket could also be linked to the imagination of these readers – exploding with delight.

<sup>617</sup> "There has been such a lot of such pleasant noise since 1937"; noise is a type of energy; it is a sound – "the energy things produce when they vibrate... Sound is like light in some ways: it travels out from a definite source" (Woodford). As Theodor was self-actualizing, the results, the energy around him created a "pleasant noise." The noise came from a definite source, a man with a mission and purpose. In the world where a noise is usually considered a disturbance, this noise in literature for children was a pleasant sound.

<sup>618</sup> Creating delight, C-2, creativeness: true inventiveness; Theodor and Dr. Seuss launched children into a lifetime of exploration; through reading and imagination true inventiveness was available to millions of youngsters.

The crucial word is *delight*, and one of the distinctive characteristics of the Dr. Seuss books is that they provide delight not only to children, but to adults...

But the Seuss books are written in such an engaging, bump-biddy-bump meter – one writer characterized it as “anapestic tetrameter” - that reading the rhymes aloud is a pleasure...

And finally, most of the Seuss books have a plot – usually a daffy one, to be sure, but a real plot with the classical requirement of a beginning, middle, and end.<sup>619</sup>

.....

As to technique, Geisel believes in pairing words and pictures: everything mentioned in the text must be illustrated, and there must be no more than one illustration to a page... “We just try to say what we have to say simply and concisely,” he explains. “Adults minimize the speed and the desire children have for learning. Children can do at three or four what is expected from them at six or seven.” Television, he believes, has vastly expanded children’s vocabularies, making it possible for authors to use words that rarely appear in primers.

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And, at 78, Geisel is still trying to amuse them. Though he long ago earned more than enough money to sit back and enjoy his Grinch-gotten gains, he continues fighting his perfectionist battle at his drafting table in an old observatory on the top of a mountain overlooking the Pacific. A new Dr. Seuss, titled, *Hunches in Bunches*, will appear this fall.<sup>620</sup>

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In all Geisel’s career, in fact, it is hard to find any endeavor at which he has failed.

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<sup>619</sup> Theodor’s books were and are in the category of the great writers because: they provide delight, reading them is a pleasure, and they are written with a plot that is simple and concise. Theodor said he wrote to amuse himself and his wife. When a person loves their work, it is tangible; Theodor loved what he did; he was comfortable in who he had become; he was honest with who he was; he was aware of what was going on inside him and in the world around him; he had the freedom to do as he wished, to create, to be spontaneous, to let children be children; and he trusted his mission in life.

<sup>620</sup> Theodor continued; the self-actualizing process was continual, an ongoing process (Maslow, *The Farther Reaches* 44).

Yes there was one – a book called *The Seven Lady Godivas*, published in 1937... The real problem, of course, lies much deeper than that. *The Seven Lady Godivas* is the one and only book Geisel has ever written for adults, and adults don't interest him. "Adults are just obsolete children, and to hell with 'em."<sup>621</sup>

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<sup>621</sup> This goes back to Theodor's letter in *The New Yorker*, dated November 16, 1952, titled "But for Grown-Ups Laughing Isn't Fun"; he began his defense of why he should probably write for adults but chose not to:

There are many reasons why an intelligent man should never ever write for children. Of all professions for a man, it is socially the most awkward. You go to a party, and how do they introduce you? The hostess says, "Dr. Seuss, meet Henry J. Bronkman. Mr. Bronkman manufactures automobiles, jet planes, battleships and bridges. Dr. Seuss...well, he writes the sweetest, dear, darlingest little whimsies for wee kiddies!"

Mr. Bronkman usually tries to be polite. He admits there is a place in the world for such activities. He admits he once was a kiddie himself. He even confesses to having read Peter Rabbit. Then abruptly he excuses himself and walks away in search of more vital and rugged companionship.

Whenever a juvenile writer goes, he is constantly subjected to humiliating indignities. When asked to take part in a panel discussion along with other members of the writing fraternity he is given the very end seat at the table...always one seat lower than the dusty anthologist who compiled "the Unpublished Letter of Dibble Sneth, Second Assistant Secretary of something or other under Polk."

Besides that, since we don't make much money, our friends are always getting us aside and telling us, "Look now, you can do better. After all, with all your education, there *must* be some way you could crack the Adult Field!"

After this little cynical story, Theodor made a brilliant, comical attack against adults:

The thing that's so hard to explain to our friends is that most of us who specialize in writing humor for children have cracked the adult field and, having cracked it, have decided definitely that we prefer to uncrack it. We are writing for the so-called Brat Field by choice. For, despite the fact this brands us as pariahs, despite the fact this turns us into literary untouchables, there is something we get when we write for the young that we never can hope to get in writing for you ancients. To be sure, in some ways you are superior to the young. You scream less. You burp less. You have fewer public tantrums. You ancients are generally speaking, slightly more refined. But when it comes to trying to amuse you...! Have you ever stopped to consider what has happened to your sense of humor?

When you were a kid named Willy or Mary the one thing you did better than anything else was laugh. The one thing you got more fun out of than anything was laughing.

Why, I don't know. Maybe it has to do with juices. And when somebody knew how to stir those juice for you, you really rolled on the floor. Remember? Your sides almost went crazy with the pain of having fun. You were a terrible blitz to your family.

His father was an international rifle champion, and Geisel has on the wall of his home beneath the observatory tower a framed target that his father fired at in a 1902 competition; the bull's-eye is virtually obliterated by holes. "That," Geisel says, "is to remind me of perfection."

One feels sure that Geisel's *père* would have admired his son's marksmanship.<sup>622</sup>

(Fensch, Thomas. *Of Sneetches* 91 - 97)

### 1983 – The Good Dr. Seuss

Jonathan Cott, in his book *Pipers at the Gates of Dawn: The Wisdom of Children's Literature* looked at John Newbery - born in 1713, his impact on children's literature, being a designer, producer, marketer and seller of children's books, his first book, *A Little Pretty Pocket Book*, published in 1744; his belief that reading should be pleasurable and then compared him to Theodor:

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So what? Your juices were juicing. Your lava was seething. Your humor was spritzing.  
You really were living.

At that age you saw life through very clear windows. Small windows, of course.  
But very bright windows.

Laughter! Humor! Really living! And with very bright windows! These were the reasons Theodor said to hell with adults. This was written before he wrote *The Cat in the Hat*, before *Beginner Books* was established; it was who he was; it was his conviction. He continued explaining how adults put shutters on the windows, when it is ok to laugh and what to laugh at. His conclusion:

You still laughed for fun, but the fun was getting hemmed in by a world of regulations. You were laughing at subjects according to their listing in the ledger. Every year, as you grew older, the laughs that used to split your sides diminished. The ledger furnished more sophisticated humor...

And by the time you had added that accomplishment to your repertoire, you know what happened to you, Willy or Mary? Your capacity for healthy, silly, friendly laughter was smothered. You'd really grown up. You'd become adults... adults, which is a word that means obsolete children.

Throughout Theodor's life, this quote became his quote. And thankfully, Dr. Seuss and Theodor chose to write for children!

<sup>622</sup> Theodor was a marksman at children's literature; he hit the bull's-eye as his father had – it was obliterated by holes – holes of success in making reading for children a delight and a pleasure.

Among Newbery's publications were alphabet, spelling, and riddle books; collections of fables and poems; histories; novels – especially the popular *The History of the Little Goody Two Shoes*; a ten-volume compendium of knowledge for boys and girls known as *The Circle of Sciences*; ... His books are filled with amusingly named characters like Tommy Trip, Zig Zag, and Giles Gingerbread; and with friendly animals like Tippy the lark, Jouler the dog, and Willy the lamb.

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... The qualities and virtues he valued and promoted for those of dutifulness, moderation, self-control, rationality, sobriety, prudence, and industry. His motto: "Trade and Plumbcake forever, Huzza!" (5 - 6)

Cott then made a comparison of how Dr. Seuss two hundred years later came into children's literature and again re-emphasized the need for pleasure in reading:

Almost 200 years later, in 1936, our cartoonist, illustrator, and writer named Theodor Geisel was walking along Madison Avenue, carrying the manuscript of a children's book that had already been rejected by twenty-seven publishers, when he ran into a Dartmouth schoolmate, one year his junior...

John Newberry-great admirer of pseudonyms and of commercial enterprise that he was – would have undoubtedly admired the panache with which Theodor Geisel entered the publishing market Place...

"Useless trumpery" is the way John Locke condemned fairy tales, ballads, and chapbook romances in the eighteenth century; his disciple John Newbery might have applied the same epithet to Marco's Mulberry Street hallucinations, as well as to the book that preserves them. But just as *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book* opened up new possibilities for children's literature in its time, so did *Mulberry Street* in ours. One could say that while Newbery created a children's book industry in England, Dr. Seuss – two centuries after its inception– has, astonishingly, been able to create his own microcosmic publishing universe: Walk into most children's bookstores today and you will find sections devoted to "Fairy Tales," "Picture Books," and "Dr. Seuss." He has become a genre, a category, an institution; more than eighty million of his books have been sold around the

world.<sup>623</sup>

“What exactly is it that makes this stuff immortal?” asked Rudolf Flesch (author of *Why Johnny Can't Read*) about Dr. Seuss's work. “There is something about it,” Flesch tried to explain. “A swing to the language, a deep understanding of the playful mind of a child, an undefinable something that makes Dr. Seuss a genius pure and simple.”<sup>624</sup>

*And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street* immediately provides several other answers to Flesch's question, striking as it does the characteristic Seussian chord and rhythm, and ringing their changes. There is, first of all, the unflagging momentum, feeling of breathlessness, and swiftness of pace, all together acting as the motor of Dr. Seuss's pullulating image machine that brings to life – through rhymes and pictures – what William James describes as our earliest experiences of the world (“The baby, assailed by eyes, ears, nose, skin, and entrails at once, feels that all is one great blooming, buzzing confusion”), as well as what, more specifically, Selma G. Lanes calls “Marcos rapidly expanding universe.” All of this expansiveness expresses itself through Seuss's unique, children's-drawing style of illustration and through a theme-and-variations technique (the theme is usually that of searching for, discovering, or inventing something new<sup>625</sup>) that the author uses in many of his books, including *Scrambled Egg Super! ...* and *On Beyond Zebra!* It is a technique that features the use of visual exaggeration. “I think that when ideas are first differentiated by children,” says Brian Sutton-Smith – professor of education and folklore at the University of

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<sup>623</sup> “Opened up new possibilities”, through freedom, Theodor was detached C-1, creative C-2, and spontaneous C-3: he created his own microcosmic publishing universe; this creativeness was unique and truly inventive - Dr. Seuss became a genre, a category, an institution.

<sup>624</sup> “Undefinable something” is the individual in each person, like a fingerprint, in this case Dr. Seuss aka Theodor Geisel. Maslow wrote that “a musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write, if he is to be ultimately at peace with himself. What a man *can* be, he *must* be. He must be true to his own nature” (*Motivation and Personality* 46). Theodor was his own, could not be defined. This uniqueness, which Theodor found in Dr. Seuss, and vice versa, brought out his genius; it was pure and simple: he had the playful mind of a child and it came forth in his creations, the books.

<sup>625</sup> These words: searching, discovering, inventing something new, are characteristics of a creative person, a curious person, a self-actualizing person not content with remaining as one is, but with a need to grow, to become all that is within; these words defined Theodor.

Pennsylvania – “they have to be caricatured. There has to be an exaggerated form of a thing in order to get it out of the background, in order to differentiate the figure from the ground - whether you’re talking about an idea or a picture. You can’t, for example, do jigsaws unless you make the edges really clear. And Dr. Seuss uses exaggeration all the time.”<sup>626</sup>

In *Mulberry Street*, Dr. Seuss’s illustrations are less exaggerated than they would become several years later – as in the books mentioned above... (His creatures, as poet and critic Karla Kushin aptly observes, all have “slightly batty, oval eyes and a smile you might find on the Mona Lisa after her first martini.”) Indeed, more than any other children’s books artist - except perhaps for Edward Lear... Dr. Seuss has created the most extraordinary variety of ingeniously named, fantastical-looking animals and composite beasts...<sup>627</sup>

Also extremely characteristic of Seuss’s work – in this and almost all of his other books – is his habitual use of anapestic tetrameter verse... a promise of the musical energy and excitement to be found in all of Dr. Seuss’s poetry. For the anapest line embodies movement and swiftness,<sup>628</sup> ... (6 – 11)

.....

Although the poem resonates on many levels [Cott is comparing Sir Walter Scott’s translation of the opening of Goethe’s famous “The Earl-King” to Marco’s conversation with his father in *Mulberry Street*], it might be taken to suggest that the denial of one’s powers of fantasy and imagination (both share the

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<sup>626</sup> Theodor used exaggeration to get what was in him out to the public. In his mind the edges were clear, the right and the wrong, Ethical awareness B-4: as if he had an inner supreme court; the exaggerated characters and satire were the hard edges to make a clear point to his audience, to bring all the pieces of the puzzle together to deliver a moral sideways.

<sup>627</sup> Freedom: C-2 Creativity: change the conception of creativeness to true inventiveness; Theodor created these fantasy animals and beasts to be in a world where children could escape reality of rules and conventions to find the joy of reading and imagining.

<sup>628</sup> This movement and swiftness is what kept the children’s attention; their minds were hungry to move as would be considered normal at this stage of development in childhood. Theodor’s mind never stopped moving.

same image-generating routes) is a form of death.<sup>629</sup> John Newbery and his contemporaries, one remembers, wished to cross children's imaginative powers and the literature that nourished them. One eighteenth-century writer even boasted that writing for children required one "to restrain a lively imagination," a sort of heroic sacrifice of gratification to virtue, which I cannot doubt is acceptable to the Supreme Being.

In this century, of course, many artists, educators, and psychologist have adamantly taken a stand strongly in favor of fantasy ("Whenever we are caught in a literal view," states the depth psychologist James Hillman, "a literal belief, a literal statement, we have lost imaginative metaphysical perspective to ourselves and our world").<sup>630</sup> But such disparate figures as Einstein and Lenin have also affirmed the importance of fantasy. As the former once said: "When I examine myself and my methods of thought, I come to the conclusion that the gift a fantasy has meant more to me than any talent for abstract, positive thinking." And as the latter stated: "It is incorrect to think that fantasy is useful only to the poet. This is an insipid prejudice! It is useful even in mathematics – even differential and integral calculus could not have been discovered without it. Fantasy is a quality of the highest importance." And it was another Russian – the children's poet and educator Kornei Chukovsky – who spoke of the child's "rights" to fairy tales and nonsense verse. "Fantasy," he said, "is the most valuable attribute of the human mind, and it should be diligently nurtured from earliest childhood." ...<sup>631</sup> (12 -13)  
 .....

"It is central to the Seuss formula," writes Selma G. Lanes in *Down the Rabbit Hole*, "that the action of all his books with children as protagonist takes

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<sup>629</sup> This form of death is that which Theodor spoke of in his article published in 1952, "But for Grown-ups Laughing Isn't Any Fun"; putting shutters on a child's window and shutting down their juices for laughing; this is death to laughter and to the imagination.

<sup>630</sup> A literal view is a matter of perspective; an adult's perspective or a child's perspective, not the same. What is literal to one mind is not literal to the other, especially adult versus child. Theodor kept the mind of a child where imaginative metaphysical perspectives are still open to one's self and the world around.

<sup>631</sup> These notably great people attested to the importance of imagination and fantasy, endorsing Dr. Seuss and his work.



place either (1) in the absence of grownups, or (2) in the imagination” .... In *If I Ran the Circus*, the young hero Morrison McGurk finds that the most wonderful spot for imagining his circus is behind Sneedlock’s store “in the big vacant lot” - ... “the places [children] like best for play are the secret places ‘where no one else goes.’” ... “The literature of childhood abounds with evidence that the peaks of the child’s experience are not visits to a cinema, or even family outings to the sea, but occasions when he escapes into places that are disused and overgrown and silent.<sup>632</sup> To a child there is more joy in a rubbish tip than a flowering rocketry, in a fallen tree than a piece of statuary, in a muddy track than a gravel path.”<sup>633</sup>

Imagination, said Wordsworth, “Is but another name for absolute power/And clearest insight, amplitude of mind,/ And reason in her most exalted mood.” He also knew that it was an “awful Power” which “rose from the mind’s abyss/ Like an unfathered vapour,” usurping the light of the senses... But imagination, in the mind of an obliquitous or greedy person (like the king in *Bartholomew and the Oobleck* who brings down ruin from the sky in the form of an all-entangling, sticky, gluey, vicious slime), can be a dangerous power.<sup>634</sup> Yet it is a necessary one. Imagination allows for and creates the possibility for things to happen and to change, freeing us from the genetic programming of specific behavior patterns (and making life less boring in the process). As Bryan Sutton-Smith remarked in a conversation with me:

I think that Dr. Seuss is packaging flexibility and possibility, and it’s a new kind of thing in children’s literature, which used to be much more

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<sup>632</sup> Awareness: B-3 Peak experience: limitless horizons that open the vision, feeling of wonder and awe, loss of time and space, a magic moment; just as Cott re-emphasized Lanes’ recognition of Theodor’s ability to captivate a child’s imagination in the simplest of pleasures: an empty backyard where a circus can be imagined, places overgrown and silent are full of adventure for a child and their mind.

<sup>633</sup> B-2 Freshness of appreciation: appreciating over and over the basic goods of life with awe and wonder, Theodor created books where wonder was found in the smallest detail.

<sup>634</sup> Imagination – an absolute power, amplitude of mind; in his imagination and expressing it, Theodor found power, clear insight, and amplitude (the extent or range of a quality, property, process or phenomenon) of mind when creating his books.

staid. His books reflect a recognition – at least implicitly by intelligent people – the flexibility of thinking and brightness and associations and combinations, etc., are what mental development is about these days – it’s as much a part of achievement as anything else. The notion that you can capture people’s souls just by pressing the basics on them is nonsense and terrifying and stupid... Seuss breaks barriers. What happens is that some person like him comes along who’s intuitively a bit more in touch with the younger generation, he’s nearer to his childhood and he expands the danger zones a little; and because kids love it, gradually parents come to accept it. It’s the *adults* who have to be comforted.<sup>635</sup>

And as Theodor Geisel has often said: “Adults are only obsolete children, so the hell with them!” (13 – 14)

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... I said quoting from *If I Ran the Zoo*. “What is it with you and the animals?” I asked him.

“Let’s just say I find them more compatible than most people,” he said, smiling.<sup>636</sup> (17)

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One might even suggest that the child’s mind is indeed like many a Dr. Seuss book, for his poetic style – although more controlled – has its roots in these characteristic modes of children’s storytelling; simply and unselfconsciously, Dr. Seuss has retained a fresh perceiving system, naturally communicating an

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<sup>635</sup> Because Theodor took the liberty to find himself, listened to his voice, he freed within flexibility and possibility; when he found this, he shared it with his audience. He was not staid; he refused this in his life and in his creations. Dr. Seuss aka Theodor listened to his soul, his intuition and his audience, both children and adults heard the authenticity. As children speak with no filters, no barriers, they recognized in Dr. Seuss, in his books and characters, the freedom, ability, flexibility and possibility to be who they were and would become.

<sup>636</sup> With honesty Theodor addressed questions with a sense of humor A-1: regarding the human situation of man, laughing at the situation and yet not hurting anyone.

understanding of children’s energies, needs, and desires.<sup>637</sup>

Nowhere is this more obvious than in *The Cat in the Hat*, (1957). “It’s the book I’m proudest of,” Geisel told me, “because it had something to do with the death of *Dick and Jane* primers... (25)

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And just as Theodor Geisel, during his one and only art class, turned his painting upside down, so Dr. Seuss, in *The Cat in the Hat*, created one of the great *bouleversements* in the history of children’s writing.<sup>638</sup> (26)

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[Cott asking Theodor this question.]

“You seem quite recusant yourself, and I think a lot of your books *are* subversive,” I added. “Don’t you?”

“I’m subversive as hell!” Geisel replied. “I’ve always had a mistrust of adults. And one reason I dropped out of Oxford and the Sorbonne was that I thought they were taking life too damn seriously, concentrating too much on nonessentials. Hilaire Belloc, whose writings I liked a lot, was a radical. *Gulliver’s Travels* was subversive, and both Swift and Voltaire influenced me. *The Cat in the Hat* is a revolt against authority, but it’s ameliorated by the fact that the Cat cleans everything up at the end. It’s revolutionary in that it goes as far as Kerensky and then stops. It doesn’t go quite as far as Lenin.”<sup>639</sup>

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<sup>637</sup> Theodor, retained a fresh perceiving system, allowed natural communication to his audience – children; and with this their energies, needs and desires were addressed. The Press points out the mind of Dr. Seuss: childlike and fresh.

<sup>638</sup> Bouleversements defined as “turning something around...a general kind of upheaval or dramatic change, as in a revolution” (Merriam Webster). Theodor and Dr. Seuss together turned the history of children’s literature upside down. This was by the Press considered an analogy to what happened in Theodor’s one and only art class: his art teacher told him he would never be an artist but in fact, Theodor was doing what was natural to him, turning the paper upside down to check the balance. Dr. Seuss wrote *The Cat in the Hat* and created a revolution in the field of children’s literature and the way children learn to read and think.

<sup>639</sup> Theodor had a mistrust of adults and said they concentrate on nonessentials; boldly declaring he was subversive: “criticizing something in a clever and indirect way in order to make it weaker or less effective” or “secretly trying to ruin or destroy a government, political system, etc.” (Merriam-Webster); then who was he this Dr. Seuss, writer and illustrator, a voice for children? Supporting Hilaire Belloc, a radical, Jonathan Swift, a political activist and author, and Voltaire,

“Like many of your books,” I suggested, “*The Cat in the Hat* is quite anarchistic.”

“It’s impractical the way anarchy is, but it works within the confines of a book.” Geisel agreed.<sup>640</sup> (28)

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“Within the confines of your books,” I added, “you’ve written some very moral and political tales...”

“Yes,” Geisel responded, “children’s literature as I write it and as I see it is satire to a great extent – satirizing the mores and the habits of the world. There’s *Yertle the Turtle*... which was modeled on the rise of Hitler; and then there’s the *Sneetches*... which was inspired by my opposition to anti-Semitism. These books come from a different part of my background and from the part of my soul that started out to be a teacher. Every once in a while I get mad. *The Lorax*... came out of my being angry. The ecology books I read were dull... In *The Lorax* I was out to attack what I think are evil things and let the chips fall where they might; and the book’s been used by ministers as the basis of sermons, as well as by conversation groups.”<sup>641</sup> (29 – 30)

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Along with “imagination,” “play” is the cornerstone of Dr. Seuss’s world. And its importance is specifically revealed in one of Seuss’s early fairy tale-type prose works, *The King’s Stilts* (1939), which seems to illustrate Nietzsche’s

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Enlightenment writer who opposed the French government and church, and was in favor of freedom of speech and writing. What was essential to Theodor? Radical, different thinking, going against an established system and way of thinking. How does honesty, awareness, freedom and trust, characteristics of self-actualization change from childhood to adulthood? The norms? The rules? The expectations? Theodor was his own person. A different wind directed him, focusing on the imagination of a child, fantasy, morals, and speaking up for the little of littlest; he was a man who spoke on behalf of children to celebrate the mind of a free child.

<sup>640</sup> Anarchy in a book, disorder due to absence of parents, in Dr. Seuss’s case, yet in the end, *The Cat in the Hat* cleaned up the mess, giving ownership, capability, and order to the mind of a child, even in the absence of parents.

<sup>641</sup> Part of Theodor’s soul, his inner being was angry, Social Interest A-2: a deep feeling of identification, sympathy, and affection in spite of the occasional anger impatience and disgust; out of a righteous indignation, Theodor wanted to do something to help humanity.

comment that “in any true man hides a child who wants to play.”<sup>642</sup> (34)

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Along with imagination, play allows us to innovate, test, accept, and reject; to explore and integrate different forms of behavior; and to envisage and to conceive of new ideas, new theories, new creations, new discoveries, and new societies. Imagination and play are at the basis of all our hope. In the words of the psychologist D. W. Winnicott: “One has to allow for the possibility that there cannot be a complete destruction of a human individual’s capacity for creative living and that, even in the most extreme cases of compliance and the establishment of a false personality, hidden away somewhere there exists a secret life that is satisfactory because of its being creative or original to that human being.”<sup>643</sup>

In the words of a good Dr. Seuss: “There is no one alive who is you-er than you!” (Cott 37)

1984, April 17 – Special Pulitzer Citation Another Happy Ending for Author Dr. Seuss

Dolores Barclay, Associated Press for *The New Yorker* wrote:

As Dr. Seuss, he can converse in private with the lifted Lorax, a roly-poly brown creature with a yellow walrus mustache, or drip a nasty green slime on Bartholomew Cubbins.

As Theodor Geisel, he grumped gently about the hoopla over his special Pulitzer citation.

“Oh I like some of it,” the 80-year-old author, his voice a bit gruff over the

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<sup>642</sup> Theodor understood early the importance of play; his fourth book, *The King’s Stilts*, revealed his deep conviction of the balance of work and play in one’s life. In reading every night to the children, the adults might find important reminders for daily living; like a comic using satire at daily events, Dr. Seuss’s books were gentle reminders to the adults and stepping stones for the children. Dinosaur prints were in the making.

<sup>643</sup> Parenting and education involves directing a child in the way the adult thinks is right, wanting a child to be like them or adopt their expectations and norms, but in fact teaching children to innovate, test, accept and reject, having the courage to encourage the child to be creative, to play, to imagine, and to think one’s own thoughts allows for the construction of the human individual. Theodor delivered this hope for children in his books.

telephone, said after the award honoring his 44 children's books was announced Monday.

But all the fuss, he said was making him "rather unprivate."<sup>644</sup>

*Resides in California*

For more than 30 years, Geisel, a native of Springfield, Mass., lived relatively unchaffed by the press in the gleaming, white hilltop castle in La Jolla, Calif. There he created the classics that have delighted generations of youngsters - "Horton Hears a Who," "The Cat in the Hat," "Green Eggs and Ham," and "How the Grinch Stole Christmas," among them.

Geisel - Seuss is his middle name - wasn't chagrined in the least that it took almost 50 years to be recognized with such a prestigious award for his accomplishment in children's literature.

"I think it's amazing that it came at all," he said with a laugh. "It's a little bit out of the field of journalism, and when I was a journalist, then they darn well should have given me one."<sup>645</sup> (Barclay, D.)

1986, January 7 - Springfield pays tribute to 'Dr. Seuss'

City celebrated native son by catching 'Seussamania'; Pat Cahill wrote for *The Springfield Republican* newspaper about upcoming events in Theodor's childhood hometown.

Who has not encountered, somewhere on the journey through childhood or parenthood, the wacky rhymes and odd creatures of Dr. Seuss?

"Horton Hears a Who," "The Cat in the Hat," "How the Grinch Stole Christmas," and more than 40 other books by Dr. Seuss have been read by several generations of children all over the world.

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<sup>644</sup> Freedom: the ability to be spontaneous, to withdraw if this is what you wish, to create, to be whatever one is at the moment, no matter what it is, but to trust that self, to be freely oneself. C-1 Detachment: Theodor needed solitude, privacy; having built his home on a hilltop undisturbed and unruffled years earlier gave him the freedom to create books which won him a great award, a Pulitzer Prize: "For his special contribution over nearly half a century to the education and enjoyment of America's children and their parents ("The Pulitzer Prize.").

<sup>645</sup> Theodor went right to the point; he spoke his mind with a trusted self, a voice of freedom: the ability to be spontaneous, to be whatever one is at the moment, no matter what that is, and to trust that self. He had learned over the years to trust his inner voice, himself.

As part of its 350th birthday celebration, Springfield is paying tribute to its famous and eccentric native son with four months of revels called “Seussamania.”<sup>646</sup>

Films, readings, puppet shows, floats, parades, and appearances by costumed Seuss characters are scheduled. (Cahill)

1986, January 31 – Seuss on the Loose

This native son thrives on fun, wrote Elsie Osterman for *The Springfield Union* newspaper.

Theodor Seuss Geisel believes in having fun, as anyone who’s ever read even a page from one of his more than 40 books knows.

“Fun is the most important thing in a children’s book,” said “Dr. Seuss” in a telephone interview last week from his La Jolla, Calif. home. “Fun and interest. If you’re interested yourself, the children who read you will be interested.”

The fun generated by this creator of a “zoo-full” of zany characters is what the George Walter Vincent Smith Art Museum offers beginning Sunday when it opens “The Wonderful World of Dr. Seuss.”

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“Yes, yes,” he insisted in a voice tinged with mirth. “I always do my own illustrations. I do what I do mostly to entertain and to have fun.”<sup>647</sup>

1986, May 21 – After 60 Years, Dr. Seuss Goes Home

Larry Rohter, for *The New York Times* reported on a special visit to Springfield, birthplace of Theodor:

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<sup>646</sup> A new word to describe Theodor Seuss Geisel aka Dr. Seuss: Seussamania. Tribute was being given to the creator of wacky rhymes and odd creatures which had entertained people all over the world. The audience was giving a standing ovation lasting four months to celebrate all that Theodor became and gave to the world.

<sup>647</sup> Theodor was vested in his work; he was interested in his work and enjoyed doing it; this came through to his readers; fun and entertaining, two crucial elements in his books and in his life. In the B-values, the self-actualizing person is constantly in search of 13-V Playfulness: fun, joy, amusement, gaiety, humor, exuberance, effortlessness; these words describe what was found in Dr. Seuss’s books; the children needed an escape to find a place to let their imagination run free, to be a child, to have fun.

Like *The Cat in the Hat*, Dr. Seuss came back today, back to the schools, libraries, streets and parks of this New England factory town where he was born 82 years ago.

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As Dr. Seuss, tanned, bearded and white-haired, pulled up in the small bus in front of the medical center at 39 Mulberry Street, it was as if he had never left. Dozens of excited children surged toward him, waving copies of “Hop on Pop” and “Green Eggs and Ham” and shouting “We love you, Dr. Seuss!”

Adults were a bit more restrained in their outpouring of affection, but just barely. Nurses and office workers began to emerge from the medical center to seek the author’s autograph, and a group of teachers quickly gathered around to hug and congratulate him. Perhaps they had heard of his latest effort, “You’re Only Old Once,” a humorous book about adults that he has been promoting.

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A few grinchers in town might argue that Dr. Seuss is not Springfield’s most famous son, that the honor belongs to James Naismith, who invented basketball here nearly a century ago. But Dr. Seuss’s legion of local fans we’re having none of that today.

“And to think that we saw him on Mulberry Street,” read one large banner displayed by a group of enthusiastic schoolchildren. When it came time for Dr. Seuss to go on his way, they saluted him with the line from one of his own books: “Thank you, thank you, Sam-I-Am.”<sup>648</sup> (Rohter)

1986, May 21 – Young readers welcome ‘Dr. Seuss’ back home

Marisa Giannetti, wrote for the local Springfield newspaper, *The Springfield Morning Union*, describing Theodor’s visit back to his hometown:

It happened again on Mulberry Street.

The years fell away from the tanned, gray-bearded face of 82-year-old Theodor “Dr. Seuss” Geisel Tuesday as he retraced his youth in the neighborhood he called home

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<sup>648</sup> Gratitude was given to a man who gave his all, Theodor Seuss Geisel aka Dr. Seuss. As “The Director” had ordered from the “inside line,” do your “Best,” and “Good” will come to you, children and adults were giving of their hearts, their affection, enthusiasm and congratulations to this creator of Sam-I-Am.



until 1925.

Turning a corner onto the street he immortalized in his first book, “And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street,” Geisel leaned forward in his second-row seat aboard a vintage 1934 Yellow Coach bus that was touring the city.

He pointed to a green-and-white street sign in the Maple Hill section, and a shy, wistful smile touched his lips.

“We’re on Mulberry Street. I’m remembering now,” Geisel said.

Ahead, more than 100 children dressed as Grinches and Sneetches and Loraxes – characters from some of Geisel’s 45 children’s books, lined the sidewalk. They shouted and cheered and wrapped themselves around Geisel’s long legs as he got out of the bus to greet them.

The children welcomed Dr. Seuss home.

“I never expected to see this on Mulberry Street,” he said...<sup>649</sup> (Giannetti)

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<sup>649</sup> And just as Marco’s father told him in *And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street*: “Marco, keep your eyelids up / And see what you can see” as he walked off to school; and Marco thinking: “But when I tell him where I’ve been / And what I think I’ve seen, / He looks at me and sternly says, / ‘Your eyesight’s much too keen. / ‘Stop telling such outlandish tales. / Stop turning minnows into whales’”, truly this was a day for Theodor like Marco’s; Theodor had seen with keen foresight a life before him long before he ever lived it; B-1 Efficient perception of reality: a born perception, as if they have clear eyes, can see directly, sharper acuity through befuddlement; more perception of reality. He lived a life where he turned minnows into whales, creating zany characters and tales – Seussamania: along the way helping generations of children learn to read with joy and fun; in learning to read, to be literate and open doors unimaginable, but doable through a great imagination and with the mind of a free child. As Marco imagined greatness:

“I swung ’round the corner  
And dashed through the gate,  
I ran up the steps  
And I felt simply GREAT!  
FOR I HAD A STORY THAT NO ONE COULD BEAT!  
AND TO THINK THAT I SAW IT ON MULBERRY STREET! ...  
There was so much to tell, I JUST COULDN’T BEGIN!”

So had Theodor imagined a life no one could beat! He came home to a parade of fans giving love and adoration; just as in Marco’s way to school, a simple man riding in a horse and carriage, which through great imagination became a great parade, today it was Theodor’s and Dr. Seuss’s parade, and sure his father was proud.

1986, May 25 – The Private World of Dr. Seuss: A Visit to Theodor Geisel’s La Jolla Mountaintop

Hilliard Harper for the *Los Angeles Times* made a special visit to the castle up on the hill:

Imagine Dr. Seuss, beloved writer of wry and whimsical children’s fables, stepping into the public forum to take sides in the country’s greatest crisis of government. Unlikely? Nothing is unlikely in the land of Dr. Seuss, where what he calls “logical insanity” rules.

During the Watergate scandal, the man best known for his fanciful books about oobleck and grinch publicly called for the President of the United States to resign...<sup>650</sup>

.....

And Nixon did, just a week after Buchwald ran Seuss’ revision in his nationally syndicated column. Seuss would say it was just coincidence.

In real life, the good Dr. Seuss is Theodor Seuss Geisel, a man whose private world seems to be full of contradictions as a notion of an author of gentle children’s books firing off a tirade against the nation’s chief executive.

With more than 100 million of his books sold, and with kids all over the globe disciples of *The Cat in the Hat* and *The Grinch who Stole Christmas*, Seuss at 82 has uncharacteristically leaped into books for adults. Published in March, his 45<sup>th</sup> book, *You’re Only Old Once! A Book for Obsolete Children*, quickly sold out a first printing of 200,000 copies and shot to the top of *The New York Times* Bestseller List - for *nonfiction*.<sup>651</sup>

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These are sides of Geisel familiar to the tight social circle that knows him not as the recluse often depicted by the media but rather as a playful raconteur and something of a screwball. But these faces of Geisel emerge less often from his mountaintop perch

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<sup>650</sup> “Logical insanity” for Theodor in the Watergate scandal was to respond to something absurd with logic; he used his book “Marvin K. Mooney Will You PLEASE GO NOW!” to ask President Nixon to leave. Theodor was a relaxed cat like *The Cat in the Hat*, but with every move there was a purpose, in this case it was a Social interest A-2: a desire to help, to do something about a President who needed to go.

<sup>651</sup> Theodor with his social interest A-2 used this book with satire to attack the medical establishment, noted *nonfiction*. He used humor to address a real concern of the day and ongoing – a man of vision.

above the Pacific in La Jolla, where the nation's most renowned children's author toils amid yet another contradiction: no children or grandchildren. "You have 'em, I'll amuse 'em" has long been his curmudgeonly motto.<sup>652</sup>

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Tall, slim and energetic, with eyes that really do twinkle, white-bearded Geisel suggests an attenuated Cat in the Hat as much as someone's kindly grandfather. By turns droll and gracious, he welcomes visitors, who on this day arrive the same time as the mailman. "God, what do you suppose is in my mail today?" he says, warily eyeing stacks of packages and fan letters, including several hundred birthday cards from children around the country.

Each spring, birthday greetings ranging from hand-lettered cards to rolls of decorated butcher paper pour in, littering the floor of his study between twice-weekly visits of the secretary. ("Don't ever have a birthday," he grumps good-naturedly.) This room – he refers to it as "The Office" – is the nerve center of his world. Its walls are covered with cork, on which he pins book illustrations as he completes them. Bookcases are filled with the mysteries and biographies he devours late at night stand against one wall. But the focus on the room is his draftsman's desk and reclining chair, from which he commands a spectacular 180-degree view of the coastline from Oceanside to Mexico.

"I can't imagine Ted really being productive without that view, and the way his seat knocks back and his feet go up and he gets a thought and slaps forward," says his wife Audrey. "That all is part of his creativity."<sup>653</sup>

It is a life far removed from Prospect Street in downtown La Jolla below, with its gridlock of trendiness. And it seems well suited to an author who insists on the privacy of home instead of cross-country book tours or even the occasional trip to his publisher's office in New York. Yet for all their privacy, the Geisel's hardly shirk from San Diego

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<sup>652</sup> Curmudgeon defined by Merriam-Webster: "a crusty, ill-tempered, and usually old man." The renowned children's author had many contradictions in his life but he was comfortable with them and who he was.

<sup>653</sup> Theodor designed a place, "the Office," that worked well for his creative juices; a behavior he had learned years earlier, 8-B finding out who one is, what one is, what one likes, what one doesn't like, what is good for one and what is bad, where one is going and what is the mission. Theodor needed freedom to be detached C-1, creative C-2, and spontaneous C-3. The view of the Pacific Ocean was a part of this need to be free in his mind.

society – their social calendar often keeps them out and down the hill until 2 A.M. Audrey has cut it back a bit in the wake of Geisel’s heart surgery and cataract operations of the last few years. But still they go out – “to stay rounded,” she says.

That “kid” is Dr. Seuss’ inspiration, his wife says.<sup>654</sup> ...

But age has inevitably taken its toll. That’s reflected in *Your Only Old Once!* A charming guide through the daunting maze of geriatric medicine, which Geisel knows well.

Illness has also slowed Geisel’s literary output. Accustomed to turning out one book annually, he has published three in the last six years. Even so, he continues to maintain a disciplined schedule. After a 9:30 breakfast, he opens “The Office” and works steadily – with a break for lunch – until 5:30 P.M...

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Geisel suffers interviews politely, but carefully steers clear of controversy. “I stay out of politics because if I begin thinking too much about politics, I’ll probably ... drop writing children’s books and become a political cartoonist again.” But he freely acknowledges that, from time to time, his books steer in that direction. *The Lorax* (1971) was “propaganda” for environmental concerns, he says. And *The Butter Battle Book* (1983) was an attack on the arms race. But those are exceptions, he insists, and any social messages that emerge are simply byproducts of a workable plot.<sup>655</sup>

He attributes most of success to the rhyming format of his books, and, in general, avoids analyzing the muse that drives him. “I prefer to look at things through the wrong end of the telescope,” he offers. “I see things more clearly with a little astigmatism.” He bristles at people who accost him at parties and say they could knock out a kids’ book in a

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<sup>654</sup> The kid in Theodor is what kept Dr. Seuss writing books right to the end of his life. He kept his windows clear and bright, free of shutters (referring to Theodor’s letter written in 1952). His awareness of his own mind and how he amused himself with entertaining thoughts, not taking the world too seriously, kept the kid alive; he had an efficient perception of reality B-1: being able to decipher the real world from phonies, he kept his awe of life, freshness of appreciation, B-2: like that of a child, creating books brought Theodor moments of peak experience B-3: magic moments, and his ethical awareness B-4: not getting tangled up about it. He was sharp all his days; his mind was free to be who he wanted to be, a kid with a big imagination.

<sup>655</sup> Deep within Theodor, honesty rang true; his sense of humor A-1, mixed with his social interest A-2, worked themselves into his plots. They had to as they were part of who he was, a man who identified with and had compassion for humanity.

few hours.

Geisel's breezy style just makes it look easy. His success affords him an autonomy rare in publishing: He writes, designs, lays out and selects the colors and paper of each book.<sup>656</sup>

But the illustrating is fun compared to the writing, he says: "The problem with writing a book in verse is, to be successful it has to sound like you knocked it off on a rainy Friday afternoon. It has to sound easy. When you can do it, it helps tremendously because it's a thing that forces kids to read on. You have this unconsummated feeling if you stop. You have to go right through to the end - to the final beat.

The main problem with writing in verse is, if your fourth line doesn't come out right, you've got to throw four lines away and figure out a whole new way to attack the problem. So the mortality rate is terrific."<sup>657</sup>

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But the owner of these laurels is characteristically terse in accessing his life's greatest satisfaction: "I think I had something to do with kicking Dick and Jane out of the school system. I think I proved to a number of million kids that reading is not a disagreeable task. And without talking about teaching, I think I have helped kids laugh in schools as well as at home. That's about enough, isn't it?"

"Hmmp?"<sup>658</sup> (Harper)

#### 1987 – Getting to Solla Sollew: The Existential Politics of Dr. Seuss

Betty Mensch and Alan Freeman wrote for the *Tikkun* magazine; Dr. Seuss was a smasher of conventional boundaries.

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This format and story line suggest a children's book, one fairly typical of the genre. In fact, however, the book is *You're Only Old Once*, by Theodore Seuss Geisel,

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<sup>656</sup> Theodor took the freedom within: to be whatever he was at the moment, be it writer, designer, colorist, or printer and with this changed the concept of creativeness C-2: to true inventiveness in himself and in his books.

<sup>657</sup> In his humanness, Theodor revealed his challenges and struggles; he was aware: the ability to know what is going on inside and to be able to express this.

<sup>658</sup> "Hmmp?" A redundant word to himself. The inner workings of Theodor kept moving him forward, always thinking, moving within. Self-actualization was on-going until his last breath.

also and usually known as Dr. Seuss, and its intended audience is grown-ups, especially the elderly. However improbable the idea of writing a children's book for grown-ups, on March 8, 1987, the book celebrated a full year on *The New York Times* Best Seller List. As recently as February 22, 1987, it was number four on the list.

This success should not be surprising. Dr. Seuss merely employed the form that has over the past fifty years made him one of the most successful writers of children's literature in the history of the English language, ranking him with such as Lewis Carroll or Beatrix Potter. He has sold more than one hundred million books. What worked for his elderly audience has been working for children all along.

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... Moreover, what seems to be the silly whimsy of his books - the made-up words, the outlandish creatures and machines-carries an empowering message. Seuss is a smasher of conventional boundaries.<sup>659</sup> He invents his own words, defying the language nonsense boundary; he invents his own creatures, defying the human/animal boundary; he is unceasingly sarcastic and satirical yet profoundly serious, ultimately defying the boundary between what is serious and what is absurd.<sup>660</sup>

This form reaches the powerless, such as small children and old people, who are expected to be passive and are objectified through their nonconsensual sub-mission to authority. For such readers (or, listeners, in the case of the children), the books offer a discourse of resistance; they are accessible, easily consumed, and utterly irreverent. Their

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<sup>659</sup> Freedom: to be whatever one is at the moment; Theodor and Dr. Seuss found a way to be free together when they found each other. This freedom brought the strength to break conventional boundaries; D-2 Autonomy: an inner directness, independent of culture and environment, they are dependent for their own development, their own growth, own potentialities and lightened resources, with this autonomy, the two had no restrictions from conventional thinking; to his audience, both children and adults, and to the Press, he smashed the boundaries of conventionality.

<sup>660</sup> Clearly written, he, Theodor Seuss Geisel and Dr. Seuss, broke the conventional boundaries in three specific areas:

1. Inventing his own words, breaking the boundary of language.
2. Inventing his own creatures, breaking the boundary between humans and animals.
3. Using satire and sarcasm mixed with serious writing, breaking the boundary of what is serious and absurd.

With his freedom, Theodor was free to be creative C-2: in a true inventive way, breaking boundaries at many levels.

suggestion that categories need not be taken for granted is empowering to those who are told they have no choice, that that's the way things are, that "life is like that." <sup>661</sup>... (Mensch and Freeman 30)

1989, Fall – On Beyond Zebra with Dr. Seuss

Rita Roth for *The New Advocate* wrote about how she as a teacher began to appreciate Dr. Seuss, years later:

Like his character who leads a friend beyond “Z for Zebra” and the confines of the conventional alphabet, Theodor Seuss Geisel (alias Dr. Seuss) goes beyond well-established boundaries to provide a voice of opposition and possibility – opposition to the established order and possibility for social change. For more than 50 years the stories of Dr. Seuss have delighted children with predictable cadence and rhyme, with invented words and cartoon-like-illustrations.

.... His stories are emancipatory in the sense that they provide alternative views of the ways things are and the way they might be, as well as alternative courses of action to bring about change. Issues of empowerment and control are played out through the use of imagination and common sense in ways that expand and enrich lives. <sup>662</sup>

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<sup>661</sup> Theodor gave hope to the powerless; as he did not stay in the boundaries, neither did they need to stay in the conventional places they were expected to stay: children and older adults were encouraged by Dr. Seuss to challenge boundaries, to have power, to not sit back and be dominated into submission, but to have a voice. His honesty for mankind, his Social interest A-2: a feeling of identification with the human species compelled him to write books to unleash power and a new way of thinking, hoping for change for the betterment of mankind. Even in his golden years, Theodor’s Interpersonal relations A-3: capability of greater love, fusion, identification brought an obliteration of the ego boundaries. Life did not have to be like that; he encouraged change, breaking of boundaries.

<sup>662</sup> Emancipatory is defined by Merriam-Webster: to free from restraint, control, or the power of another; *especially*: to free from bondage, to free from any controlling influence (such as traditional mores or beliefs). As Theodor had learned to live his life free from restraint by thinking and living in an alternative way, not the conventional road, he was now relaying to his audience that they too could approach life and issues differently, bring about change. The proof was in the pudding so to speak: Theodor had changed the way children learned to read, it could be fun and effective at the same time; children did have a voice that needed to be listened to, no matter how small they were; the environment and social issues did not have to remain hopeless, but there could be change for the betterment of mankind. As Theodor allowed himself to be self-actualized, he was now challenging boundaries of individuals, young and old, to live an enriched life.

My interest in Dr. Seuss began as an elementary school teacher in the late sixties. It was apparent that my students were attracted to his books in a way that was different from their response to most other books for children. Yet, I never took Dr. Seuss seriously. Was it the careless whimsy that characterizes his illustrations and texts that kept me from seeing the stories as “literature”?

I remember feeling puzzled and a little annoyed by the strong preference my students showed for Dr. Seuss. However, there was no way I could ignore *their enthusiasm* as they read and reread *The Cat in the Hat* (1957) nor their foot-dragging as they approached the basal reader. Whatever the reason for his attraction, it seemed clear to me then that Dr. Seuss, like comic books, provided a kind of frivolity that was not appropriate for school. “Let the children read Dr. Seuss at home,” I thought, “not in my classroom.” Still, there was no denying the impact of his work and his popularity. I wondered who this Dr. Seuss was and why children were perennially tuned-in to his tales.

Twenty years later, I teach children’s literature, language arts, and reading to teachers and prospective teachers. With a less narrow view of what constitutes school language learning and a wider base of experience, I find Dr. Seuss more than a peddler of near nonsense. Geisel deserves serious attention because his work is replete with social commentary and critique. A “smasher of conventional boundaries,” he explores oppression in many forms (Mensch & Freeman, 1987, p. 30). A kind of “non-sense with basic sense” (Sutherland & Arbuthnot, 1986, p. 256) these stories present useful insights into our culture and the experience of childhood.<sup>663</sup>

I look at the writings of Theodor Geisel as a cultural discourse about power relations, as a kind of rhetoric of opposition and possibility. Because these stories call into question ideologies that reinforce the established society, they illustrate the view that

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<sup>663</sup> The experience of childhood; as Maslow wrote about the characteristics of self-actualization, he used words that one could relate to childhood: spontaneous, creative, easily breaking through social artificial, trivial barriers and boundaries (a child in kindergarten or first grade care to play, learn, laugh, enjoy life; they are not concerned with what social class their friend comes from), can see color differences, acuity, appreciates the wonder of life – the joy of picking wild flowers or discovering a ladybug, is in awe of what is learned... Theodor’s books gave a fresh look at childhood; children were attracted to his books because life for a child or even an adult is not all about seriousness; frivolity, laughter, light-heartedness, imagination, new ways of thinking are necessary for a rich life; Dr. Seuss reminded the world of this.



the way things are is not necessarily how they must be. What meanings could children take from this perspective? These delightfully zany tales provide children an alternative voice, the voice that turns away from passive conformity and encourages active engagement and a sense of community...<sup>664</sup> (Fensch, Thomas. *Of Sneetches* 141 – 142)

1990, December 20 – The Cabinet of Dr. Seuss

Allison Lurie wrote for *The New York Review of Books* looks at Dr. Seuss's last book, *Oh! the Places You'll Go!*

Theodor [sic] Seuss Geisel, known to millions as Dr. Seuss, is the most popular living juvenile author in American today. Almost everyone under forty was brought up on his books and cartoons, and even those who didn't hear the stories read aloud or saw them on TV probably met his fantastic characters at school. Beginning with *The Cat in the Hat* in 1957, Seuss revolutionized the teaching of reading, managing to create innovative, crazily comic tails with a minimum vocabulary (*The Cat in the Hat* uses only 220 words). The inventive energy of these books and the relative freedom from class and race norms made middle-class suburban Dick and Jane look prissy, prejudiced, and totally outdated.

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Why didn't editors see at once what a winner Seuss would be? Partly because of his artistic style, which was unabashedly cartoon-like and exaggerated in an era when children's book illustration was supposed be pretty and realistic. Perhaps even more because of the content of his stories, especially their encouragement of wild invention and, even worse, the suggestion that it might be politic to conceal one's fantasy from one's parents. Children in the Thirties and Forties were supposed to be learning about the real world, not wasting their time on daydreams, and they were encouraged to tell their parents everything.

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.... *And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street... The Cat in the Hat...* In these tales the children whose imagination transforms the world are abashed or secretive when

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<sup>664</sup> Theodor gave children a voice, to speak out against conformity and encouraged active engagement. He believed in empowering the weak, the small; like in *Horton Hears a Who*, the littlest *Who* made a difference, as did he - Dr. Seuss.

confronted with possible adult disapproval. More often, however, Seuss lets fancy run free without equivocation or apology. A whole series of books from *McElligot's Pool* through *On Beyond Zebra!* and *If I ran the Circus* celebrates the wildest flights of fantasy. They usually begin in familiar surroundings, then move into an invented world where the scenery recalls exotic landscapes of *Krazy Kat* comics. There, just as Seuss's Elephant-Bird, Tufted Gustard, and Spotted Atrocious defy natural history, so his buildings and roads and mountains defy gravity, seeming always to be on the verge of total collapse.<sup>665</sup>

Though these stories are full of euphoric vitality, there is occasionally something uneasy and unsatisfying about them. Seuss's verbal inventions can become as shaky and overblown as the structures in his drawings. At the end of these books the elaborate language always does collapse. There isn't an abrupt return to simple dictation, and a simple, realistic illustration implicitly declares that Seuss's protagonist was only fantasizing.<sup>666</sup>

Innovative as he was, Seuss can also be seen as squarely in the tradition of American popular humor. His strenuous and constant energy, his delight in invention and nonsense recall the boasts and exaggerations of the nineteenth-century tall tale,<sup>667</sup> with its reports of strange animals like the Snipe and the Side-Winder...

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<sup>665</sup> "So his buildings and roads and mountains defied gravity, seemingly always to be on the verge of total collapse", the verge of total collapse to an adult's mind maybe, but not to a child's mind. Awareness in a child's mind or a mind which is self-actualizing is aware of one's world, able to see and hear, be aware of magic moments, peak experiences that have special significance. B-1 efficient perception of reality: is that of living in the real world of nature as opposed to the manmade mass of concepts, abstracts, beliefs and stereotypes that most people confuse with the world; according to Lurie's perception, the buildings and language of Dr. Seuss were on the brink of total collapse and shaky. Was it because she found it difficult to use her imagination, she kept her mind on manmade beliefs and stereotypes?

<sup>666</sup> Lurie was not comfortable with the way Theodor pushed the boundaries; she did not approve of fantasy, the buildings and language on the verge of collapse; this suspense is what grabbed the children's interest. Fantasy, what child would tell their parents crazy inventions when they, the parents, would probably like her, tell them to concentrate on the real world.

<sup>667</sup> With all the inventions in the nineteenth-century, it took nonsense thinking to think outside the box. If inventing were so easy, but as she wrote, it takes strenuous constant energy to be creative and inventive, more people would do it, it would be the norm and accepted. It takes energy to be one's own person, to be self-actualized.

For years Seuss's tales were hailed by experts as a wonderful way to teach children not only reading but moral values. Recently, however, a couple of them have run into opposition. Last year loggers in northern California went after *The Lorax* (1971)... Though Seuss said the book was about conservation in general, the loggers saw it as a blatant propaganda and agitated to have it banned from the school's required reading list. "Our kids are being brainwashed. We've got to stop this crap right now!" shouted their ad in the local paper, taking much the same belligerent anti-environmentalist tone as a Once-ler himself does went criticized:

I yelled at the Lorax, "Now listen here, Dad!  
 All you do is yap-yap and say 'Bad! Bad! Bad! Bad! Bad!'  
 Well, I have my right sir, and I'm telling you  
 I intend to go on doing just what I do!  
 And for your information, you Lorax, I'm figgering  
 on biggering  
 and BIGGERING  
 and BIGGERING  
 and BIGGERING  
 turning MORE Truffula Trees into Thneeds  
 which everyone, EVERYONE, EVERYONE needs!"

*The Butter Battle Book* (1984), a fable about the arms race, also provoked unfavorable comment... *The New York Times Book Review* considered the story "too close to contemporary international reality for comfort," while *The New Republic*, somewhat missing the point, complained that the issues between our real-life Zooks and Yooks were more important than methods of buttering bread.

Other, perhaps more relevant criticisms might be made today of Seuss's work. For one thing, there is almost total lack of female protagonists; indeed, many of his stories have no female characters at all.

.....

Seuss's most recent book, which has been on *The New York Times Bestseller* for thirty-nine weeks, also has a male protagonist. But in other ways *Oh! The Places You'll Go!* is a departure for him. "The theme is limitless horizons and hope," Seuss, now

eighty-seven years old told an interviewer, and the blurb describes the book as a “joyous ode to personal fulfillment”; but what it really reads like is the yuppie dream - or nightmare - of 1990 in cartoon form.<sup>668</sup>

.....

Gerald McGrew and Seuss’s other early heroes were content simply to fantasize success. *Oh! The Places You’ll Go!* has a different moral. Now happiness no longer lies in exercising one’s imagination, achieving, independence from tyrants, or helping weaker creatures as Horton does. It is equated with wealth, fame, and getting ahead of others. Moreover, anything less than absolute success is seen as failure – a well-known American delusion, and a very destructive one. There are also no human relationships except that of competition – unlike most of Seuss’s earlier protagonists, the hero has no friends and no family.<sup>669</sup>

Who is buying this book, and why? My guess<sup>670</sup> is that its typically purchaser - or recipient - is aged thirty-something, has a highly paid, publicly visible job, and feels insecure because of the way things are going in the world. It is a pep talk, and meets the same need that is satisfied by those stiffly smiling economic analysts who declare on television that the present recession is a Gunk that will soon be unthink, to be followed—*On Beyond Zebra!* - by even greater prosperity. (Fensch, Thomas. *Of Sneetches* 155 – 163)

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<sup>668</sup> Lurie revealed a different awareness than Dr. Seuss’s: stuck in an adult’s world of conventional thinking, lack of imagination.

<sup>669</sup> In self-actualization, the road is not filled with many people; in truth, it takes an inward listening to what is going on inside, to be different, to listen to the quiet voice. At this point in Theodor’s life he trusted where he had come from, the road where it had taken him. This character in *Oh! The Places You’ll Go!* is about mankind’s individual journey through life; the need to be detached, to be creative, to be who one is in the moment. This woman, Allison Lurie seemed to have a problem with the possibility of success, of teaching fantasy, of children being children.

<sup>670</sup> It is good this was Lurie’s “guess” because in reality it became a number one best-seller for years. In 1991 when Theodor died an article in *The New York Times* by Eric Pace read:

Mr. Geisel won the hearts and minds of children ... He also charmed adults, especially with "Oh, the Places You'll Go!," a 1990 book he wrote for adult readers as well as children, which has been on The New York Times best-seller list for 79 weeks.

In *Amazon* from 2011 through to 2018 it continued to be on the Best Seller list.

1991, September – Turning Loose

Sue Monk Kidd, wrote for *Guideposts*, giving her opinion of Dr. Seuss and his last book, *Oh, The Places You'll Go!*

Boxes are strewn across the floor of my son's room in various stages of packing... I stand in the doorway and watch Bob sort through the items in his room, deciding which ones he'll take to college and which ones he'll leave behind.

.....

I watch as Bob picks up a book he got as a graduation gift. It's titled *Oh, The Places You'll Go!* and has a swirling rainbow on the cover. He ponders the book a moment, then puts it back on the shelf. I remember when he received it some weeks earlier. "Dr. Seuss?" he said a little indignantly. "That's for children!"

That was my sentiment too, until I read the book jacket. "It says here this book is for people of *all ages*," I explained to Bob. "The perfect send-off for children starting out in the maze of life, be they nursery school grads or medical school achievers."

But he set the book on the shelf, unimpressed.

There was a time, of course, when my son would have done somersaults at receiving a Dr. Seuss book. Somewhere in the garage there's a whole box of them, along with all the other discarded remnants of his childhood.

I let out a sigh, wondering how this moment of life has arrived so quickly. Yesterday my child was sitting on my lap reading *The Cat in the Hat*. Tomorrow he's leaving home...

.....

The garage is layered with the stuff we can't bring ourselves to throw out... I rummage through an old box in the corner. At the bottom of it is the minnow net that I bought four-year-old Bob when Sandy and I took him for a summer vacation at the beach. Suddenly my chest feels like something inside is being torn from me. I sink down onto the cool cement floor and stare at the net through a blur of tears.

That summer vacation Bob and I had a daily ritual. We would go to the beach first every morning. We would spread out our towel and read Dr. Seuss' *One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish*. When we finished I would say, "Ready to catch red fish and blue fish?" And off Bob would go along the shore with his new minnow net, skimming for

fish, and I'd tag right behind him as if I were sewn to his shadow.

Fourteen years later I can see clearly in my memory: the chrome-colored waves sliding in and out and Bob, small and tawny-skinned, with this little net flying over his shoulder. I clutch the net to my breast with shaking hands.

I have not cried once over this nest-emptying experience, but now my grief spills out, grief for the little boy chasing blue fish. I'm surprised it hurts this much. Tears drop off the end of my nose. "Please, God," I cry. "Help me turn loose."

Later that night I wander back into Bob's room. "Did you ever read that Dr. Seuss book you got for graduation?" I ask. He shakes his head.

"Me either," I say. I pull it off the shelf, plop down on the bed and open it, thinking of the way I read to him on the beach that long ago summer.

I scan a few pages. It's filled with the inimitable Seuss rhymes and illustrations. "Listen," I say to Bob, who's playing a video game across the room.

He protests, "Aw, Mama."

But I read out loud anyway:

Congratulations!

Today is your day.

You're off to Great Places!

You're off and away!...

Oh, the places you'll go.

.....

As I read, Bob chuckles. Sometimes I chuckle too. The heaviness I've been feeling begins to fade a little.

One of the last pictures shows the dauntless adventurer single-handedly pulling a mountain behind like a wagon.

And will you succeed?

Yes! You will, indeed!

(98 and  $\frac{3}{4}$  percent guaranteed.)

When I closed the book, I notice Bob's eyes are fired with eager anticipation. I stare at the title of the book, *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* and a thought suddenly radiates in my mind as luminous as the swirling rainbow on the cover. *This time the shoreline Bob*

*will walk is life itself, and if he's going to become truly whole and independent, he needs to walk it on his own, without me tagging behind like a hovering shadow...*

.....

That night I do not sleep. I keep thinking about tomorrow. I keep trying to get the minnow net out of my dreams.

The next afternoon is warm and sunny as Bob, his father and I drive onto the campus, winding through redbrick, white-columned buildings and sprawling Southern Oaks. It is nice place. Big, but nice.

It takes six trips, from the car and up three flights to Bob's dormitory room, to haul all the stuff he's brought. I help him put his clothes in the drawers. "Remember, wash the whites separate from the darks. And don't wash wool. It shrinks," I tell him.

"I know Mama," he says. I look at him. Does he? Does he really know all these things?

There are suddenly about 50 other pieces of motherly wisdom I want to bestow on him...

I arrange a blue rug across the tile floor of the dorm room, then tuck a blanket around his bed. His father helps him put a poster on the wall. Finally, too quickly, it's all done.

We walk down the steps in silence. We pause on the sidewalk beside the car and stand there looking up awkwardly at one another, trying to figure out how to say good-bye.

He's wearing his all-star baseball cap, grinning at us from under the bill. His daddy grabs him and gives him a hug. Then Bob turns to me. I reach for him and hold him. Then I turn loose. It is nearly the hardest thing I ever did in my life. "You'll be fine," I tell him.

Sandy and I stand still on the sidewalk and watch him walk away. At the corner of the dormitory he looks back over shoulder and waves. I swallow real hard, then smile and give him the thumbs-up sign.

That night I go to the garage and take the minnow net from the box. I carry it into Bob's room, where I hang it on the wall beside the high school senior picture. In the lamplight the picture takes on a golden reflection, and the net seems to shine from the

rays of a sunlit beach. I stare at them both a long while, pondering the seasons of love in the mother's life, knowing there's a time to hold and a time to let go, a time to tag along and a time to wave good-bye.

Then I turn to the window, my heart traveling far into the night. "Oh, Son, the places you'll go!" I whisper.<sup>671</sup> (Fensch, Thomas. *Of Sneetches* 177 – 179)

September 26, 1991 – Author who delighted children with rhyming stories dies at 87  
The *Roswell Daily Record* reported:

.....  
"If you asked people today to name one children's author, I'd venture it would probably be Dr. Seuss," said Julie Cummins, the New York Public Library's coordinator of children's services.

"He had a wonderful talent for rhymery. He was a wizard at it," said Stan Berenstain, who with his wife, Jan, write the popular Berenstain Books for children. The couple credited Geisel for encouraging them to try their own hand at the children's books, and Geisel edited some of them.

First lady Barbara Bush said: "All of us are grateful for the laughter and the love shared by parents and children every time we read one of Dr. Seuss's classic tales together."

Geisel's works were journeys into nonsense, magical worlds of truffula trees, ziffs and zuffs and nerkles and nerds, where top-hatted cats run rampant through youngsters' homes while parents are away – despite the best efforts of scolding fish.

But they often included subtle messages on issues important to him, from internationalism to environmentalism...<sup>672</sup> ("Author who delighted children")

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<sup>671</sup> Sue Monk Kidd wrote this article the same month Theodor Geisel passed away. Though the story is about a mother's experience of sending her son off to college, the difficulties of letting go, her concern of will he remember everything, hoping he will be successful, it could also be an analogy of how Theodor felt preparing to die: the memories he had in writing *The Cat in the Hat*, and teaching children, his children – children of the world – to use their imagination and learn to read with fun; like Bob and his mother did on the beach with *Red Fish Blue Fish*; saying good-bye as children grow-up; hoping they would be successful and thinking: "Oh! The Places You'll Go!" As Kidd's heart traveled far into the night; so Theodor and Dr. Seuss were to travel into eternity, with the hope that each child too would go great places.

<sup>672</sup> A reflection of Theodor Seuss Geisel spoke of who he was and became: a wizard at rhyming, a man who brought laughter and love into homes by way of his books – touching both children and parents, a writer who took children onto journeys of nonsense without the supervision of their parents, and one who delivered subtle messages that were important to him and his core being. Self-actualization, according to Abraham Maslow is defined as this: "...the desire for self-fulfillment, namely, the tendency for him to become actualized in what he is potentially. This tendency might be phrased as the desire to become more and more what one is, to become



1991, September 26 - Yes, Dr. Seuss is dead – But not The Cat in the Hat<sup>673</sup>

Martin Merzer wrote for the *Elyria Chronicle Telegram*:

His work was whimsical and magical. One look at a child's eyes told you that. And rare was the American home that didn't harbor a Dr. Seuss book – usually under the bed, or maybe over there, in the corner.

Theodor Seuss Geisel, whose gift for rhymed fantasy introduced generations to the wonder of the written word...<sup>674</sup>

.....

Geisel's work reverberated with wondrous characters doing wondrous things. It was saturated with virtue, a right and wrong that children embraced instantly.

And, as any parent obliged to read the same story night after night knows, children couldn't get enough of it.<sup>675</sup> Secretly, perhaps, neither could parents, not with passages like this from "Green Eggs and Ham":

*I would not eat them here or there.*

*I would not eat them anywhere.*

*I would not eat green eggs and ham.*

*I do not like them, Sam-I-Am.*

---

everything that one is capable of becoming" (Maslow *A Theory* 7). In 1970, Maslow added a higher level after self-actualization, transcendence needs, that of helping others. The Press affirmed how Theodor helped others, how he evolved higher than self-actualization to transcendence.

<sup>673</sup> Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss's work transcended death. *The Cat in the Hat* and all his books would go on to help many more children, many more generations – dinosaur prints.

<sup>674</sup> Theodor's books were all over the world; he put magic and playfulness into his work which transferred into the children's minds, reflecting in their eyes; the fantasy he delivered brought wonder to the reader and a new love for the power of words and language. What was in Dr. Seuss's books began in the mind and heart of Theodor Geisel; he was a man of magic, fun, wonder, and a man who could harness the power of the written word to make it do as he pleased. It was his pleasure to bring joy and imagination to the realm of children's literature.

<sup>675</sup> Wondrous characters doing wondrous things with a virtue to give was what the children read night after night, never getting tired of repeating a story, a story with a right and wrong, better and more effective than a parent drilling a child with do's and do not's. Theodor told the rights and wrongs with a sideways slant.

“The children just enjoy his works so much and they seem to identify with everything,”<sup>676</sup> said Barbara Lewis, a librarian for 24 years, who now works at North Miami Elementary School. “Every media center in every elementary school in the country is stocked with his books.”

.....

Many of Geisel’s seemingly nonsensical works carried messages that seemed subtle but somehow reached children, who gladly explained it to their parents.<sup>677</sup>

“The Lorax” (1971) was a plea for a cleaner environment. Former President Lyndon Baines Johnson wrote to Geisel after receiving an advance copy. “I know my grandchildren will enjoy it,” Johnson said, “but no more than we will.”

The main character in “Yertle the Turtle” (1958) was a caricature of Adolf Hitler, or as Geisel once said, “A little domineering guy who pushes people around.”

.....

A modest man, he maintained that many of his finest creations developed almost by accident.

He said he wrote “The Cat in the Hat” (1957), one of his most memorable works, at the request of a friend publishing who was dissatisfied with the Dick and Jane brand of school books.

“I agreed to do it. I thought I could knock it off over a weekend. And he sent me a list of 50 words, because, at that time, you had to follow a word list to get in the public school system.

“People since then have thought that I was brilliant in choosing my subject the cat and the hat. But I chose them because they were the first two words I found on the list

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<sup>676</sup> Theodor always believed in not talking down to children but to give them equality and respect; perhaps this is one reason why children loved his work and identified with him; he identified with them; there was mutual respect; there was a love of laughter; their window, both Theodor’s and the children’s were bright and free of shutters.

<sup>677</sup> Theodor’s social interests A-2 for the environment, for the children, for society were welcomed by the children; Theodor was instilling in the very young, messages adults at the time, found it difficult to listen to, that with open ears or minds; they seemingly could not hear it, but their children could; for long-lasting effect, for real change, Theodor reached out to an audience who embraced a very real message wrapped around fantasy. Their hearts were open likened unto the windows Theodor spoke of.

that rhymed.”<sup>678</sup>

It took him months to write “The Cat in the Hat.” All of his books required more work than the casual reader might imagine.

“Whenever things go a bit sour in a job I’m doing, I always tell myself: ‘You can do better than this,’” Geisel told a reporter for the San Diego Tribune just two weeks ago. “The best slogan I can think of to leave with the U.S.A. would be: ‘We can do and we’ve got to do better than this.’”<sup>679</sup>

A tribute to Dr. Seuss

By Stephen Whitty

Knight-Ridder Newspapers

An elephant Horton,

A cat in a hat

And Bartholomew Cubbins, it’s true,

Are sad-eyed and weeping

Today and tonight

As folks give the doctor his due

It’s even brought tears

To the eyes of the Grinch

(And he never mists up at all),

And now there’s an ache

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<sup>678</sup> Theodor was comfortable with rhyming and understood how he worked; it came natural to find the rhyming words; he was familiar with what worked best for him, 8-B: finding out who one is, what one is, what is good for one and what is bad; he was a genius at rhyming and that worked; he did not consider himself brilliant, he just understood himself well.

<sup>679</sup> Theodor was a visionary; he saw into the future and his heart was touched; he had to do something about it; as he was departing, he wanted to leave this message that more must be done, and done better.

Steep, deep in is heart  
Which once was two sizes too small.  
There have always been two brothers Grimm,  
And even a motherly Goose,  
But to children in countries all over the world  
There was simply just one Dr. Seuss.<sup>680</sup>  
He taught us to read,  
And kept us amused,  
And made us all giggle and sing,  
And when he was done  
He taught our kids, too,  
Which was the most wonderful thing.  
They learned about trying to do what was right,  
And telling the truth 'cause they should,  
And then came the very best lesson of all,  
That it could be fun to be good.  
Because in the end,  
And after the jokes,

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<sup>680</sup> Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss were unique; they followed their own mission and call D-1: teaching countless children to read, to have fun, to laugh, amusing them, learning about right and wrong, and most importantly that it can be fun to be good; what a lovely and powerful mission and vocation. Yet, Theodor started out with the intent of becoming a professor of English literature, taking the track to Oxford but only for a year...it felt wrong to him and was evident to those close to him; there was another path he needed to follow, one that suited him better, and in the end, he made a profound and lasting mark in English literature as a writer and illustrator.

There was always a moral to see:

Clean off your plate

(even green eggs and ham?)

And treat everyone quite equally.

You see a person's a person,

No matter how small,

Or grown-up or young in the end,

And this week all

Of the persons who read,

Are missing a very dear friend.<sup>681</sup>

[Below the article there was this tribute to Dr. Seuss written by Whitty S.]

1991, September 26 – Children express grief over losing Dr. Seuss

In the *Syracuse Herald-Journal* the Associated Press wrote how children will miss Dr. Seuss:

Eight-year old Jeremy M. Bergstrom was typical of his classmates in wishing that his favorite children's writer, Dr. Seuss, was still alive.

"He was my favorite author out of all the authors, anytime," Jeremy wrote in a class essay Wednesday after hearing of the death of author Theodor Seuss Geisel.

"If I had three wishes, one of them would be for Dr. Seuss to still be alive," said the student at Monterey Hills Elementary School in South Pasadena.

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<sup>681</sup> Theodor aka Dr. Seuss was a friend to all. Characteristics of a good friend, one who is: honest in telling the truth, aware of surroundings, has the freedom to be who he or she is and is trustworthy in all.

His death touched school children everywhere.

Students at Monterey Hills and W L Valentine Elementary School wrote about their favorite Dr. Seuss books, among them "...And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street," "Green Eggs and Ham," "The Cat in the Hat," "Yertle the Turtle" and "Horton Hears a Who."

Valentine first-grader Noelle Sprunger drew a little blond girl with a purple bow and red shoes, with blue crayon tears streaming down her face.

At Monterey Hills, 8-year-old Marcile Vadell-Strickland wrote her essay as a personal letter to the author.

"Dear Dr. Seuss Wherever you are, I have been reading your wonderful books since I was a little baby," she wrote

"Since you're dead now, maybe when I get older, I'll be a children's story writer just like you were. I love you Dr. Seuss."

At Valentines, second graders made construction paper hats fashioned after the ones worn by Dr. Seuss characters, fourth-graders wrote reports, and in the school library, Dr. Seuss books were nearly all checked out.

"I'm kind of sad because his books were so good," said Chris Sommers, 9.

First-grader Taylor Knowles drew a scene from "The Cat in the Hat" in crayon.

Sloan Youksetter, another first-grader, placed his Grinch from "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" on a snowy hill next to a pine tree.<sup>682</sup> (Associated Press)

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<sup>682</sup> When Theodor wrote the Grinch it was as a result of looking into a mirror and seeing a Grinch looking back at him; he wrote the book *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* and realized that Christmas is not in the gifts/commercialism, but in the giving and sharing of love; the story says the Grinch's heart grew two sizes that day. Theodor gave and shared his heart with the children of the world; he did not hide behind what was considered right or wrong, behind stuffy conventions, but pushed the boundaries with fantasy mixed with truth, giving his best to his audience - children; his audience's heart too, like the Grinch's could not remain the same, it grew and came to love this man, Dr. Seuss aka Theodor Seuss Geisel. A-3 Interpersonal relations: capable of more fusion, greater love, more perfect identification and obliteration of the ego boundaries; Theodor found in being true to himself and his heart, listening not to the rules of adulthood and of society, but in letting go of the ego, kept his child within, kept his heart from hardening and shrinking, kept the shutters off and kept a clear bright window where he could laugh at life and share this joy with children.

1991, September 26 – Popular Children’s Author, Dr. Seuss, Died at Home

In the *Tyrone Daily Herald* Greenberg wrote the impact of Theodor Geisel:

.....  
 Children liked his writing because he understood them as equals, Geisel often said. His illustrations were another matter. His creatures often looked like stuffed animals missing much of their sawdust.

“I’ve taken the mistakes and refined them a little bit,” Geisel said in a 1986 interview with the San Diego Union.

“It’s all mistakes – controlled mistakes.”

“Horton Hatches the Egg,” published in 1940, reflected Geisel’s impatience with pacifist sentiment in America at the tie of international crisis.

.....  
 “Grinch,” made into a cartoon with Boris Karloff reading the title role, was a stark critique of the commercialism that had befallen Christmas, a 20<sup>th</sup> century version of Dickens’ “A Christmas Carol.”

“The Cat in the Hat” revolutionized children’s reading habits.

“That is what I am proudest of; that I had something to do with getting rid of Dick and Jane,” Geisel said in 1982.

“His philosophy was to try to give the kids as many good laughs to get them over the hump of learning to read,” Berenstein said.

.....  
 Of all his books, “The Lorax” was his favorite. “Oh, the Places You’ll Go,” published in 1990, has been on The New York Times’ best-seller list for 78 weeks. His last book, “Six by Seuss,” a collection of six previously published books, was published in July 1991.<sup>683</sup> (Greenberg, B.)

1991, September 26 - Dr. Seuss, Modern Mother Goose, Dies at 87

Eric Pace for *The New York Times* wrote:

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<sup>683</sup> Theodor worked right until the end; publishing a book only two months before his death; he had: “the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming” (Maslow *A Theory* 8) right unto death.

Theodor Seuss Geisel, the author and illustrator whose whimsical fantasies written under the pen name Dr. Seuss entertained and instructed millions of children and adults around the world,<sup>684</sup> died in his sleep on Tuesday night at his home in La Jolla, Calif. He was 87 years old.

.....

Mr. Geisel won the hearts and minds of children "by the sneaky stratagem of making them laugh,"<sup>685</sup> Richard R. Lingeman wrote in a review in *The New York Times*.

.....

Sales of "Horton Hatches the Egg," "The Cat in the Hat" and other children's books by Mr. Geisel totaled well over 200 million copies, Kathleen Fogarty, the director of publicity for Random House Books for Young Readers, said. She said he had written 48 books in his long career, some of them meant for adults as well as children.<sup>686</sup>

.....

1991, September 30 - Dr. Seuss left best legacy: Child's laugh

Ellen Goodman, a columnist for *The Boston Globe* wrote:

"He was a subversive of course...<sup>687</sup> Only the most literal and dullest of booksmiths would dare define Dr. Seuss's appeal by calling him a "children's writer."<sup>688</sup>

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<sup>684</sup> Life Mission D-1, Theodor's life mission was greater than in a classroom as a lecturer of English literature; he made history outside the classroom where later he would enter into the halls of learning to be studied as one of the greatest writers of children's literature – dinosaur prints.

<sup>685</sup> The power of laughter, opening the mind of the reader; Theodor at an early age decided to go for the laugh; as a child without knowing it, heeded the call within.

<sup>686</sup> Though a children's author, Theodor's books had stepping stones for all generations to follow, young and old.

<sup>687</sup> Theodor often admitted to being subversive. Subversive can be described as someone who is a: troublemaker, dissident, agitator, revolutionary, revolutionist, insurgent, insurrectionist, renegade, rebel, mutineer, traitor; many of his books, most of his books had notes and colors of these nouns. *The Cat in the Hat* came into Sally and her brother's home and seemingly caused trouble, at first; this was on their minds the entire time, what will Mom think? *Yertle the Turtle* caused a revolution with his burp. Theodor caused a revolution with his books, bringing down Dick and Jane, throwing out boredom and prissiness from the classrooms to bring in fun,



“Theodor Seuss Geisel... was subversive in the way that people who really speak to children are. They cut through the treacle, the mush and the fear. They side with the young and dismiss the rest of us for what we are: ‘obsolete children, and the hell with them.’”

This is the beauty, after all, of the writers who built Oz and Wonderland as well as Whoville. They recreated what Seuss called the “logical insanity” of a child’s world out of their memory and imagination.

What is it like for the people who inhabit a world full of chairs that are too big for them and rules they don’t understand? What does it feel like to be as small and complicated as a speck of dust in Hortons hand? “A persons a person no matter how small.”

Dr. Seuss, the creation and creator, was unlike most adults. He remembered. He retained a sense of the absurd, including the absurdity of the idea that growing up means losing your humor. So while too many adults spend their time teaching children the seriousness of the situation, he managed to sneak under the heavy door of learning. “Do You Eat Green Eggs and Ham?”

The Loraxes and Grinches, the Cats in the Hats and elephants on nests, began life not so far from Mulberry Street in Springfield, Mass. The boy’s sense of the absurdity of the adult rules came from his father, slated to be named president of a brewery on the very day Prohibition began. The fantastic menagerie grew out of Geisel’s visits to the zoo when his father became, instead, superintendent of parks.

Geisel spent the Depression drawing an endless series of cartoon ads for insect killer – bearing a single cutline: “Quick Henry, The Flit.” But in 1936, sitting on the deck of a Cross-Atlantic ship and turned the mind numbing rhythm of the engine into the beat behind, “And to Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street.” That began his running, giggling and sometimes warning commentary on the world.

If governments ignored the little folk, Horton heard a Who. If there were Hitlers

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laughter and a love of learning and reading. Theodor could have been considered a traitor to the adult world calling them obsolete; he had great regard for children; to be subversive to adults and their artificial boundaries, trivial barriers and cast systems was exactly what he put his energy into - Social Interests A-2.

<sup>688</sup> Theodor surpassed himself and went onto transcendence.

in the world, well, Yertle the Turtle was brought down by a single burp from his lowliest subject. If the environment was in danger, one child listened to the Lorax. And if the adult world worked one way, children worked another.<sup>689</sup>

He drew inhabitants for these places that resemble a collection of runaways from some mad genetic institute. He even gave them their own language, snuffled and snarggled, cried with cruffulous croaks and made snoggulous smokes.

But the subversion that pleased him the most was when he replaced Dick and Jane and their dreary little reader world with the rambunctious, irrepressible Sam-I-am. He excised Spot for a Fox in Socks.

Dr. Seuss was not universally loved. There were educators who thought that making up words was improper. There were loggers who thought the Lorax was dangerous. To which I say, Quick Henry! The Flit!

The world tells children to act their age all too often. School is Serious and Reading is Important. Today the Books are Relevant, the Subjects are Real Life. It's rare that an adult escapes all this, rarer still that someone comes along piping a message that says, Imagine This. Thing One and Thing Two.

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Ted Geisel has died. But in Dr. Seuss's reading room, it is still possible to laugh and think at the same time. In his pages, even parents still get permission to delight in the sounds of silliness. He has left a legacy of Truffula Trees, ziffs, nerkels, Grinches and stolen pleasures.

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<sup>689</sup> Theodor worked the way children work, with imagination, with fun, with laughter all mixed together with learning and seriousness. The government working for the children, forgot the children; they brought seriousness and boredom into the classrooms. The Hitlers in the world, those who think they can rule and reign by raising themselves by stepping on others are reminded that with a burp, they too can be brought down. The Lorax reminding generations, people, individuals, that it takes one seed to make a difference, one act to reverse a bad action, a wrongful doing. Theodor heard what most people could not hear. He had an awareness, an ability to know what was going around him, aware of his world; he could see and hear and then express this in his books. He had an efficient perception of reality B-1: he was born with perception.

“I think I have helped kids laugh at school and at home,” he said. “That’s enough, isn’t it?”<sup>690</sup> (Goodman).

1991, October 7 – The Doctor Beloved by All

Stefan Kanfer for *Time* remembered:

He was one of the last doctors to make house calls – some 200 million of them in 20 languages.<sup>691</sup> By the time of his death last week at 87, Dr. Seuss had journeyed on beyond Dr. Spock to a unique and hallowed place in nurseries of the world.

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For the past several decades, the white-bearded, bow-tie figure was a fixture in La Jolla Calif., along with his second wife Audrey. He toiled around in a car with a license plate GRINCH and continued to work despite four cataract operations and a heart attack. His later volumes revealed the teacher hidden beneath the torrent of mirth. *The Butter Battle Book* spoke of the dangers of the nuclear-arms race; his final work, *Oh, The Places You’ll Go!*, took on the meaning of life.

For Geisel, that meaning was never in doubt: “It’s wrong to talk about what’s wrong with children today,” he insisted. “They are living in an environment that we made. When enough people are worrying enough – about war, the environment, illiteracy – we’ll begin to get those problems solved.” Reason enough to believe:

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<sup>690</sup> Helping children, the future, learn to laugh at school and at home, what a great accomplishment of epidemic proportion. Laughter instead of sadness; laughter at school, in the portals of learning where the mind is to be challenged; laughter at home, where the heart is to be free and safe to grow. These characters Theodor created, Marco, The Cat in the Hat, Horton, the Lorax, the Grinch, what did they all have in common? They imagined, they listened, they cared, they broke the norms, they had fun and they laughed; and behind the laughter deep truths were told and continue to be told.

<sup>691</sup> Theodor became Dr. Seuss who went into millions of homes in 20 languages; potential was larger than a professor of literature; the seed within him was far reaching, not into one classroom but worldwide.

It was T.S. Geisel who provoked all the chortles  
 But it's old Dr. Seuss who has joined the immortals.<sup>692</sup> (Fensch, Thomas. *Of Sneetches* 199 - 200)

1994, April 22 – THE MEDIA BUSINESS; Dr. Seuss Rights Are Sold

*The New York Times* reported a much desired acquisition regarding Theodor Geisel's works:

Living books, a joint venture of Broderbund Software Inc. and Random House Inc., has purchased the multimedia rights to the classic children's books of Dr. Seuss, among the most sought after in the publishing and computer industry.<sup>693</sup>

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The terms of the deal and the value of the rights were not disclosed, but more than 200 million copies of the 48 Dr. Seuss titles have been sold.

Among the companies that had bid for the rights were paramount publishing and Microsoft Corporation. ("THE MEDIA BUSINESS")

1995, December 1 – UCSD Holds Dedication Ceremonies for Geisel Library

In recognition of a substantial gift to the University of California, San Diego, Libraries by Audrey S. Geisel, the former Central University Library was officially named Geisel Library in dedication ceremonies today.

The naming ceremony recognized Audrey Geisel's gift and honored her and her late husband, Theodor Seuss Geisel, the venerated author of Dr. Seuss children's books.

The donation will be used to enrich the library's collections, increase access to print and electronic resources, and promote information literacy.

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<sup>692</sup> Theodor's mission in life was a living mission; it was not enough to talk but he had to do; the problems facing society were addressed by Dr. Seuss with humor, fantasy and action. He provoked the adults by dismissing them and going to the children, hoping they would get the message, share it with their parents; as the parents read to the children at night, they too, the adults heard the wisdom of Dr. Seuss and Theodor Geisel. Surely he provoked their thinking and he still does...an immortal with living books still read all over the world.

<sup>693</sup> The children's books of Dr. Seuss, considered among the most sought after, revealed the power of imagination, creativity, morals, literacy, and humor – characteristics of self-actualization.

Noted UC President Atkinson in his talk today: “UCSD has always been remarkably fortunate and its friends, and especially fortunate to number Ted and Audrey Geisel among them. Their generosity has created a stunning public/private partnership that will enrich the lives of students and scholars for generations to come, as the Geisel Library takes its place among the nations great university collections.”

In announcing the gift in September, Audrey Geisel said it was “a perfect fit-first, because promoting literacy was one of Ted’s most cherished goals, and secondly, because he claimed that if he had strayed into the field of architecture he would have come up with a building that was not too dissimilar from the library design by architect William Pereira.”

While the amount of the endowment was undisclosed at Audrey Geisel’s request, it is the largest gift in UCSD’s history and believed to be the largest single donation ever made to any San Diego institution.

Three years ago Audrey Geisel gave the library \$2.3 million notebooks and other memorabilia dating from the 1970s to the 1990s. Substantial other material has been added to the UCSD collection since that time, so that the Dr. Seuss collection now reflects the breath of his creative work throughout his career.

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The newly-named Geisel Library – considered by many to be the center of UCSD

intellectual life – opened in 1970 and its space doubled in 1992 with an all-underground addition. The eight story, oddly configured building – widest at the six floor – embodies the whimsical, imaginative spirit found in the Seuss books. Said biographer Neil Morgan,

“Ted thought the library design was unexpected, dramatic and provocative, and he loved going there” ...<sup>694</sup> (UCSD)



Fig. 54 The Library. “Geisel Library at University of California San Diego.” UC San Diego, 1995.

<sup>694</sup> The whimsical and imaginative spirit found in Theodor’s books reflect the words used to describe the library, Geisel Library, named after him: unexpected (he was unexpected and did the unexpected in his life), dramatic (Theodor was dramatic in his books and in entertaining his private guests with hats and impromptu skits), provocative (known to be subversive in every

1997, November 24 – Hometown honoring the man who put a hat on a cat

Tim Cornel for *Daily Herald* reported on the plans to remember Dr. Seuss with bronze sculpture:

They're building a statue of a man of renown, setting it up in the middle of town.

Not a man on a horse or a tank or a gun, but a man at his work, who likes to have fun.

His name was Ted Geisel, but once on the loose, he found fame as the great Dr. Seuss.

For in Springfield, Mass., his ideas were hatched of the Lorax, the Sneetches, and the Cat in the Hat.



Fig. 55 “Dr. Seuss National Memorial Sculpture Garden.” Springfield, MA. Bronze sculptures by Lark Grey Dimond-Cates; Digital photo image by Coralee Friesen-Prutzman, 2016.

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In front of the library and three museums, the city plans a series of six bronze sculptures celebrating their favorite son and his most popular books, if it can raise \$6 million to pay for them. The sculptures will be executed by Geisel’s stepdaughter Lark Grey Dimond-Cates.

“I should be scared witless of this, but I don’t have any doubts,” Ms. Dimond-Cates says... “I’ve thought more about him now than I ever did in my life, trying to get it

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sense of the word yet highly moral) and as he loved to draw and write, going into his mind to bring out and create a world of fantasy filled with zany creatures, he created a place children and adults loved to go. It is fitting that where his archives are held, University California San Diego, it has been named after him. Each book within the library, millions of books, on the outside of the spine have the words written: Geisel Library. How far can one go, what is their capability? Theodor Geisel’s self-actualization did not stop with his death; it became more and more of what he was - a visionary: continuing to become everything that one is capable of becoming - immortal, leaving dinosaur prints.

right. Dr. Seuss was so pure, so magical. I'm trying to find a way to capture that."<sup>695</sup>

Dr. Seuss wasn't always so appreciated. His children's books first popped up during 1950s, in the Dick and Jane period of children's books. Though he grew up in Springfield – home of Merriam–Webster, the arbiter of proper language – his books tossed propriety on its ear. His chaotic scenes, topsy-turvy grammar, and made-up words were reviled by the education establishment, which feared children would be confused. Instead, his books let children in on an inside joke.

“Seuss was cautioning children– indirectly, never preaching, but using the whimsy and satire – not to take the world, especially the adult world, on its full face value”, says California State Librarian Kevin Starr.

When they're completed in 1999, the sculptures will be positioned in the park to point out the messages in Dr. Seuss' books... *Yertle the Turtle*... “It's the story of dictatorship versus democracy, the flow of history.”

... *The Lorax*... reminder of the dangers of unbridled development... *Sam I am*... the third best-selling book in the English language... his first book, *And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street* ... a statue of Geisel working at his desk, with the Cat in the Hat peering over his shoulder. “It's like a double portrait,” Dimond-Cates says. “They're alter egos – both are tall, elegant, shy, and mischievous.”<sup>696</sup> ... (Cornell)

## 2002 – Dr. Seuss National Memorial Sculpture Garden

Opened in 2002, the Dr. Seuss National Memorial Sculpture Garden was first envisioned when Ted Geisel visited Springfield in 1986.<sup>697</sup> After his death in 1991, his

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<sup>695</sup> “Dr. Seuss was so pure, so magical,” from a woman who lived with Theodor, his step-daughter, Lark Grey Dimond-Cates.

<sup>696</sup> 4a-V Dichotomy: transcendence, acceptance, resolution, integration, transcendence of dichotomies, polarities, opposites, synergy, transformation of oppositions into unities, of antagonists into collaborating or mutually enhancing partners; this definition of a B-value by Maslow defined perfectly the relationship between Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss. In the words of the sculptor herself, Lark Grey Dimond-Cates, Theodor's step-daughter, speaking of the bronze statue of Theodor Geisel aka Dr. Seuss, it was: “a double portrait...alter egos - both are tall, elegant, shy, and mischievous.”

<sup>697</sup> First envisioned in 1986, five years before Theodor's death; vision is required before actualization. This occurred throughout his entire life; growing up and experiencing the animals at the zoo, getting a picture of them in his head; intelligently he told himself that since he could not draw them as they were, he would go for the laugh and draw them in comic form.

wife Audrey authorized the creation of a national memorial and provided major support for the project. In 1996, Ted's stepdaughter, noted sculptor Lark Grey Dimond-Cates, was selected to make over 30 bronze statues for the Museums' grounds. (Springfield, MA.)

#### 2004, February 5 – Theodor Seuss Geisel Issue

The 37-cent Theodor Seuss Geisel commemorative stamp was issued on March 2, 2004, in La Jolla, California. Carl T. Herrman of Carlsbad, California, designed the stamp.

The stamp honors Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, on the 100th anniversary of his birth.<sup>698</sup> A Pulitzer Prize-winning author and illustrator, Dr. Seuss has introduced countless children to the joys of reading.

The stamp features a color photograph of Geisel taken in Dallas, Texas, in 1987. In the stamp design Geisel is surrounded by his illustrations of six characters from his books. From left to right:

- The Cat in the Hat from "The Cat in the Hat " (1957)
- The Grinch (with color added) from "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!" (1957)
- The Glotz (or the identical Klotz) from "Oh Say Can You Say?" (1979)
- Three characters from the 1965 book "I Had Trouble in Getting To Solla Sollew": the Skritz, the anonymous "young fellow," the Shrink

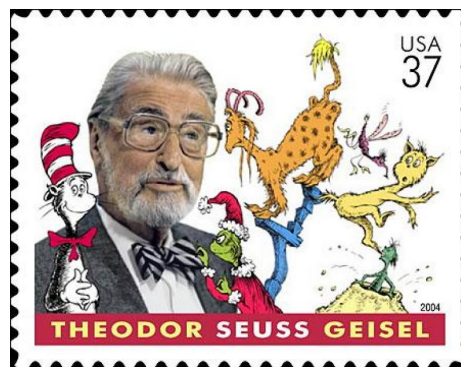


Fig. 56 Arago. "Theodor Seuss Geisel Stamp." March 2, 2004.

Sennett Security Products printed 172 million stamps in the gravure process. (Arago)

<sup>698</sup> "Better known as Dr. Seuss"; Theodor's other half, Dr. Seuss, was the famous one; but who was it who created the zany creatures, the imagination where adults felt the buildings were about to crumble or the English language was pushed to extremes; Dr. Seuss was the child within Theodor Geisel. It was the two together, working as one.



2004, February 28 – The Rise of Seussism

Ian Garrick Mason, wrote for the *National Post*: “Dr. Seuss adopted radical, avant-garde techniques in both his illustrations and storytelling, using them to encourage children to see beyond the mental limits imposed by their society.”

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Seuss never adopted the cynicism that plagues many of today's postmodernists. A successful American ad man rather than a bomb-throwing radical, he retained our trust as a mildly eccentric uncle with whom our children would come to no harm. Though he adopted radical, avant-garde techniques -- surrealism, subversion of language, ambiguity -- he employed them in constructive ways that encouraged children to see beyond the mental limits imposed by their society. We can do better, he was saying. If it is true, as cultural historian Robert Hewison asserted in *The Heritage Industry*, that "postmodernism is modernism with the optimism taken out," then we can thank Dr. Seuss for having put the optimism right back in again.<sup>699</sup> (Mason)

2004, March 1 – Celebrating 100 Years of Dr. Seuss

Michelle Morgante, wrote for the *Appeal Democrat*, interviewed, wife of Theodor Seuss Geisel, as she continued his legacy:

At the end of his life, Theodor “Dr. Seuss” Geisel sat down with his wife, Audrey, to speak of the past and of things to come.

“I’ve had a wonderful life,” Audrey Stone Geisel recalls him saying. “I’ve done what I had to do. I lived where I wished to live. I had love. I had everything.”<sup>700</sup>

“But,” he said, “now my work will be turned over to you. And you’ll have to deal with those consequences.”

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<sup>699</sup> Considered an optimist yet with radical, avant-garde techniques: surrealism, subversion of language, ambiguity... Theodor created a relationship with modernism and optimism, as he created a relationship with Dr. Seuss, opposites, a quiet, shy man to an expressive, bold creator; as well, he created a relationship with children, considered to be a father, a grandfather, an uncle to generations of children, though he was radical, he was trusted and loved, and all are grateful for what he put into children’s lives – past, present and future.

<sup>700</sup> Theodor in his own words recognized his self-actualization.

Nearly 13 years after her husband's passing, Geisel leads the global enterprise that has sprouted from Seuss' beloved books – watching over the Cat in the Hat, the Grinch and all the other critters and characters who live on in movies, toys, games and ventures that perhaps not even the imaginative doctor could have envisioned.

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Audrey Geisel is presiding over a year's worth of ceremonies celebrating "Seussentennial: A Century of Imagination."

The events include the debut of a Postal Service stamp; a tour of theatrical performances and children's workshops that crossed 40 cities; a series of Dr. Seuss celebrity book reviews; exhibits of items from the Dr. Seuss archives and of Ted Geisel's art; the unveiling of a Dr. Seuss sculpture at the Geisel Library at the University of California, San Diego; and the presentation of a star honoring the author on Hollywood's Walk of Fame.

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Children continue to love Seuss, even in an age when babies seem to "come down the birth canal with a computer," Geisel says.

In a world buzzing with action, she says, it is all the more important to share with them the original seed of the Seuss enterprise – the nonsensical yet completely sensible Seuss words.

"Just to have their favorite Seuss story read to them by a parent – that is the most calming, uniting, understanding thing that one generation can share with an oncoming generation."<sup>701</sup> (Morgante)

2004, March 2 – You Rock, Doc

Lisa Friedman Miner for the *Daily Herald* wrote 100 fantabulous things about Dr. Seuss (aka Theodor Geisel)!

For decades, Dr. Seuss taught tiny Americans to read. More importantly, he made them *want* to read. Dr. Seuss introduced generations of fans to whimsical, colorful

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<sup>701</sup> To share a book with a child is to create calm, unity and understanding from one generation to the next. In World War II, Dr. Seuss was cited to bring calm to the home and unity to the family. To this day and on-going, Dr. Seuss aka Theodor Geisel, continues to share the love and fun in reading, encouraging imagination, laughing and thinking differently.

creatures – beloved buddies like sweet, loyal Horton and the great, grumpy Grinch.

He celebrated all that was silly, and reveled in the reason of rhyme. And he did all that while nudging readers to reject bigotry, embracing environment and learn to live in peace.<sup>702</sup>

Today, Dr. Seuss– aka Theodor Geisel – would have turned 100. Though he died more than a decade ago, his classics continue to delight children and parents across the globe. So happy birthday, doc. And long live the Cat!

Dr. Seuss has sold more than 500 million books worldwide... (Miner)

#### 2004 – Theodor Seuss Geisel Award

The Association for Library Service to Children established an award to honor Theodor Geisel:

The Theodor Seuss Geisel Award is given annually to the author(s) and illustrator(s) of the most distinguished American book for beginning readers published in English in the United States during the preceding year. The winner(s), recognized for their literary and artistic achievements that demonstrate creativity and imagination to engage children in reading, receives a bronze medal. Honor Book authors and illustrators receive certificates, which are presented at the ALA Annual Conference. The award was established in 2004 and first presented in 2006.

The award is named for the world-renowned children's author, Theodor Geisel. "A person's a person no matter how small," Theodor Geisel, a.k.a. Dr. Seuss, would say. "Children want the same things we want: to laugh, to be challenged, to be entertained and delighted." Brilliant, playful, and always respectful of children, Dr. Seuss charmed his way into the consciousness of four generations of youngsters and parents. In the process, he helped them to read.<sup>703</sup> (Association for Library Service to Children)

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<sup>702</sup> Theodor's transcendence was that of teaching a love of reading, a respect of differences – rejecting bigotry, taking care of the environment – embracing the environment, and learning to live at peace; at 100 years, he had given much and continued to do so, even after his death a decade before – dinosaur prints.

<sup>703</sup> A challenge to the world was given by Theodor Seuss Geisel - to never forget the little people; to let them be children as they need: to laugh, be challenged, be entertained and delighted. How is this done? As Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss did: brilliantly, playfully and

2008, May 28 – Geisel, Pauling named to California Hall of Fame

SAN DIEGO – The late Theodor “Ted” Geisel, aka Dr. Seuss, and Nobel Prize-winning chemist Linus Pauling were among the dozen people named to the California Museum's California Hall of Fame Monday.<sup>704</sup>

Geisel, a longtime La Jolla resident, was the most popular author of children's books in American history. He won Academy Awards, Emmy awards, Caldecott honors and a Pulitzer Prize during his career. He died in 1991. (UNION-TRIBUNE)

2010 – Theodor Seuss Geisel, Lives and Legacies

Donald E. Pease, Professor at Dartmouth College, wrote in his book, *Theodor SEUSS Geisel, Lives and Legacies*, about the life of Theodor, giving insight into the works of Dr. Seuss and the legacy he left as America's favorite children's author. The inside cover of the dust jacket reads: “Dr. Seuss's infectious rhymes, fanciful creatures, and roundabout plots not only changed the way children read but also how they imagine the world.” The preface listed Theodor's accolades as a person:

In the course of his sixty-five-year career, Theodor Seuss Geisel was an advertisement agency artist, animator, producer and director of animated cartoons, caricaturist, playwright, short story writer, documentary filmmaker, lyricist, teacher, political cartoonist, and editor and author of children's books. Early in his career he invented the persona of Dr. Seuss to integrate these disparate facets of his creative personality. But Dr. Seuss did not wholly commit himself to authoring books for children until the 1950s.

Dr. Seuss's children's books have enjoyed phenomenal commercial and critical success. Dr. Seuss's works, which have changed the way children everywhere learn how to read, have been translated into fifteen languages. More

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respectfully – those are how adults who nurture, teach and raise children need to be... to act, to live; that is a tall order. Theodor Geisel did it, so must we.

<sup>704</sup> As a graduate at Dartmouth, Theodor was not expected to go great places, having played a joke on his father, he ended up at Oxford only to realize he was not cut out to be a professor of literature but something greater; writing a letter to explain why he wrote Brat Books, being looked down-upon. In his own words: “This, in the Thirties in the writing profession, was not a sign of going forward. This was a step down. A loss of face” (Seuss “Brat Books”). Now he was in the Hall of Fame.

than 200 million copies of his books have been sold worldwide. Six books have been published posthumously. In 2001 *Publishers Weekly* listed fourteen Dr. Seuss's books among the top one hundred all-time best-selling hardcover children's books...<sup>705</sup>

2012, April 4 – Dartmouth Names Medical School in Honor of Audrey and Theodor Geisel

Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth is the fourth-oldest medical school in the United States:

Dartmouth College announced today the naming of its medical school, founded in 1797, in honor of Audrey and Theodor Geisel. Their generosity to Dartmouth during their lifetimes and through their estate plan renders the Geisel family the most significant philanthropist to Dartmouth in its history. Theodor “Ted” Geisel, known worldwide as the author and illustrator, “Dr. Seuss,” was a Dartmouth graduate of the Class of 1925.

“Naming our school of medicine in honor of Audrey and Ted Geisel is a tribute to two individuals whose work continues to change the world for the better,” said Dartmouth President Jim Yong Kim. “Ted Geisel lived out the Dartmouth ethos of thinking differently and creatively to illuminate the world’s challenges and the opportunities for understanding and surmounting them. His vivid storytelling – with its whimsical imagery, fanciful phrasing, and deeper meaning – lives on and raises children’s literacy around the world to new heights by entertaining, amusing, and educating.<sup>706</sup> Audrey and Ted Geisel have cared deeply for this institution, and we are enormously proud to announce this lasting partnership.” (Office of Communications)

2014, April 22 - Reading Rockets' interview with Audrey Geisel

*"I've got it!"*<sup>707</sup>

He was his own person. There was no one that would tell him anything about his

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<sup>705</sup> Did Theodor realize how he would continue to self-actualize even after his death? To become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming. Out of one-hundred books, fourteen Dr. Seuss's books took their place; one author, ten years after his death; his work, his imagination, his morals, his books... were among the best-selling hard cover children's books; transcendence – his gift was helping children to read – and read with fun!

<sup>706</sup> Transcendence to a high level of not just reading but in all walks of life.

<sup>707</sup> Trust: D-2 Autonomy: an inner directedness, independence of culture and environment, responsible for themselves, they are their own bosses following their own star.

work... And so it would be, when he had an idea, when it was a new idea, he'd come scuttling in, kinda like that, and tell me, "I've got it." "I've got it." What I learned [is] that he didn't want an answer. He wanted nothing. He just wanted to let me know he had "it" – whatever "it" was going to be.

...As I was saying, when he had the idea, he'd share that he indeed had the idea, and then he'd hit the desk, and he'd stay with it night and day; made no difference that it was one o'clock, two o'clock, three, four, five – no difference at all. Till he had it really fleshed out. Till he personally was satisfied with it. He was not aware of the time at all.

Then, when he reached a place where he couldn't take it further for one reason or another, then he'd get out the easel and he'd begin an original painting.

*A challenge for Ted Geisel*<sup>708</sup>

In Ted's writings, he tended to be very specific. He tended to put as much time in as he felt necessary and that he felt he wanted to. And he had friends who would say "I'm going to do a children's book on the weekend. This weekend is open. I'll bring it up, see what you think." That used to privately gall him. He worked so hard on every book. And the fact that some wouldn't have more than 250 words – that in and of itself was such a challenge.

He was given that challenge by Bennett Cerf [Seuss' publisher at Random House]. They were very good friends, and [Bennett] would say, "I betcha can't do it in 225," something like that. And that would get to Ted, and he'd get it down there somehow. It might take months and months to really make it readable after he had his 225 words. But, he was open to that kind of challenge.<sup>709</sup>

...People recall Bennett Cerf as a TV person on talk shows and that sort of thing, but he had declared more than once that he had one genius at Random House, and that was Ted Geisel. They were very good friends, and he did put forth challenges to Ted.

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<sup>708</sup> D-1 Life mission: a problem outside themselves that requires much of their energy; the making real of the inner self which is understood as constitutional and that means what you love, what you are interested in, what excites you, what fascinates you, and that is the cause outside yourself which paradoxically then becomes the defining characteristic of yourself: Theodor loved a challenge; the challenge put before him was to write books children would love and write books to perfection.

<sup>709</sup> Theodor had surrounded himself with people who challenged him; life challenged him; he responded with unconventional ideas and thoughts; he was who he was, right to the very end.

And Ted couldn't stand a challenge that he didn't respond to. And Bennett knew just where to hit him. Tell him he couldn't tell a complete story in a certain amount of words, very few words, because that is quite a challenge. And that would take Ted quite a time.

...As time went along, no one at Random House ever touched his books. He would do the book. He would then illustrate the book, or illustrate first and then write it. And he'd ship it East to Random House. No one ever edited it. No one ever touched it. It went right to press. And that had never been done before, and Random House has not done that since. They edit everything, but they never edited Ted's work.

*Dr. Seuss's favorite book*<sup>710</sup>

I've been asked many times what was his favorite. First of all, he liked each one; he was like a father. He liked all his children, each particularly in the time of their conception.

When it comes to Ted's books, I love them, and I find such clever things. I like "this" for that book, and I like "that" for this book. But one of my very own personal, private favorites is the one about Ted. It had a very remarkable time when it came out, and that was *You're Only Old Once*.

*Every book had a message*<sup>711</sup>

Every book had something that was morally important, but rather masked, but always there. Otherwise, Ted would not have said from time to time, "Am I getting preachy?" He did not wish to seem to be preaching.

He was putting forth a variety of messages. Case in point: Horton. "A person's a person, no matter how small." "An elephant's a hundred percent" – that kind of thing.

And what his characters did was – imagine an elephant sitting in a tree all that

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<sup>710</sup> Honesty: A-3 Interpersonal relations: relation that is capable of more fusion, greater love, more perfect identification and obliteration of the ego boundaries, a higher love that is a purer love. Theodor loved the children he wrote for and the books he wrote; the more he gave the deeper he grew.

<sup>711</sup> Honesty: A-2 Social interest: a deep feeling of identification, sympathy, and affection in spite of the occasional anger, impatience and disgust; a desire to help, must do something about it out of compassion trying to help and be involved. Theodor's messages came from his identification with the human species; yet, desired not to be pushy; this would have taken the play and fun out.

time, never leaving. I was so happy that out of that egg came an elephant bird – little, tiny elephant bird out of there. That was fun.

*A career that spanned 50 years*<sup>712</sup>

I think he had a span of 50 years, more or less, of turning out, more or less, a book a year. And as time went along, they began to have a definite message. [Sometimes he asked me,] "Am I preachy?" He really thought he held the preacher portion in very good control. But he wanted to hear it, and so I would tell him, "You have a message. Anyone that puts pen to paper has a message, or what are they doing? But," I said, "You're not preaching at all."

And he wasn't. It was hidden so beautifully by, oh, "The Sneetches On the Beaches." That was a hidden message there. All you got were stars on the bellies, or not. That [story] started down at the beach and tennis club. There were the haves and the have-nots, so why not show that by a star on "thar's," and none on "thar's"? That's how that worked out.

*A tad subversive*<sup>713</sup>

He wanted to free the children from parental presence. He wanted to be a tad subversive about that. And besides that, it was more innocent times, and now you wouldn't dream of leaving them alone. But you could at that time. Not recommended, but you could. But from Ted's point of view, that wasn't the story. It was what happened in the absence.

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<sup>712</sup> Again, D-1 Life mission: a problem outside themselves that requires much of their energy; in the case of Theodor Geisel a career spanning 50 years...and more – like dinosaur prints: worthy to be studied and cherished, on-going.

<sup>713</sup> Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: that of the real world as opposed to manmade mass of concepts, abstracts, beliefs and stereotypes that most people confuse with the world; Theodor had clear eyes, sharper acuity through befuddlement. B-4 Ethical awareness: discrimination between ends and means, strongly ethical, notions of right and wrong are often generally not the conventional ones. Theodor thought differently about children; to free the children from parental presence, perhaps not physically, but mentally, to allow children to be children: to imagine, to laugh, and to have fun.



*A working relationship*<sup>714</sup>

Well, I was a sounding board, and I think a very intuitive, important sounding board. And I also became the colorist as we went further and further into color charts – that sort of thing. And I was a confidant, of course. And I was the very loving caregiver. Keep the systems going. Maintenance.

*From primary colors to shades of lavender*<sup>715</sup>

Ted had worked with primary colors: yellow, red, black. With the Lorax and the story of *The Lorax*, it was absolutely imperative [to include the] various shades of lavender, mauve, grey – all those shades that are really quite complicated. I think there were times that Random House felt, "What is happening here? We have to have a complete scale of colors." And I was putting out the colors.

But you had to [use vibrant colors], because the Barbaloots were leaving through this "smogulous fog." You're not gonna pick red, white on that, you know.

So, I came in at that time, and every book from there on in became far more color-conscious – subtle color-conscious.

*If he had been an architect...*<sup>716</sup>

There was one thing that I knew I was going to do for Ted... I had taken him out to UCSD [University of California, San Diego] when their library was finished. And it was such an unreal building. And I thought it was fabulously original, special. And I took him up, and I showed it to him. And he looked at it, stood around it, looked at it, snorted once or twice and said, "Well, if I'd ever strayed into architecture, that would probably look quite similar." And at that moment, that building was the Geisel Library.

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<sup>714</sup> Freedom: C-1 Detachment: the need for privacy, often to remain above the battle; Theodor did not like crowds but he depended on Audrey (and his first wife, Helen) to give feedback.

<sup>715</sup> Awareness: B-1 Efficient perception of reality: can see color differences, sharper vision; Theodor during his entire career was very specific about the colors he chose for illustrations. Details mattered to him. He could see differences and would spend time at the press to be sure it would come out exactly as he wanted.

<sup>716</sup> Trust: D-2 Acceptance: of self, others, and of nature, a perception of reality, they do not fight with reality; Theodor accepted that he had been a child's author; yet knew he could have been something else if he had chosen. He accepted the road he traveled.

*Dr. Seuss's legacy*<sup>717</sup>

I just know that what he left as a legacy is the fun of learning when you don't know you're learning. I think the legacy is that he pleased children. He pleased the parents of children. And he's here for all time.

*A hug from one generation to the next*<sup>718</sup>

Reading to a child something that you have read that meant a great deal to you – you are touching that child in more than one way. You're touching him. He's getting it first time, but he's realizing it's part of you, and that you knew about it before he did. There's something very warming about that. It's like a hug. (“Transcript – Reading Rockets”)

2016, March 13 – Celebrating Dr. Seuss

Subtitle: “Birthday of legendary children’s author launches week of reading and fun”; written by Mary Newport, for *Brazos Life* newspaper; she went to the Angleton Library to see what all the fun was about.

There are quotes that transcend their medium – songs that everybody knows, movie dialogues everybody recognizes, speeches we can all identify. Some are inspirational: “I have a dream...” Some take us back: “Nobody puts Baby in a corner.”

On March 2, book lovers celebrated the man who gave us possibly the silliest of these quotes, some of the most joyful nonsense ever to catch the imagination of a nation: “I do not like green eggs and ham!”

Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, wrote more than 60 books during his lifetime, becoming famous for works like, “Horton Hears a Who,” “The Cat in the Hat” and “How the Grinch Stole Christmas.”

Geisel’s birthday, March 2, has been adopted as the annual date for National Read Across America Day, an initiative of reading created by the National Education Association.

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<sup>717</sup> Transcendence - a higher level after self-actualization, that of helping others; Theodor’s legacy lives on: the fun of learning when you don’t know you’re learning.

<sup>718</sup> A hug, transmitting a warm feeling and sentiment from one person to another; Theodor gave many hugs to millions of children and parents.

“Dr. Seuss is such a popular children’s author. We try to use it to promote reading,” said Layna Lewis of the Angleton Library.

“His stuff is silly, nonsensical, it’s wonderful. It’s just a promotion to get kids to read.”<sup>719</sup>

The Angleton Library hosts a celebration on Dr. Seuss’ birthday every year as part of Read Across America, but this year, it decided to extend the festivities. Kids were able to partake of a variety of come-and-go activities every day through Saturday.

“We wanted to start out the week before Spring Break to get people interested. We wanted activity centers that the kids could come and go all week,” Lewis said. “We have a whole slew of them right now.

Word’s getting out. It’s educational.” (Newport)

2017, May 27 – The world’s first Dr. Seuss museum is opening in Springfield

Kristi Palma for *Boston.com* reported the future opening of Dr. Seuss museum:

The Amazing World of Dr. Seuss Museum, the world’s first museum dedicated to Dr. Seuss, will open in Springfield next Saturday, June 3.

In true Seussian fashion, the museum’s debut will be celebrated with a Cavalcade of Conveyances parade down Mulberry Street, the street that Springfield native and iconic children’s author Theodor Seuss Geisel, aka Dr. Seuss, immortalized in the book *And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street*.

Expect a procession of 1,200 kids marching and performing original music inspired by Dr. Seuss, local dignitaries, antique cars, and an open-topped double-decker bus—all moving beneath a 75-foot Cat in the Hat balloon, said Kay Simpson, president of Springfield Museums. On the museum lawn, stilt walkers will roam, and families can check out hands-on art activities and Dr. Seuss readings...<sup>720</sup>

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<sup>719</sup> A desire to get children to read is exactly what Theodor Seuss believed in and worked for all his life. He once said that if parents would put stacks of books out in the house, a child would eventually pick one up and begin to read, and like it.

<sup>720</sup> Just as Marco, in *And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street*, imagined a great parade, Theodor’s life became great through the power of his imagination and self-actualization.

### Conclusion Chapter III

Maslow wrote that after self-actualization, transcendence is the highest level, that of helping others; in this giving there is a relation “between inner and outer, between self and world” ... “they are transient experiences, and not permanent ones. If this is a going into another world, then there is always a coming back to the ordinary world” (Maslow *The Farther Reaches* 157 – 159). Theodor’s relationship with Dr. Seuss allowed him to create worlds to enter first for himself; in these places he could reflect, find reason, understand and make sense of the real world to deal with it his way, to go back and forth from self and world, dealing with the inner and outer and in this become self-actualized. At the same time he created worlds for children to enter, helping them to also make sense of the world through a child’s mind and imagination: a world of happy nonsense (Cahn), a wonderful world (Cahn), a wacky world (Bunzel), a bizarre world of Sneetches, Grinches, Loraxes, Ooblecks, multiplying hats and strange cats (Diehl), a child’s world (Goodman), a mad revolutionary world (Renthal), and a world of humor and joy (Renthal), to name a few; yet, he always brought his audience back to the real world; in this creating transient experiences to share, bringing joy and laughter. He was able to do this because he was a man who “retained a fresh perceiving system, naturally communicating an understanding of children’s energies, needs, and desires” (Cott 25). Both women closest to Theodor agreed, “His mind ... has never grown up” said Helen in 1959 (*Fensch 11-13*). Audrey, twenty-seven years later confirmed, “That ‘kid’ is Dr. Seuss’ inspiration ... He maintains something terribly worthwhile that most other people no longer have after maturity ... After the children’s hour, the crazy little kid grows up, and he’s a crazy grownup. [Ted’s] mind just keeps flipping out ... getting kind of crazier all the time” (Harper). Was he crazy or just a man who refused to forget how to laugh, play and have fun? Ellen Goodman, less than a week after his passing, described Dr. Seuss, unlike most adults, he kept a sense of the absurd; “including the absurdity of the idea that growing up means losing your humor.”

In becoming self-actualized, the impact of Theodor’s life mission had great purpose within, to lift the child’s spirit, to give liberty and freedom, to give voice to the little of the littlest, to create a desirable path in the process of learning to read and learn, to love and appreciate the English language, and to bring families together to share in the experience of imagining the unimaginable. His creations would also have a great impact on who he himself

became. As his father was sure to shut up Cyril with the hundred and fifty million years old dinosaur print, Theodor Geisel would out-do a one-time desired doctorate from Oxford; he not only earned one honorary doctorate, no, he was bestowed eight honorary doctorates. He never became a professor of literature but became the Father and Grandfather (Frutig) of children's literature, entering classrooms, homes, universities and beyond. The footsteps and cornerstones he made, created dinosaur prints beyond his imagination: opening up new possibilities for children's literature, creating his own microcosmic universe, fathering a whole martyr mythology of bizarre creatures, becoming a part of basic children's literature worldwide, revolutionizing the field of reading and education by throwing prissy, prejudiced, and totally outdated (Lurie) Dick and Jane out with Spot, changing the way children were looked upon and treated, giving children a place to go and imagine without their parent's voice and delivering lifelong messages to the world. These indeed were large footprints made by a giant – Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss, the two working together at just the right time in history.

Theodor sits with the other giants: Edward Lear, Sinclair Lewis, Booth Tarkington, Robert Frost, Lewis Carroll, Hans Christian Andersen, Aesop and Beatrix Potter; never to be forgotten, "but" ... "because his drawing and imagination are so outlandish the weird menagerie of potbellied, strangely name creatures ... has put Geisel in a class by himself as the creator of children's books and a wacky world" ("Local Boy Made Good"). Theodor preferred to do things his way and looked through the wrong end of the telescope; he listened and followed the voice within leaving dinosaur prints behind.

## DISSERTATION CONCLUSION

The hypothesis of this paper was: “Theodor Geisel became self-actualized by Dr. Seuss.” Self-actualization defined simply: “A musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write, if he is to be ultimately happy. What a man can be, he must be...the tendency for him to become actualized in what he is potentially” (Maslow *A Theory* 7). Maslow suggested that it is easier to test SA on an older person or a historical person because they can be studied indirectly. He wrote that when the subject became aware of the research, they became “self-conscious, froze up, laughed off the whole effort, or broke off the relationship. As a result, since this early experience, all older subjects have been studied indirectly, indeed almost surreptitiously” (*Motivation and Personality* 151). He went on to say that:

“since living people were studied whose names could not be divulged, two desiderata or even requirements of ordinary scientific work became impossible to achieve: namely, repeatability of the investigation and public availability of the data upon which conclusions were made. These difficulties are partly overcome by study of people and children who could conceivably be used publicly.” (151-152)

Examples of historical figures he proposed for case studies of SA: Abraham Lincoln (1809 – 1865), Thomas Jefferson (1743 – 1826), Eleanor Roosevelt (1884 – 1962), Jane Addams (1860 – 1935), Albert Einstein (1879 – 1955), William James (1645 – 1707), Aldous Huxley (1894 – 1963) Baruch Spinoza (1632 – 1677), Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 – 1882), Frederick Douglass (1818 – 1895), Pierre Renoir (1885 – 1952), Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807 – 1882), Thomas More (1478 – 1535), Walt Whitman (1819 – 1892) and others are listed in his book, *Motivation and Personality*, p. 152. Thus, my case study has been, Theodor Geisel, his life, work, and the audience’s reception. This study could be repeated and it would be interesting to see what another researcher’s findings would be, but to conclude, the following are the main points summarizing each chapter; followed by the conclusions, future work, and closing thoughts.

Chapter 1: Biography – Footsteps, the points summarized are as follows:

- Difficult events in Theodor’s life made him think, pressed his consciousness, and forced his voice to speak out through Dr. Seuss.

- Challenges made Theodor perform; especially when they were given by friends, the audience, and societal challenges and injustices.
- He took the difficult road; never the easy road.
- He profited from each day, living life to the fullest.
- A close network of friends surrounded Theodor, pushing and encouraging him.
- He viewed the world different than the norm; through the wrong end of the microscope.
- He was a man who pushed himself and the boundaries constantly.
- Theodor knew his strengths as well as his weaknesses, capitalizing on these.
- Theodor found a door to enter through - Dr. Seuss; it was his means to express himself fully and freely.
- Theodor kept momentum moving from one success to the next; this is how he SA.
- His failures, specific areas or works of weakness, he distanced himself from.

Chapter 2: Books – Stepping Stones, the points summarized are as follows:

- His books reveal a path for society to follow; to become better versions of one's self individually and collectively.
- He used his books as a platform to express himself.
- His books reveal the ongoing work within Theodor, the transformation into SA and transcendence.
- His books reveal a methodology for learning: frame learning with fun and laughter and keeping at the center, imagination with a free voice and mind - imperative.
- The characters in Dr. Seuss's books exemplify characteristics of SA: honesty, awareness, freedom and trust.
- The characters are from a child's point of view; they are often talking to and challenging the adults in the stories.

Chapter 3: Reception – Dinosaur Prints, the points summarized are as follows:

- The children embraced Dr. Seuss immediately.
- The adult world was cautious at first to accept someone and something different: a subversive way of thinking; eventually, the audience welcomed and anticipated what Theodor created.
- Theodor was unexpected.
- Theodor came on the scene at a specific time in history when change was needed.

- There was a dichotomy between parents and children in relation to Dr. Seuss's books – thinking exact opposite.
- His audience pushed Theodor, encouraged him; the need drove him to give children voice and their own unique place in society.
- Theodor's impact on children's literature made a legacy and continues to touch the audience's hearts and minds – dinosaur prints: there was no one like him, unique.

#### The Conclusions from the Findings:

- Theodor Geisel through Dr. Seuss did become self-actualized; he was born to be an illustrator and writer and indeed became one of the greatest children's author of all time.
- The main historical events in his life affected his individual growth in his convictions and experiences; one can see the SA characteristics in play. See table 2, page 512.
- The chronological order of the books reveals the inner SA of Theodor Geisel; looking at the themes in chronological order can also give importance to what a child needs in progression to become SA.
- The most famous books of Dr. Seuss reveal characteristics of SA. See table 2, page 512.
- The books create a hierarchy of basic psychological needs for children comparable to Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs. See diagram 4, page 513.
- The two men, Theodor Geisel, 1904 – 1991, and Abraham Maslow, 1908 – 1970, were presenting something new and different in their time, at the same time period; Theodor with his comic and zany outspoken characters and Maslow with his positive view of self-actualization; they ran parallel to each other in much of what they believed and presented; their works complement the others; they both have lasted the test of time and remain the "Fathers" of what they created: Theodor Geisel, Father of children's literature and Abraham Maslow, Father of the theory of hierarchy of needs and self-actualization. See table 2, page 512.
- Not only did Theodor Geisel become SA, he went beyond to transcendence in helping others, giving to society; Dr. Seuss continues to be in the hearts of people; his books continue to be bestsellers. In the "Longest-Running Children's Best Sellers of 2017" of Publisher's Weekly, under the title of Picture Books, Dr. Seuss has three out of ten books listed: 42 weeks, *Dr. Seuss's ABC Board Book*; 35 weeks, *Oh, The Places You'll Go!*;



and 30 weeks, *Green Eggs and Ham* (Milliot, Jim). Theodor Geisel continues to touch the hearts and minds of people all over the world.

- Carl Rogers, according to this research was not correct in thinking the environment had to be correct to be self-actualized; difficult times created in Theodor the character and truths he lived by which guided him to SA.
- SA is an on-going process; the choices one makes creates the road of destiny and SA.

Abraham Maslow's Main Characteristics of Self-Actualization	Major Events in the life of Theodor Geisel	Dr. Seuss's Best Selling Books	Theodor Geisel's life & Dr. Seuss's Main Themes in his Books
A. Honesty: A-1 Humor A-2 Social Interest A-3 Interpersonal Relations	World War I - as a child, Theodor felt rejection and was bullied; the truth was brutal, yet his family was honest with the reality and hardworking with a German background. Humor was a way to deal with the truth and human relations.	<i>How the Grinch Stole Christmas</i> – the Grinch realized that Christmas was more than presents and decorations; Christmas lay in the hearts of mankind. Theodor in writing the Grinch looked in the mirror and saw the Grinch; he was honest with himself. The Grinch when he confronted his thoughts, the reality made his heart grow.	Honest with himself, his talents, his likes, dislikes; in social issues he was brutally honest and confronted mankind by way of cartoons and books; he kept real relationships close and select.
B. Awareness: B-1 Efficient Perception of Reality B-2 Freshness of Appreciation B-3 Peak Experiences B-4 Ethical Awareness	The Great Depression – Theodor became aware of the need and reality to illustrate and write at the same time for financial success.	<i>The Lorax</i> – the Lorax was aware of the greed in man's heart and what this greed had the power to do – destroy the environment. Theodor was aware of the danger of pollution and greed, creating an ethical awareness with this book.	Aware entire life of surroundings, events, issues, people, appreciated details, and ethically he was aware right until the end; his books speak of social issues and awareness of the heart and mind.
C. Freedom: C-1 Detachment C-2 Creativeness C-3 Spontaneity	Prohibition - Theodor created his pseudo name – Dr. Seuss, expressing himself at Dartmouth with the <i>Jack-O-Lantern</i> ; with his expression he could be creative, spontaneous and free with his thoughts.	<i>The Cat in the Hat</i> – Sally and her brother through the Cat in the Hat experienced freedom to think different, be creative and act spontaneous as children are born to be. Theodor through Dr. Seuss found freedom.	Lived a life of doing his own thing, constantly creating and responding to the events around him and his voice within; his books hold these themes of individuality, imagination, and fun.
D. Trust: D-1 Life Mission D-2 Autonomy D-3 Acceptance	World War II – Theodor found his life mission in illustrating and writing books for children – there was a great need; the GI babies; Theodor spoke out against social injustices.	<i>Green Eggs &amp; Ham</i> – Sam is encouraging an older man to try green eggs and ham. Trusting one's self to try new experiences, be true to oneself, to find one's purpose and trust it. Theodor's friends encouraged him to be true to himself; Theodor learned to trust his inner voice.	Confidence developed in him as a child in difficult times, guided him to his purpose, following his own rhythm, and embracing himself; his books have purpose, uniqueness, and within the audience finds a place to be who they are, trusting themselves and finding their own unique voice.

Table 2. "The On-Going Process of SA in Theodor Geisel's Life Events, Books, and the Dichotomy of Theodor and Dr. Seuss." Prutzman, Coralee, 2018.

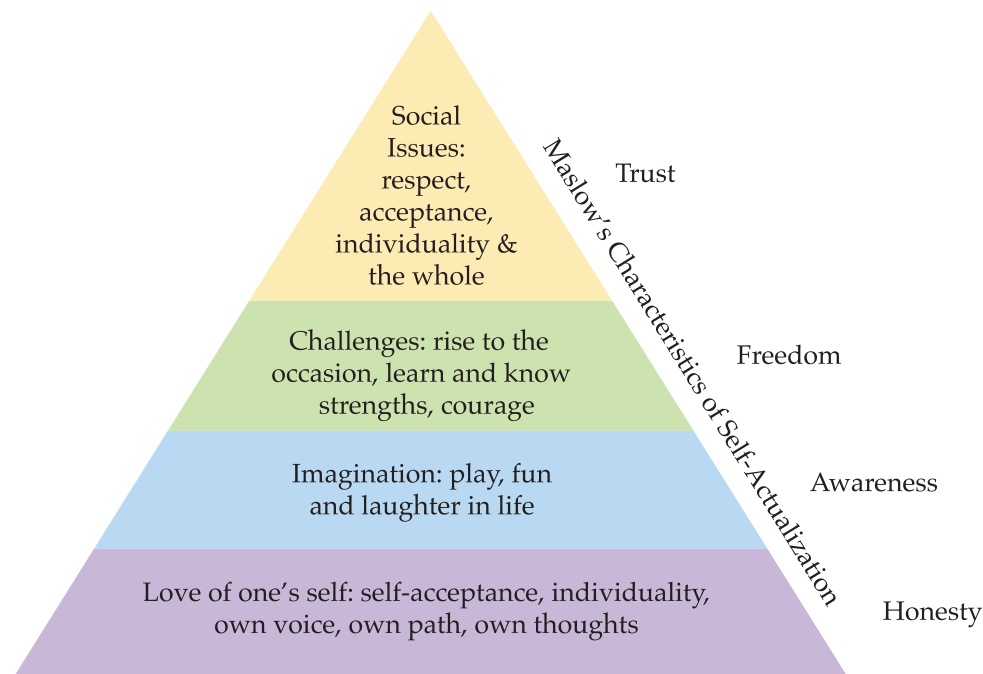


Diagram 4: Dr. Seuss's Themes of Importance in Books; Prutzman, Coralee, 2018.

The Future Work in this Field of Study has the Following Potential:

- Look at Theodor's paper: "But for Grown-ups Laughing Isn't Any Fun", written in 1952; do an in-depth study on his thoughts on laughter and how it relates to an open mind.
- From Theodor's article: "Brat Books on the March", published November, 1960 in *The Los Angeles Times*, how has the mentality changed in the twenty-first century; also, Theodor's thoughts and convictions on the importance of writing for children, how did he develop his convictions in his books?
- Looking at a body of work from an author, see what can be found as a whole, from the entire corpus – it creates a bigger picture of the author, the message(s), societal awareness and what can be learned and what is on-going, relevant today and for the future.
- Compare Theodor's private art work to his books; what are the differences? Similarities? Themes?
- How have children's books progressed, digressed, kept similarities, changed since Dr. Seuss?
- Apply the code created in this paper: Abraham Maslow's SA characteristics, B-Values, and behaviors leading to SA - into education, professional development courses and other applicable areas where SA is encouraged and spoken of.

- Go back to the basics of SA and do further research on authors, artists, political leaders and other notable people; researching to see if there are similarities, differences and patterns between the individuals' lives, work, and reception.
- Use the hierarchy of themes from this research paper, according to Dr. Seuss's work, apply them to educational programs and curriculum in schools, in everyday areas of social interaction and in future books.
- Look closely at Theodor's early cartoons and political cartoons as this was his beginning before writing children's books; many of his core beliefs may lie within these cartoons; research how he further developed these into his stories.
- Compare his political work to his books; similarities and differences.
- The main characters in Dr. Seuss's books could be researched: comparing and contrasting, finding significant meanings.
- Study Theodor's films: the similarities, the differences; what human need was he addressing?
- Do detailed research on Theodor's artistic style; how it relates to other cartoon artists of the time, example Charles Schultz.
- Develop the research on Theodor Geisel as a man of vision.
- Theodor said he was a subversive man; who did he say this to? What created this subversive voice in him?
- The weight of success, did it wear on him? How did his gifts of illustration, words, thoughts, and communication weigh him down until he began to share them with others? This is referring to his book: *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*.

### Closing Thoughts

In closing thoughts, Maslow wrote that SA people are “primarily an intellectual group, ... most of whom already have a mission, and feel that they are doing something really important to improve the world” (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 173). Theodor was born with a purpose: in his books for children he delivered imagination, hope, joy, laughter, fun in learning to read, individuality, subversive thinking, relief, humor and play. Theodor Geisel became self-actualized by Dr. Seuss; the four major characteristics of a self-actualizing person according to Abraham Maslow: honesty, awareness, freedom and trust, were constantly and vividly apparent

in Theodor's life and work as a result of the door he created, discovered, and destiny brought to him through Dr. Seuss. The two dichotomies, Theodor Geisel and Dr. Seuss "were resolved, the polarities disappeared, and many oppositions thought to be intrinsic merged and coalesced with each other to form unities" (Maslow *Motivation and Personality* 178 – 179). Not only did he self-actualize, "to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming" (Maslow *A Theory* 8) but went on to the highest tier in Maslow's theory of hierarchy of needs, transcendence, that of helping others: "transcendence refers to the very highest and most inclusive or holistic levels of human consciousness, behaving and relating, as ends rather than means, to one-self, to significant others, to human beings in general, to other species, to nature, and to the cosmos" (Maslow *The Father Reaches* 269). Each person has a unique purpose; through SA, the calling has a greater need, that of helping society, giving back, to make this world a better place for the individual(s) and society as a whole.

Looking at Theodor Geisel's life, examining his footsteps, one can see a man who took specific steps which lead him to SA; he found and developed himself. One can compare these steps to Maslow's characteristics of SA and see how they inter-lap and correspond with each other. Dr. Seuss's books leave stepping stones, keys for children to learn at an early age - fundamental truths for a lifetime. Not only are his books for children, the books are for parents to take note of as they read to their children - guiding themes for mankind lie within. His reception revealed how mankind responds to a person who is honest, aware, free and trusting of themselves: the audience are often taken back, hesitant, observant, and critical; yet, when they see depth, truth, applicability, and validity – for the development of man in a positive direction, the audience comes on board, are accepting, are hungry and become supportive and loyal individuals, followers, and students. Theodor's audience did just that, both children and adults. The impact Theodor left on his audience, mankind, was and continues to be monumental, likened to dinosaur prints.

The relevancy of a man's work keeps his legacy alive; a work that continues to speak to the conscience and condition of man, giving hope and laughter. In Theodor Geisel's aka Dr. Seuss's case, he made immeasurable footprints and left a living legacy; as man continues, one generation to the next, applicable truths found in his books remain foundational and fundamental. Theodor Geisel through Dr. Seuss continues to speak to generations of people, the

little people and the big people, one book at a time, one Lorax at a time, one Grinch at a time, one Cat in the Hat at a time... it takes just one to change the hearts of man.

## ANNEX

## Code to Self-Actualization

Characteristics of Self-Actualization	Being (“B”) Values of Self-Actualization	Being (“B”) Values of Self-Actualization Continued	Behaviors Leading to Self-Actualization
A. Honesty: A-1 Humor A-2 Social Interest A-3 Interpersonal Relations	1-V Truth: honesty, reality, nakedness, simplicity, richness, sensuality, pure, clean, unadulterated completeness	8-V Completion: ending, finality, justice, fulfillment to destiny	1-B Experiencing fully, vividly, selflessly, with full concentration and total absorption.
B. Awareness: B-1 Efficient Perception of Reality B-2 Freshness of Appreciation B-3 Peak Experiences B-4 Ethical Awareness	2-V Goodness: rightness, desirability, justice, benevolence, honesty	9-V Justice: fairness, suitability, necessity, inevitability, non-partiality 9a-V Order: lawfulness, perfectly arranged	2-B A process of choices, one after another.
C. Freedom: C-1 Detachment C-2 Creativeness C-3 Spontaneity	3-V Beauty: aliveness, simplicity, richness, wholeness, perfection, completion	10-V Simplicity: honesty, nakedness, essentiality, abstract unmistakably, essential skeletal structure, bluntness	3-B There is a self to be actualized.
D. Trust: D-1 Life Mission D-2 Autonomy D-3 Acceptance	4-V Wholeness: unity, synergy, homonymous 4a-V Dichotomy: transcendence, integration	11-V Richness: complexity, intricacy, totality, nothing missing, everything is equally important	4-B When in doubt, be honest rather than not.
	5-V Aliveness: spontaneity, self-regulation, full functioning, expressing itself	12-V Effortlessness: ease, lack of strain, grace, perfect, beautiful functioning	5-B Making better choices; to be courageous rather than afraid, take responsibility for listening to inner voice and being honest.
	6-V Uniqueness: idiosyncrasy, individuality, novelty	13-V Playfulness: fun, joy, amusement, gaiety, humor, exuberance, effortlessness	6-B The process of actualizing one’s potential; becoming smarter, using one’s intelligence.
	7-V Perfection: nothing lacking, everything in its right place, just-rightness, justice	14-V Self-sufficiency: autonomy, independence, not-needing-anything other than itself	7-B Transient moments that break illusions; getting rid of false notions, learning what one is not good at. 8-B Finding out who one is, what one likes, what one doesn’t like, what is good for one and what is bad, where one is going and what is the mission.

Table 3. “Code to Self-Actualization According to Abraham Maslow.” Prutzman, Coralee; created from an interview between Shostrum, E. L. and Maslow, Abraham, (1968); *Youtube*, uploaded by Biophily2, N.d. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=7DOKZzbuJQA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7DOKZzbuJQA).

## Livret du Doctorant Érasme FRIESEN Coralee

Numéro	Période/Date	Événement/Activity	ECTS hours	Type
9815	13&14/10/17	Les interventions de l'inconscient au XIX <sup>e</sup> siècle – 16h	5.50	activités scientifiques pers.
9814	13/02/16	Dr. Seuss exhibit – West Palm Beach Florida – 4h	2.00	activités scientifiques pers.
9811	23/10/15	Dartmouth College Hanover, New Hampshire – Special Collection Dr. Seuss – 8h	2.00	activités scientifiques pers.
9817	24/11/17	Defense of thesis – 3h	1.00	activités scientifiques pers.
9816	24/11/17	Defense of thesis – 6h	2.00	activités scientifiques pers.
9812	26au28/10/15	Special collection research – Université de California San Diego - 24h	8.00	activités scientifiques pers.
9813	28/10/15	Interview avec Audrey Geisel – 3h	1.00	activités scientifiques pers.
9807	30/04au03/05/15	Special collection research – Université de California San Diego - 32h	10.50	activités scientifiques pers.
9806	avril 2015	Chuck Jones Gallery – California – Seuss Collection - 3h	1.00	activités scientifiques pers.
9799	dec. 2017	Colloque en humanités médicales – 16h	5.50	activités doctorales
9800	dec. 2017	Poets & Critics symposium – Université Paris 7 – 20h	7.50	activités doctorales
9801	dec. 2017	Les rituels de l'enfance – 8h	2.00	activités doctorales
9802	fev. 2018	Le sang : monter ou occulter ?	3.00	activités doctorales
9803	fev. 2017	Symposium on Carla Harryman's work	6.00	activités doctorales
9809	mai 2015	Legends Gallery of La Jolla – California Seuss Collection – 3h	1.00	activités scientifiques pers.
9808	mai 2015	Interview Linda Claasen – 1h	1.00	activités scientifiques pers.
9797	nov. 2016	Oscar Wilde, écrivain et penseur – 3h	1.00	activités doctorales
9796	nov. 2016	The conversational turn in Shakespeare – 2h	1.00	activités doctorales
9798	nov. 2017	Open Access – 3h	1.00	activités doctorales
9810	oct. 2015	Springfield Museum – Research in library – 10h	5.50	activités scientifiques pers.
9795	oct. 2015	Plurilinguisme et auto-traduction – 8h x 2	5.50	activités doctorales
9794	oct. 2015	La première séance du Paris Early Modern Seminar – 2h	1.00	activités doctorales
9804	sept. 2016	Séminaire avec Juliette Vion-Dury – 1 semestre	8.00	activités doctorales
9805	sept. 2017	Séminaire avec Juliette Vion-Dury – 1 semestre	8.00	activités doctorales

Table 4. “ECTS”; Livret du Doctorant Érasme FRIESEN Coralee.pdf, Université Paris 13 – Sorbonne Paris Cité / Université Paris-Sorbonne, 30 January 2018.

activités doctorales	total ECTS : 49.5
activités scientifiques personal	total ECTS : 40.5
<b>En tout</b>	<b>total ECTS : 90</b>

## Works by Dr. Seuss – Well Known Books Included in Chapter II

1937

- 1.0 *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Vanguard Press, 1937.

Imagination – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme with most illustrations printed in five colors. It is the first published book written by Dr. Seuss, which he initially titled: *The Story That No One Could Beat*. The book was dedicated to Helene McC. “Mother of the One and Original Marco.” Helene was the name of Marshall McClintock’s wife; Marshall was a friend from Dartmouth who was responsible for publishing this first book. The book is about a boy who imagines a series of incredible sights on his way home from school so that he will have an interesting report to give his father.

1938

- 2.0 *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Vanguard Press, 1938.

Acceptance of self – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme with black and white illustrations highlighted in red (Lindemann 10); later editions have colored illustrations. The book was dedicated to Chrysanthemum-Pearl (aged 89 months, going on 90), the imaginary daughter of Helen and Theodore as they could not have children. The book is about a boy, Bartholomew Cubbins, whose hat when taken off as the king passed, another hat appeared on the boy’s head. This hat created an adventure for the boy and the king, in the end bringing something good to each of them.

1939

- 3.0 *The Seven Lady Godivas* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random Press, 1939.

Power of determination – fiction for adults. The story is written in prose with black and white illustrations highlighted in red. The book was dedicated to the seven lady Godiva sisters. The book is about the seven lady Godiva sisters and how after their father departs to go to war and his horse rears up and kills him, the sisters make a vow that they will not marry until they find a horse truth that will help mankind. This book according to Theodor was a disaster; the plates were destroyed in 1945; in 1967 the book was reissued.

- 4.0 *The King’s Stilts* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random Press, 1939.

Balance of work and play – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme with black and white illustrations highlighted in red. The book was dedicated to Alison Margaret Budd and Deirdre Clodagh Budd. This book is about King Birtram who after his work of protecting the kingdom from the Nizzards everyday plays by walking on his stilts. His stilts are stolen and his kingdom almost is destroyed by the Nizzards until the stilts are found and the kingdom is saved.

1940

- 5.0 *Horton Hatches the Egg* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random Press, 1940.

Determination and the importance of keeping one’s word – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme with black and white illustrations highlighted in blue, green and red. There



is no dedication in this book. This book is about Horton the elephant who is asked by Mayzie the bird to look after her egg while she goes on vacation; he says he will and keeps his word through many difficult challenges.

1947

6.0 *McElligot's Pool* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House 1947. Power of possibilities and imagination – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme with black and white illustrations with some pages having various colors, mostly blue and green. This book is dedicated to T. R. Geisel of Springfield Mass., the world's greatest authority of Blackfish, Fiddler Crabs and Deegel Trout. This book is about Marco and how his imagination finds great things to catch in the farmer's pond taking Marco's imagination on a worldwide tour of what can be caught in the water. This book earned a Randolph Caldecott Honor Award by the American Library Association.

1948

7.0 *Thidwick, the Big-Hearted Moose* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House 1948.

Kindness has a limit; there is a time to say no – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme with black and white illustrations with highlights of red and blue. This book was dedicated to his wife, Helen: EXTRA MOOSE MOSS for HELEN. This book is about Thidwick, a moose, who when asked by various animals and insects if they can ride along with him in his antlers, he cannot say no because of his big heart; eventually with a host of guests now ruling his life, Thidwick has one last hope to get rid of his guests.

1949

8.0 *Bartholomew and the Oobleck* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1949.

Being thankful; taking responsibility for one's actions; the power of saying, I'm sorry and it's my fault – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme with black and white illustrations having highlights of green. This book was dedicated to Kelvin C. Vanderlip, Jr., Theodor's godson. This book is about Bartholomew Cubbins, the page boy, of King Derwin in the Kingdom of Didd; the king is tired of what falls from the sky and makes a wish for something new to fall; the magicians cast a spell and Oobleck falls from the sky creating a disaster for the king and his kingdom; with a few magic words, the spell is broken and the Oobleck disappears. This book earned a Randolph Caldecott Honor Award by the American Library Association.

1950

9.0 *If I Ran the Zoo* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1950. Imagination – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme with black and white illustrations having highlights of red, yellow and blue. This book was dedicated to Toni and Michael Gordon Tackaberry Thompson, his godchildren of James Thompson and Peggy Conklin. This book is about a young boy named Gerald McGrew and his thoughts and imaginations on how he would run a zoo.

1953

10.0 *Scrambled Egg Super!* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1953.

Imagination – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme with black and white illustrations with highlights of red, yellow and blue. This book was dedicated to Libby, Orlo, Brad, and Barry Childs. Orlo and Libby (Elizabeth) Childs were close friends of Theodor and Helen. This book is about a little boy, Peter T. Hooper, who takes his sister on an imaginary world tour to collect ingredients to create a super meal.

1954

11.0 *Horton Hears a Who!* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1954.

Respect for the little of littlest – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme with black and white illustrations having highlights of red and blue. This book was dedicated to Mitsugi Nakamura of Kyoto, Japan; a Kyoto university professor Theodor had met while touring Japan to see the effects of the war on the youth. This book is about Horton, an elephant who hears a little *Who* the size of a speck and helps save their people. The book was made into a movie.

1955

12.0 *On Beyond Zebra* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1955.

Imagination and curiosity – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme with black and white illustrations having highlights of red and blue. This book was dedicated to Helen, Theodor's wife. This book is about Conrad Cornelius o'Donald o'Dell, a young boy, who explains to an older boy that he knows all the alphabet; the older boy listens and then says his alphabet starts where Conrad's alphabet stops; he describes his alphabet beyond zebra.

1956

13.0 *If I Ran the Circus* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1956.

Imagination and vision in others for greatness – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme with black and white illustrations having highlights of red, yellow and blue. This book is dedicated to Theodor's Father: for my Dad, Big Ted of Springfield / The Finest Man I'll Ever know. This book is about a boy named Conrad, who sees a vacant lot behind Mr. Sneelock's store; Conrad imagines the greatest circus on earth with Mr. Sneelock becoming the hero.

1957

14.0 *The Cat in the Hat* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1957; also published by Houghton Mifflin as a textbook, 1957.

Imagination and subversive thinking – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme with black and white illustrations having highlights of red and blue. This book is about a girl named Sally and her little brother; the Cat in the Hat comes to visit and brings adventure with him; a little fish is watching and is sure their mother would not like the Cat's adventures. This was the first book for the *Beginner Book Readers*; it has a limited vocabulary of 223

different simple words to help children learn how to read. This book was a response to the growing illiteracy in United States; Rudolf Flesch and John Hersey were writing articles encouraging and asking for change. Theodor responded with this book. It was the turning point in his career.

- 15.0 *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1957.

Love and kindness to self and mankind – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme with black and white illustrations having highlights of red. This book was dedicated to Teddy Owen, Theodor's nephew. This book is about the Grinch who does not like Christmas and tries to destroy the *Whos'* Christmas by taking all the presents and decorations away Christmas Eve, only to find that Christmas is more than this; it is the love in the heart that is shared. In 1958 this book was made into a cartoon and since then continues to be played every year at Christmas.

1958

- 16.0 *Yertle the Turtle and Other Stories* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1958.

Respect and humility – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme with black and white illustrations having highlights of blue and green. This book was dedicated to both friends and colleagues from his time at Dartmouth: This Book is for The Bartletts of Norwhich, Vt. And for The Sagmasters of Cincinnati, Ohio. This book is about Yertle who lives on the island of Sala-ma-Sond; here he is the king of the pond; he uses other turtles to create a tower for himself to see beyond his pond to claim more; Mack, the turtle on the bottom burps and brings the tower crashing down including Yertle.

- 17.0 *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Beginner Books; distributed by Random House, 1958.

Problems can bring solutions and giving friends a second chance – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme with black and white illustrations having highlights of red and blue. This book is about how the Cat in the Hat goes back to Sally and her brother's home to get out of the snow; creating a problem by accident, the Cat's friends come to help find a solution and at the same time help Sally and her brother.

1959

- 18.0 *Happy Birthday to You!* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1959.

Loving one's self and celebrating individuality – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme and illustrated with vibrant colors. This book was dedicated to his good friends, the Children of San Diego County. These children are the children who would come to visit the planned extension in the San Diego Fine Arts Gallery which would be named Dr. Seuss Wing. This book is about a Birthday Bird that arrives at a little persons' home whose birthday it happens to be; the little person is brought on a great adventure to celebrate his special day.

1960

19.0 *Green Eggs and Ham* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Beginner Books, 1960.

Taking chances in life and trying new things – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of red, yellow, blue and green. This book is about Sam trying to get a man in a hat to eat green eggs and ham; he goes to many fun places and extremes trying to convince the man in the hat; finally, to get Sam to be quiet, he agrees to try the green eggs and ham, just so he will leave him alone; to his surprise, he likes them. This book was created on a bet of fifty-dollars that Dr. Seuss could not write a book with less than fifty words. He won. This is a Beginner Book.

20.0 *One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Beginner Books, 1960.

Fun is everywhere – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of red, yellow, blue and green. This book is about finding fun things everywhere you look. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

1961

21.0 *The Sneetches and Other Stories* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1961.

Acceptance of self and others; respect – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of red, yellow, blue and green. This book is about the Sneetches who have stars on their tummy and Sneetches who don't; the Sneetches keep separate because of this; Mr. McBean comes along with a machine to put stars on and take stars off for a price. Going in and out, the Sneetches lose all their money and realize they can play together with or without stars.

1962

22.0 *Dr. Seuss's Sleep Book* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1962.

Sleep is necessary – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of red, yellow, blue and green. This book is dedicated to Marie and Bert Hupp, Theodor's neighbor and trusted friends who would often give last minute advice or encouragement before a book was delivered to Random House. This book is about the beauty of sleep: how sleep begins, from yawning, to preparing for bed, putting things away in order, and turning the lights off; to what can happen in sleep: sleep talking, sleepwalking, and dreaming.

1963

23.0 *Dr. Seuss's ABC*. / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Beginner Books, 1963.

Learning to read is fun – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of red, yellow, blue and green. This book is about the alphabet with zany and make belief characters. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

- 24.0 *Hop on Pop* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Beginner Books, 1963. Fun in learning and imagination – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about learning to appreciate sounds and beginning words that rhyme. This is a Beginner Book for the very young readers.

1965

- 25.0 *Fox in Socks* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Beginner Books, 1965. Taking care of self and setting boundaries – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book was dedicated to Mitzi Long and Audrey Dimond of the Mt. Soledad Lingual Laboratories. This book is about Fox who plays games with Mr. Knox by way of tongue twisters; in the end Fox gets his just reward. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

- 26.0 *I Had Trouble in Getting to Solla Sollew* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1965.

Dealing with trouble and life's challenges – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book was dedicated to Margaretha Dahmen Owens with love and with thanks, (this being his niece). This book is about a young chap who encounters trouble for the first time; a man arrives saying he is headed to Solla Sollew where there is never trouble and he should come along; challenges come up along the road and the young chap realizes it was not so bad at home.

- 27.0 *The Cat in the Hat Song Book* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1967.

Music and fun mixed together – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book was dedicated to Lark and Lea, daughters of Edmund and Audrey Dimond, friends of Theodor and Helen. Lyrics were written by Dr. Seuss and the musical score written by Eugene Poddany, a music composer for other popular cartoons classics of the day, Tom and Jerry. The book has 20 funny and zany songs for children beginning to read and sing. It was not a success.

1968

- 28.0 *The Foot Book* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Beginner Books, 1968. Fun is everywhere – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about rhyming opposites: left foot, right foot, with the base word foot used throughout to make comparisons and often repetitions. The first book for Bright and Early Book series for children before the Beginner Series books; it was the first book he wrote after the death of his wife, Helen.

1969

- 29.0 *I Can Lick 30 Tigers Today! and Other Stories* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1969.

Conflicts and challenges – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book was dedicated to Audrey, his second wife. This book is about the little Cat in the Hat thinking he can lick 30 tigers; in his

mind he was strong until he faced the 30 tigers; then everything changed; he began to find reasons in them why they could not be licked but were lucky and could go, thus eliminating the number until it was down to just one tiger. The other stories in this book are: *King Looie Katz* and *The Glunk That Got Thunk*.

- 30.0 *MY Book about ME, By ME Myself* / written by Dr. Seuss and illustrated by Roy McKie. New York: Beginner Books, 1969.

Celebration of self – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is an inter-active book where the child is making their own book by writing, drawing, coloring, putting in information pertaining to who they are.

1970

- 31.0 *I CAN DRAW IT MYSELF: By ME, Myself* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1970.

Imagination – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is in story format with pictures of missing parts, asking the child to complete the drawing.

- 32.0 *Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You?* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1970.

Listening to self and having fun learning – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about Mr. Brown who makes all the familiar and fun noises presented to him; the reader is then asked if they can make them too. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

1971

- 33.0 *The Lorax* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1971.

Taking care of the environment/pollution – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book was dedicated to Audrey, his second wife, and Lark and Lea, her two daughters. This book is about the Once-ler who tells how the Lorax had to leave because of greed and pollution. This book was made into a feature film.

1972

- 34.0 *Marvin K. Mooney, Will You Please Go Now!* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1972.

A time to go, say goodbye – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about Marvin K. Mooney being asked to go; and as he departs, enjoying the various ways to leave, having fun along the way, stalling the process. This is a Bright and Early book for Beginning Beginners learning to read.

1973

35.0 *Did I Ever Tell You How Lucky You Are?* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1973.

To count one's blessings in the middle of difficulty – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book was dedicated to Phyllis Jackson, Theodor's agent for 30 years. This book is about a young boy named Duckie in the Desert of Drize, who remembers a song, sung by an old man telling him how lucky he is.

36.0 *The Shape of Me and Other Stuff* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Beginner Books, 1973.

Love of self and uniqueness – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about a boy and girl silhouette and that every object has a shape, a silhouette, a form: flowers, mice, strings, lips, ships, drips, peanuts, pineapples, noses, and grapes. This is a Beginner Book for Beginning Beginners learning to read.

1974

37.0 *Great Day for Up!* / written by Dr. Seuss and illustrations by Quentin Blake. New York: Beginner Books, 1974.

Self-awareness in life – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about the word Up! Everything gets up and celebrates life, except at the end of the book, the little boy wants to stay in bed. This is a Beginner Book for Beginning Beginners learning to read.

38.0 *There's a Wocket in My Pocket* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Beginner Books, 1974.

Dealing with thoughts and imaginations – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about a little boy going throughout his house explaining what lives with him, made up creatures rhyming with objects and places found at home. This is a Beginner Book for Beginning Beginners learning to read.

1975

39.0 *Oh, the Things You Can Think!* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Beginner Books, 1975.

Imagination – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about all the things one can think if they try hard enough and let their imagination play, wonder and go. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

1976

40.0 *The Cat's Quizzer* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Beginner Books, 1976.

Fun and humor about life – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about the Cat in the Hat

asking questions about everything. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

1978

41.0 *I Can Read with My Eyes Shut!* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Beginner Books, 1978.

Self-discovery – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book was dedicated to David Worthen, E.G. (Eye Guy), Theodor's ophthalmologist. This book is about the Cat in the Hat taking the Young Cat on a lesson about all that one can learn about when reading. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

1979

42.0 *Oh Say Can You Say?* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Beginner Books, 1979.

Tongue twisters and determination – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book was dedicated to Lee Groo, the Enunciator, who was Theodor's youngest stepdaughter, Lea Grey. This book has many little stories made into tongue twisters; stories with the bizarre and zany. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

1982

43.0 *Hunches in Bunches* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1982.

Trusting self – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about a little boy who is not sure what he should do; he has many hunches.

1984

44.0 *The Butter Battle Book* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1984.

Arms control – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book was dedicated to Audrey, Theodor's second wife. This book is about grandfather Yook telling his grandson of the battle with the Zooks over the right side to spread butter; how they built a wall to guard against the each other and the devices to fight the battle.

1986

45.0 *You're Only Old Once!* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1986.

Humor in and about life – fiction for children & adults. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book was dedicated to Members of the Class of 1925, Theodor's graduation classmates the year he graduated from Dartmouth College. The book is about a man who spends a day in the Golden Years Clinic on Century Square for Spleen Readjustment and Muffler Repair as he is not feeling his best.



1987

46.0 *I Am NOT Going to Get Up Today!* / written by Dr. Seuss and illustrated by James Stevenson. New York: Beginner Books, 1987.

Taking care of self – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of pastel colors. This book is about a boy who does not want to get up even though everyone and everything else is getting up. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

1990

47.0 *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1990.

Celebration of life – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of pastel colors. This book is about a boy who goes for a walk and experiences many places, challenges and obstacles. This was Theodor's last book published one year before his death. Other books have since been published posthumously.

Missing Children's Books by Dr. Seuss – Less Well-Known Books Not Included in Chapter II

1961

1.0 *Ten Apples Up On Top!* / written by Theo LeSieg; illustrated by Roy McKie. New York: Beginner Books, 1961.

Counting to ten – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of red and orange. This book is about a dog, tiger and lion having fun balancing apples on their head from one to ten. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

1964

2.0 *The Cat in the Hat Beginner Book Dictionary* / written and illustrated by the Cat Himself and P.D. Eastman. New York: Beginner Books, 1964.

A practical and fun alphabet dictionary – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book goes through the alphabet with pictures of nouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbs describing each letter. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

1965

3.0 *I Wish That I Had Duck Feet* / written by Theo LeSieg; illustrated by B. Tobey. New York: Random House, 1965.

Imagination – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about a boy weighing the pros and cons of having various animal feet. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

1966

4.0 *Come Over to My House* / written by Theo LeSieg; illustrated by Richard Erdoes. New York: Beginner Books, 1966.

Multi-cultural – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about different homes around the world that children live in as well as what they eat, how they play and sleep. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

1968

5.0 *The Eye Book* / written by Theo LeSieg; illustrated by Roy McKie. New York: Random House, 1968.

Awareness and Imagination – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about a boy and a rabbit and what they see with their two eyes. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

1972

6.0 *In a People House* / written by Theo LeSieg; illustrated by Roy McKie. New York: Random House, 1972.

The home and objects in it – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about a mouse inviting

a bird into a house where they find 65 common items found in a home. This is a Beginner Book for Beginning Beginners learning to read.

1974

7.0 *Wacky Wednesday* / written Theo LeSieg; illustrated by George Booth. New York: Beginner Books, 1974.

Imagination – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about a child who has a day filled with bizarre occurrences; he goes to school where he is kicked out for disturbing the class and finally he meets a man who says this wacky day will soon come to an end. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

1975

8.0 *Because a Little Bug Went Ka-CHOO!* / written by Rosetta Stone; illustrated by Michael Frith. New York: Beginner Books, 1975.

Consequences – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about a bug that sneezes creating a chain of events that get funnier and funnier. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

9.0 *Would You Rather be a Bullfrog?* / written by Theo LeSieg; illustrated by Roy McKie. New York: Beginner Books, 1975.

Imagination – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about imagining being different things and letting one's imagination go. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

1976

10.0 *Hooper Humperdink...? Not Him!* / written by Theo LeSieg; illustrated by Charles E. Martin. New York: Beginner Books, 1976.

Alphabet and Imagination – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about a boy who plans a party inviting friends whose names begin with every letter of the alphabet. This is a Beginner Book for Beginning Beginners learning to read.

1977

11.0 *Please Try to Remember the First of October!* / written by Theo LeSieg; illustrated by Arthur Cumings. New York: Beginner Books, 1977.

Months of the year and hope – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book goes through the months of the year as a boy makes wishes along the way. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

1980

12.0 *Maybe You Should Fly a Jet! Maybe You Should Be a Vet?* / written by Theo LeSieg; illustrated by Michael J. Smolin. New York: Beginner Books, 1980.

Self-discovery – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about all the choices one can be when they grow up. This is a Beginner Book for young readers learning to read.

1981

13.0 *The Tooth Book* / written by Theo LeSieg; illustrated by Roy McKie. New York: Beginner Books, 1981.

Self-discovery and teeth – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about who has teeth, who doesn't and how to take care of them. This is a Beginner Book for Beginning Beginners learning to read.

1994

14.0 *Daisy-Head Mayzie* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 1994.

Imagination and individuality – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book was dedicated to Herb, from Audrey, Theodor's second wife. This book is about a girl who has a daisy growing out of the top of her head; she becomes a worldwide sensation.

1996

15.0 *My Many Colored Days* / written by Dr. Seuss; paintings by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher. New York: Knopf; distributed by Random House, 1996.

Moods in life – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme with paintings throughout. This book is about how different days feel like different colors and matching moods.

1998

16.0 *Hooray for Diffendoofer Day!* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss with some help from Jack Prelutsky & Lane Smith. New York: Knopf; distributed by Random House, 1998. Celebrating diversity – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book was written in memory of Dr. Seuss by Jack Prelutsky & Lane Smith. This book is about having various teachers in school and the diverse and fun ways they teach.

2011

17.0 *The Bippolo Seed and Other Lost Stories* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 2011.

Imagination – fiction for children. Stories are written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is a compilation of stories and illustrations published in *Redbook* magazine between 1950 - 1951.

2014

18.0 *Horton and the Kwuggerbug and More Lost Stories* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 2014.

Imagination – fiction for children. The stories are written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is a compilation of stories

published in Redbook magazine between 1950 – 1955: Horton and the Kwuggerbug (January, 1951), Marco Comes Late (September, 1950), How Officer Pat Saved the Whole Town (October, 1950), and The Hoobub and the Grinch (May 1955).

2015

19.0 *Seuss-isms! A Guide to Life for Those Just Starting Out...and Those Already on Their Way* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 2015.

Sayings created by Dr. Seuss – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about wise and witty sayings about life from the good doctor.

20.0 *What Pet Should I Get?* / written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. New York: Random House, 2015.

Imagination and choices – fiction for children. The story is written in rhyme, with black and white illustrations having highlights of bright colors. This book is about Kay and her brother going to a pet store to find a pet; the pets are beyond one's imagination.

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