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Theodor Seuss Geisel

Donald E. Pease
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Experiencing the fantastic worlds of children's author Theodor Seuss Geisel may not be out of reach. Simply take a stroll down Springfield, Massachusetts' Mulberry Street. Keep an open mind, and Dr. Seuss's *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street* may come to life.

Pulitzer-prize-winning author and illustrator Geisel, who grew up in Springfield, routinely tapped into familiar landmarks and personalities of friends throughout his prolific career writing children's books, which themselves have become landmark titles. *The Cat in the Hat*, *Horton Hears a Who*, and dozens of others have enticed generations of young readers into exploring new worlds.

Biographer Donald E. Pease takes readers deep behind the scenes of Geisel's world, establishing a link between his personal life and his art. Pease depicts the evolution of a college student cartoonist into an advertising copywriter into a bestselling powerhouse of children's books that offer a message.

Pease is the Ted and Helen Geisel Chair of the Humanities at Dartmouth, Geisel's beloved alma mater. With his access to a myriad of historical documents, Pease knows the surrealistic Geisel terrain as few others do.

During an era in which educators feared that children—today's baby-boom generation—would be repulsed by a reading list limited to Dick-and-Jane books, Geisel dramatically altered the offerings. His books, combining rhyming words, creative illustrations, and more than a touch of the fantastic, lured young readers into embracing books. Pease describes in detail—and with an abundance of Geisel's illustrations—the efforts Geisel took to convey valuable life lessons in a non-preaching presentation. To encourage respect for everyone, Geisel created Horton, the inquisitive elephant and discoverer of tiny Whoville, who proclaims, "A person's a person, no matter how small."

Pease captures Geisel's ongoing efforts: "He empathized with children's struggle against the corrupting influence of grown-up hatreds, and he trusted that writing children's books would enable him to better the world." Millions of readers would no doubt concur that Geisel was successful in that effort.
KARL KUNKEL (April 15, 2010)

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