

MSS220

# SESAME STREET

Cultural Impact, Representation, and Modern Connections

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# Overview

November 10, 1969: Sesame Street premiered on the National Educational Television Network



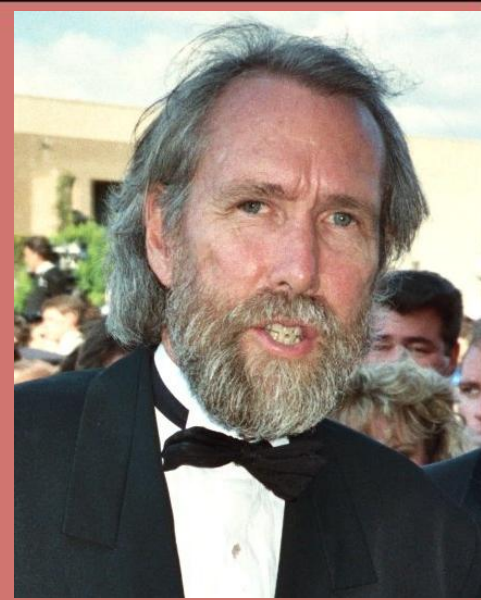
“Well, *Sesame Street* is a product of the civil rights movement. In the mid-1960s, Joan Ganz Cooney was a very young producer who was trying to level the playing field, trying to help all children get ready for school—not just the kids who had more advantages and may even have had an opportunity to attend preschool.” - Rosemarie Truglio

# Overview

Joan Ganz Cooney - creator



"I was a TV producer at a noncommercial station, and we were producing some good documentaries - on Head Start, on poverty. But I was struck by the children, and the damage that poverty was doing to them. I didn't think filming them was helping much, so I wondered how we could use TV for them, to teach them."- Joan Ganz Cooney



Jim Henson - famous puppeteer

# Overview

This program has made an impact...

## Social/ Cultural:

- Racial inclusivity
  - Situational inclusivity
- Established a place for emotional lessons
- Challenged gender roles

## Political impact:

- Touched on impactful topics
- Created a positive social message

## Historical impact:

- Bridged a educational social gap
- Helped develop emotional and academic intelligence
- Shifted education Tv programming

# News Media Coverage

Uncensorable and Liberal Beliefs

**In order to be funded taxpayers + government had to approve of the show**

Primarily criticized for being inclusive

1994 - 14% of funding was seized by  
Republican Congress

1997 - Self Funding to continue their mission

1970 to Present - *New Yorker* Cartoons and  
Articles



DAILY CARTOON

## DAILY CARTOON: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14TH

“What me want to know is: What are the implications of supply-chain crisis for cookie?”

By Jason Adam Katzenstein    October 14, 2021



[https://www.youtube.com/  
watch?v=r-egpOuaYOo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-egpOuaYOo)

DAILY CARTOON

## DAILY CARTOON: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20TH

“Not now, honey. Daddy’s arguing with strangers about the sexual orientation of puppets.”

By Jason Chatfield and Scott Dooley    September 20, 2018



# Street Gang

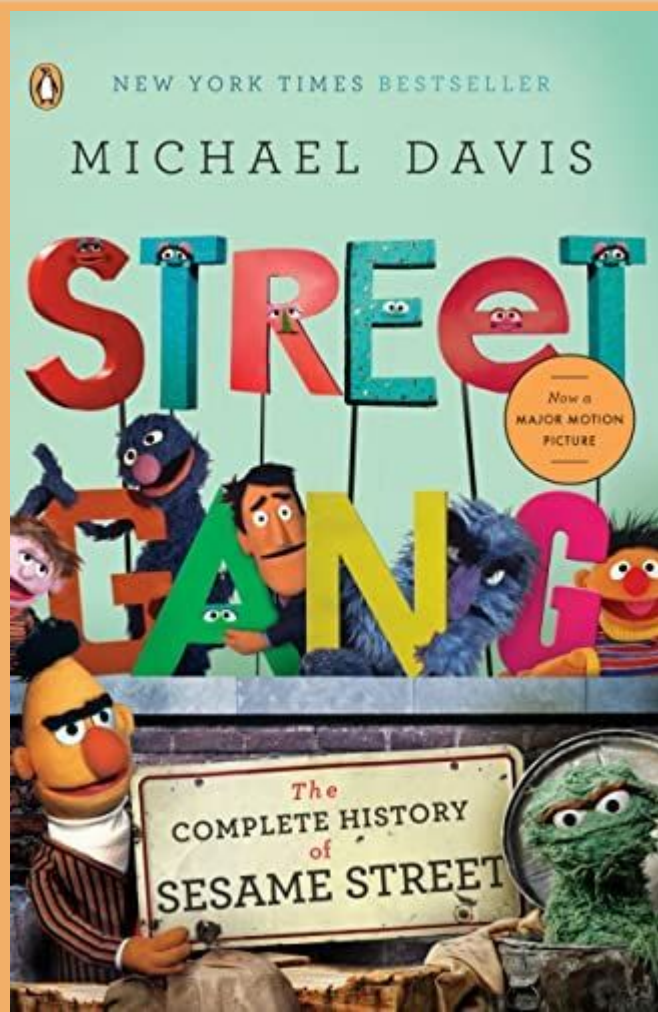
## 2006 + 2021

“A dozen of New York's top publishers are eager to get their hands this week on the story of how Sesame Street emerged as the iconic program that shaped the minds of countless kiddies around the globe”

“Henson's Furry Tales”  
*Broadcasting & Cable*, vol. 136, no. 11



HBO Max Original  
Premiered on December 13th, 2021







# Controversies in the News

- 2005 - Cookie Monster to Veggie Monster
- 2009 - Oscar the Grouch calling Fox News trashy
- 2010 - Katy Perry's non-kid friendly outfit
- 2012 - Sexual Assault Accusations against Elmo's voice actor

## Sesame Place

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1548727928476901376>

## HBO Max

Agreement about Rights  
2015 - 2025  
200 episodes are not available

“We are committed to continuing to bring ‘Sesame Street’ into families’ homes, including the newest season premiering this fall and the nearly 400 episodes of the most current and historic seasons that remain on Cartoonito on HBO Max”(Fox News).

- HBO spokesperson to Fox News



Sesame Workshop is aware of the recent incident at Sesame Place Philadelphia, which we take very seriously. What these children experienced is unacceptable.

We have been in contact with Sesame Place, our licensed park partner, and they have assured us that they will conduct bias training and a thorough review of the ways in which they engage with families and guests.

As a global nonprofit educational organization with a mission to help children grow smarter, stronger and kinder, Sesame Workshop has always stood for respect, inclusion and belonging and is committed to providing the highest quality engaging experiences for all children and families.

We hold our partners to the same high standards.

We will continue working with our long-term partner Sesame Place to ensure that appropriate actions are taken and that incidents like this do not happen in the future.



# Popular Media Representation

## Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade

- Float is called 1-2-3 Sesame Street
- Fun fact "In 2022, Sesame Street is celebrating its
- 46th appearance in the parade" (Macy's).
- [Sesame float](#)



# Popular Media Representation

Tv shows/movies/songs

- [Good Mythical Morning](#)

- [Jimmy Fallon](#)

- [Good Luck Charlie Song](#)

- Darth Vader and Oscar the Grouch



scmp



Tumblr

# Popular Media Representation

- 4626 episodes (muppetfandom.com)
- 52 seasons (muppetfandom.com)
- Over 3000 songs (muppetfandom.com)
- Over 1400 books (muppetfandom.com)
- [Merchandise shop](#)



Sesame Street

- International representation
- “Sesame Street has engaged in over thirty coproductions with international partners. Designed to both educate and entertain, these projects retain the essence of Sesame Street on its original version, but take on distinct qualities from the locales in which they are produced” (Cole 359).

# Collective Memory

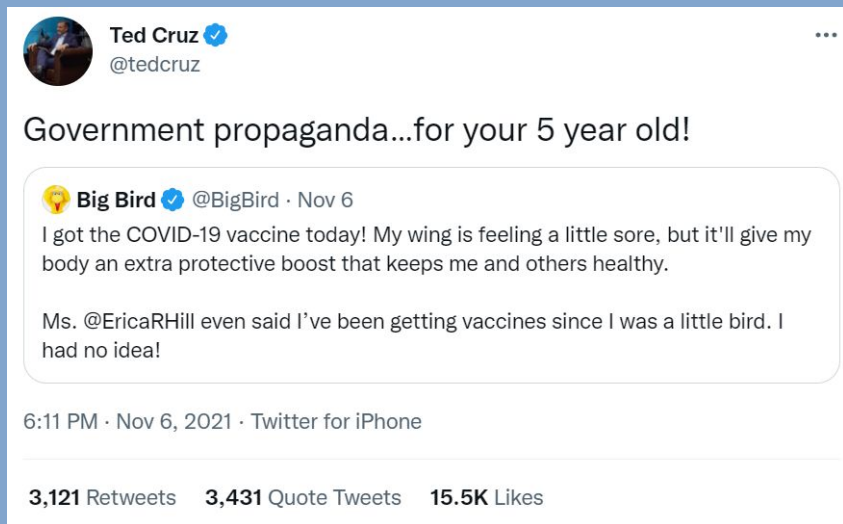
“Where some might see a political agenda, many more would simply see a model for the kind of society the US would like to be.”

The Secret History of Sesame Street: 'It Was Utopian – It's Part of Who We All Are!' *The Guardian*



# Collective Memory

- Ted Cruz



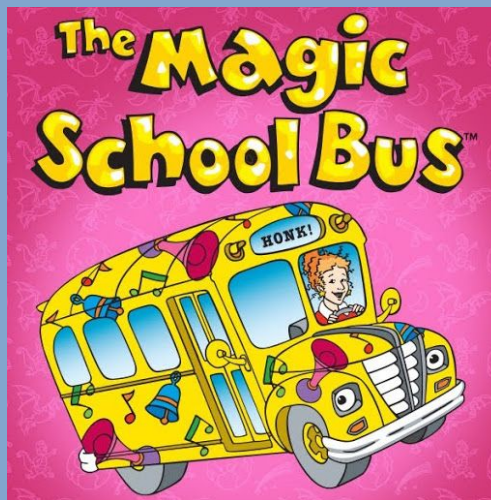
- Whoopi Goldberg

"There's just something really amazing about Sesame Street that I always felt, because my mother taught me that children need to be spoken to like people, and that's what Sesame Street does," Goldberg says. "I love that, and I love all the teaching that they've done. We've introduced characters together. It just made me happy."

# Collective Memory

- “...making well-designed and age-appropriate programs crucial for providing meaningful educational experiences for children. *Sesame Street* took the lead on such efforts by integrating educational curricula as well as formative and summative research into television production.”

Choi, Koeun. “*Sesame Street: Beyond 50.*”  
*Journal of Children and Media*



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**Kahoot.it!**

<https://play.kahoot.it/v2/?quizId=a0b4d070-00c5-40fa-80a6-c8075e19ff87>



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