

# Scholastic's pro-Trump propaganda for kids enrages teachers and parents

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 [thinkprogress.org/teachers-writers-criticize-scholastic-for-trump-childrens-book-cce3891a9bc3/](https://thinkprogress.org/teachers-writers-criticize-scholastic-for-trump-childrens-book-cce3891a9bc3/)

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Authors, teachers, and parents are upset about a Scholastic book about President Donald Trump that they say glosses over his racism, misogyny, xenophobia, and treatment of workers, among many other things. The book, *President Donald Trump* by Joanne Mattern, was published last year but it has received renewed attention after groups fiercely criticized it on social media and elsewhere.

Teaching for Change, a nonprofit organization with a social justice and education-focused mission, wrote a review of the book over the weekend and StepUpScholastic, a campaign that asks Scholastic to distribute books that “affirm the identity, history, and lives of ALL children in our schools” began encouraging people to write to Scholastic to voice their criticism. Over the past few days, teachers, parents, and writers began criticizing the book on Twitter.

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A review of the book by Social Justice Books, a project of Teaching for Change, by Kathleen Nganga and Sarah Cornelius, [reads](#):

“These partial truths construct a false narrative. Scrubbing away any trace of complexity or nuance from an account about an elected official stunts the quintessential democratic freedom and responsibility of questioning and critiquing those in positions of power. We find this book to be dangerous from a democratic standpoint.”

The writers point that out even if the book, which is supposed to be for first and second graders, couldn't unpack issues such as xenophobia and Islamophobia, the book could have addressed concepts such as exclusion and unfair treatment. They also wrote that young children should not see their leaders as limitless or all powerful and that books about any leader should include more nuance than this one.

Another Scholastic book about Trump for children in grades three through five, reads, “Trump made several statements during his campaign that were concerning to some people,” but doesn't delve further into the specific reasons people were concerned, the reviewers point out.

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StepUpScholastic — a campaign started by a coalition of education-focused groups, including Teaching for Change, and educators, librarians, writers, and activists — shared letters and tweets addressed to Scholastic about the book. Teachers, writers, and parents took to social media to criticize the book after the review went viral, bringing attention back on the book published in 2017.

Daniel Jose Older, the author of *Salsa Nocturna: A Bone Street Rumba Collection*, criticized Scholastic.

Come on [@Scholastic](#) we need you to be better than this right now [#StepUpScholastic](#)  
<https://t.co/WFc99VbaZ>

— Daniel José Older (@djolder) [June 13, 2018](#)

Leslie Mac, a writer and activist, who is also part of the StepUpScholastic campaign wrote a Twitter thread on the book and wrote, “this company has unfettered and unprecedented access to our children via their book fairs.”

I don't really actually have words for why & how wrong this is. But for now I'll just say what we have been saying FOR YEARS [#StepUpScholastic](#) - this company has unfettered and unprecedented access to our children via their book fairs.<https://t.co/uOhyDCdFsX>

— LeslieMac (@LeslieMac) [June 9, 2018](#)

Writer Katrina Emmel called the book a “piece of propaganda” and Shailja Patel, author of *MIGRITUDE*, took the company to task for glossing over the president’s racism and misogyny.

Hey [@Scholastic](#), glorifying Donald Trump for kids is NOT okay. If you continue to publish this piece of propaganda, you can kiss all book club and book fair purchases I planned to make this upcoming school year goodbye. [pic.twitter.com/8OAWQbZZ4y](https://pic.twitter.com/8OAWQbZZ4y)

— Katrina Emmel (@KatrinaEmmel) [June 11, 2018](#)

Hello [@Scholastic](#). I want to commend you on expanding the vocabularies of your young readers, with words like:

paedophile  
rapist  
wife-beater  
Nazi

I'm sure your top-selling author, [@jk\\_rowling](#), is proud of you. <https://t.co/ezcoYBvXMj>

— Shailja Patel (@shailjapatel) [June 12, 2018](#)

Marcia Mickelson, a third grade teacher, said she won’t share the book with her classroom full of immigrants and children of immigrants.

As a 3rd grade teacher, I buy books for my classroom. I love biographies & recently bought bios of Malala, Rosa Parks, & Sonia Sotomayor. I will definitely not be buying [@Scholastic](#) new Trump bio for my class filled with immigrants & children of immigrants. [#StepUpScholastic](#)

— Marcia Mickelson ([@MarciaMickelson](#)) [June 13, 2018](#)

An elementary school library media teacher said the book won't be in her school's library.

We tell kids what we value by the books we don't have in our classrooms & libraries. Well, [@Scholastic](#), you also tell kids what you value by what you omit in the books you publish. This book will send a damaging message, & won't be in my school library. <https://t.co/SOP9KnPEOv>

— Jillian Heise ([@heisereads](#)) [June 12, 2018](#)

Kelly Baker, a journalist, said she was not comfortable running her child's book fair if Scholastic stands by the book.

So, I run the Book Fair at my nine year old's school. I will not continue to do so if this the type of book that [@Scholastic](#) stands behind. [#StepUpScholastic](#)

Scholastic Tells Children: Trump is Great <https://t.co/PIIPQHYJEH>

— 🧠 Kelly J. Baker 🧠 ([@kelly\\_j\\_baker](#)) [June 11, 2018](#)

When asked what the goal of the social media campaign is, Deborah Menkart, executive director at Teaching for Change, told ThinkProgress that Scholastic should pull the book. Menkart said that although she understands why they would publish a book about every president, she said, "They should be nonfiction." Menkart said she has not heard from Scholastic since social media uproar over the book began.