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2004 film by Brad SilberlingThis article is about the film. For the book series, see A Series of Unfortunate Events. For the TV series, see A Series of Unfortunate Events (TV series). For the video game, see Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events (video game). For the soundtrack, see Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events (soundtrack).Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate EventsTheatrical release posterDirected byBrad SilberlingScreenplay byRobert GordonBased onBook the First: The Bad Beginning, Book the Second: The Reptile Room and Book the Third: The Wide Windowby Lemony Snicket[a]Produced byWalter F. ParkesLaurie MacDonaldJim Van WyckStarringJim CarreyJude LawLiam AikenEmily BrowningTimothy SpallCatherine O'HaraBilly ConnollyCedric the EntertainerLuis GuzmnJennifer CoolidgeMeryl StreepCinematographyEmmanuel LubezkiEdited byMichael KahnMusic byThomas NewmanProductioncompaniesNickelodeon MoviesParkes/MacDonald ProductionsDistributed byParamount Pictures (United States and Canada)DreamWorks Pictures (International)Release dateDecember17,2004(2004-12-17) (United States)Running time108 minutesCountryUnited StatesLanguageEnglishBudget$140142 million[1][2]Box office$211.5 million[1]Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events (also simply known as A Series of Unfortunate Events) is a 2004 American black comedy adventure film directed by Brad Silberling from a screenplay by Robert Gordon, based on the first three novels of the book series A Series of Unfortunate Events: The Bad Beginning (1999), The Reptile Room (1999), and The Wide Window (2000), by Lemony Snicket (the pen name of American author Daniel Handler). It stars Jim Carrey, Liam Aiken, Emily Browning, Timothy Spall, Catherine O'Hara, Billy Connolly, Cedric the Entertainer, Luis Guzmn, Jennifer Coolidge, and Meryl Streep, with Jude Law as the voice of Lemony Snicket.Nickelodeon Movies purchased the film rights to Handler's book series in 2000 and soon began development of a film with Barry Sonnenfeld attached to direct. Handler adapted the screenplay and courted Carrey for Count Olaf. Sonnenfeld left over budget concerns in January 2003 and Brad Silberling took over. Robert Gordon rewrote Handler's script, and principal photography started in November 2003. The film was entirely shot using sound stages and backlots at Paramount Pictures and Downey Studios.Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events was released theatrically in the United States on December 17, 2004, by Paramount Pictures with DreamWorks Pictures distributing the movie internationally. It received positive reviews from critics, with many praising its production values, Newman's score, and the performances (particularly Carrey's), while some criticized its comical tone and short length. The film grossed $211 million worldwide. At the 77th Academy Awards, it won the Academy Award for Best Makeup (the second to involve Carrey, after How the Grinch Stole Christmas in 2000) and received nominations for Best Art Direction, Best Costume Design, and Best Original Score.In a clock tower, investigator Lemony Snicket begins writing a documentation of the whereabouts of the Baudelaire children: 14-year-old inventor Violet, her 12-year-old bibliophile brother Klaus, and their mordacious 2-year-old sister Sunny. One day, the children are orphaned when a mysterious fire destroys their mansion, killing their parents. Mr. Poe, the family banker, manages their affairs and leaves them in the care of Count Olaf, a nefarious stage actor intent upon secretly obtaining their family fortune, which will remain in the custody of the bank until Violet turns 18. Olaf forces them to do heavy chores and belittles them.Driving back from the court where Olaf has legally obtained custody of the kids, he stops to go into a general store, leaving them locked in the car parked on train tracks with a train heading toward them, Mr. Poe calls and Violet tries to tell him that they were going to be hit by the train, but is unable to hear her due to him driving next to the train. The children divert the train by building a device to remotely activate the railroad switch. Mr. Poe arrives and takes them away, thinking that Olaf was allowing the kids to drive the car alone.The orphans are taken to uncle Dr. Montgomery "Monty" Montgomery, an eccentric herpetologist who treats them incredibly kindly. One day, Olaf arrives disguised as a new assistant "Stephano". The orphans attempt to warn Uncle Monty about Count Olaf's arrival, but he believes Stephano is after the Incredibly Deadly Viper, a giant misnomer python, in his laboratory that he discovered. Uncle Monty is discovered dead shortly after, and his death is blamed on the viper, although the children are certain that Count Olaf murdered him. They are almost placed in Stephano's care by Mr. Poe, but Sunny proves his guilt by showing that the snake is harmless, and Stephano escapes.Mr. Poe takes the children to their Aunt Josephine, a grammar-obsessed widow with panphobia, living on a house at the edge of a cliff. Olaf later appears, disguised as a sea captain named "Captain Sham", to meddle with their plans again. One day, Josephine is not at the house, leaving an apparent suicide note entrusting them to Captain Sham. Klaus deduces that Olaf forced her to forge the note, but she left a hidden message revealing her location. A hurricane causes the house to fall into the lake; however, the children escape. They sail to the cave where Aunt Josephine is hiding and rescue her, but attract leeches due to Josephine eating a banana. Olaf appears and takes the children, leaving Josephine to be eaten by the leeches. Mr. Poe then finds him with the children, and Olaf pretends to have rescued them. Mr. Poe is fooled and returns the children back to Olaf, believing that he has redeemed himself.Olaf plans a play titled "The Marvelous Marriage", starring Violet and him as a bride and groom, respectively. Klaus's suspicions reveal that Olaf is planning to take advantage of the play to really marry Violet in an attempt to get the fortune, using legally recognized vows and a bona fide justice of the peace. Olaf locks Sunny up in a birdcage, threatening to drop her to her death if Violet refuses to take part in the play. Klaus escapes and finds a hidden tower in Olaf's house, where he discovers a large window with a set of lenses that, if positioned correctly, can focus the rays of the sun. Klaus realizes that Olaf used it to set fire to the Baudelaire mansion. Using the window, Klaus manages to burn the marriage certificate, leading to Olaf's arrest. As a punishment, Olaf is made to suffer every hardship that he forced upon the Baudelaire kids before serving a life sentence. However, a jury of his peers overturns his sentencing and Olaf vanishes.Violet, Klaus, and Sunny are taken to visit the charred remains of their old home one final time. A lost letter from their parents finally arrives, and inside is a spyglass announcing their family's secret society before they became orphans. Snicket finishes writing his documentation and hides the papers in the clock tower for his publisher to find. As Mr. Poe drives the Baudelaires to their next home, Snicket concludes that despite the siblings' recent unfortunate events, they have each other.Jim Carrey as Count Olaf, a villainous stage actor and master of disguise who lusts after the Baudelaire family fortune.Stephano, Count Olaf's first disguise who pretends to be Dr. Montgomery's new assistant, he later kills Montgomery and tries to frame The Incredibly Deadly Viper but fails.Captain Sham, a peg leg sea captain and Count Olaf's second disguise. He makes Josephine give the Baudelaires to him and later kills Josephine by making her fall into the lake with leeches.Liam Aiken as Klaus Baudelaire, an intelligent and kind-hearted bibliophile. He is the middle child of the Baudelaire siblings and uses his encyclopedic knowledge to get them out of trouble.Emily Browning as Violet Baudelaire, a brilliant inventor. She is the eldest of the Baudelaire siblings and makes inventions out of everyday items.Kara and Shelby Hoffman as Sunny Baudelaire, the youngest Baudelaire sibling. She is an infant with four very sharp teeth. Her dialogue is mostly subtitled as she communicates via unintelligible babbling.Jude Law as the voice of Lemony Snicket, an introverted writer and the narrator of the story. Background actor James Henderson plays Snicket physically.Timothy Spall as Arthur Poe, the Baudelaire family banker who informs the Baudelaire children of the fire and manages their affairs in its aftermath.Catherine O'Hara as Justice Strauss, Count Olaf's kind neighbor and a judge.Billy Connolly as Dr. Montgomery Montgomery, an eccentric but kindly herpetologist and the Baudelaires' uncle and temporary guardian.Meryl Streep as Josephine Anwhistle, a paranoid, OCD-stricken grammar stickler and the Baudelaires' aunt and temporary guardian.Luis Guzmn as the Bald-Headed Man, one of Count Olaf's minions.Jamie Harris as the Hook-Handed Man, Count Olaf's main minion.Craig Ferguson as the Person of Indeterminate Gender, one of Count Olaf's minions.Jennifer Coolidge and Jane Adams as the White-Faced Women, two of Count Olaf's minions.Cedric the Entertainer as the Constable, a local detective who is skeptical of Count Olaf.Bob Clendenin as Grocery clerkLenny Clarke as Gruff grocerFred Gallo as Judge Gallo, a judge who grants custody of the Baudelaires to Count Olaf.Deborah Theaker as Mrs. Poe, Mr. Poe's wifeRick Heinrichs and Amy Brenneman (both unbilled) as Bertrand and Beatrice Baudelaire, Klaus, Violet and Sunny's deceased parents.Helena Bonham Carter (uncredited) as Beatrice Baudelaire, the Baudelaire children's late mother.Dustin Hoffman (uncredited) as a Critic who attends Count Olaf's The Marvelous Marriage.Jane Lynch (uncredited) as realtorGilbert Gottfried (uncredited) as the voice of the Aflac Duck, who appeared in a cameo.Daniel Handler, the writer of the Lemony Snicket stories, appears as a photographer.Handler initially viewed Count Olaf as a James Mason type.[3] Carrey was not familiar with the book series when he was cast, but he became a fan of the series. "Handler's books are just a bold and original way to tell a children's story," he said. Carrey was also attracted to the role despite self-parody concerns.[4] Silberling was open to Carrey's idea of improvisation for various scenes, especially the Stephano and Captain Sham alter egos.[5] To make his prosthetic makeup more comfortable and easier to apply, Carrey shaved his head bald for the part.[4] His inspiration for Olaf's voice was combining the voices of Orson Welles and Bela Lugosi.[6]Emily Browning was cast as Violet Baudelaire when she auditioned at a casting call in Australia. She was sent Handler's original script when Barry Sonnenfeld was planning to direct, and screen tested for the part using an English accent. Browning became a fan of the books after reading Handler's original script.[7] The actress was not cast until Silberling took over, then her character's accent was changed to American.Nickelodeon Movies purchased the film rights to the A Series of Unfortunate Events novel series in May 2000.[8] Paramount Pictures, owner of Nickelodeon Movies, agreed to co-finance, along with Scott Rudin.[9] Various directors, including Terry Gilliam and Roman Polanski, were interested in making the film. One of Daniel Handler's favorite candidates was Guy Maddin.[3] In June 2002, it was announced that Barry Sonnenfeld was hired to direct. He was chosen because he previously collaborated with Rudin and because of his black comedy directing style from The Addams Family, Addams Family Values and Get Shorty.[10] Sonnenfeld referred to the Lemony Snicket novels as his favorite children's stories.[11] The director hired Handler to write the script[12] with the intention of making Lemony Snicket a musical,[7] and cast Jim Carrey as Count Olaf in September 2002.[12]The film suffered setbacks in development in December 2002. Rudin left Unfortunate Events over budget concerns. While Sonnenfeld and Carrey remained, Sonnenfeld admitted he was skeptical of Paramount's $100 million budget. Paramount decided that changing the shoot from Hollywood to Wilmington, North Carolina, would be less expensive.[11] The April 2003 start date was also pushed back.[13] Paramount eventually settled the situation in January 2003 by enlisting help from DreamWorks Pictures to co-finance the film, but Sonnenfeld vacated the director's position. Rudin and Sonnenfeld had no involvement with the film afterward, but were credited as executive producers. Carrey remained with approval over the hiring of the next director.[14]Very little of what I wrote is in the film, which I actually think is appropriate being as that I was writing it for Barry Sonnenfeld. It's a director's medium and Brad Silberling makes entirely different films from Barry Sonnenfeld. I wasn't filled with resentment because they didn't use it [my script], I was just disappointed because I'd worked a long time [on it] and Scott Rudin, Barry Sonnenfeld and I were all sort of ready to go, along with Jim Carrey, with the film that we had. So it was sort of a long, rocky, journey. But that's all [in the past]. Series author Daniel Handler[3]Brad Silberling signed on to direct in February 2003.[15] He was not familiar with the series when he was first approached. He quickly read the first three novels and was excited that "Hollywood was taking a chance to put over $100 million to adapt these inventive children's books onto screen".[16] Handler, who wrote eight drafts of the script for Sonnenfeld,[3] was replaced by Robert Gordon in May 2003.[17] Handler approved of the changes that were made to his screenplay.[18] "I was offered credit on the film for screenwriting by the Writers Guild of America", Handler continued, "but I didn't take it because I didn't write it. I felt like it would be an insult to the guy who did."[3]Filming was set to begin in October 2003, but was pushed back.[15] Principal photography commenced on November 10, 2003,[19] using the sound stages and backlot at Paramount Studios in Hollywood. Silberling avoided using too many digital or chroma key effects because he wanted the younger actors to feel as if they were working in a realistic environment. Olaf's mansion occupied two sound stages, while the graveyard and the ruins of the Baudelaire mansion were constructed on the Paramount back lot. After 21 weeks of shooting at Paramount,[20] production then moved to Downey Studios, a former NASA facility in Downey, California,[21] for eight more weeks. Downey housed the circular railroad crossing set complete with forced perspective scenery, as well as a newly constructed water tank complete with over one million gallons of water. The water tank was instrumental in filming scenes set at Briny Beach, Lake Lachrymose, Damocles Dock and Curdled Cave.[20] Filming for A Series of Unfortunate Events wrapped on May 29, 2004.[22]Some scenery was designed using forced perspective techniques, combined with matte paintings.Silberling, production designer Rick Heinrichs and costume designer Colleen Atwood all aimed for the film's setting to be ambiguous, giving it a "timeless" feel. Heinrichs also added steampunk designs to the period.[20] To contribute to the setting, Silberling hired Emmanuel Lubezki as the cinematographer because he was impressed with the trio's work on Sleepy Hollow.[23]Lubezki compared the cinematic similarities to Sleepy Hollow, notably the monochromatic look of both films. He also chose a specific color palette backdrop for A Series of Unfortunate Events. "The story is very episodic, so we picked a different color scheme for each section. For example, Count Olaf's house has a lot of greens, blacks and grays; the house of Uncle Monty has a lot of greens and browns and a bit of yellow; and the house of Aunt Josephine has blues and blacks."[23] The railroad crossing set was constructed on a cyclorama, which was the most ambitious set piece for the art department on using elements of "in house" special effects and matte paintings.[20]Industrial Light & Magic (ILM), supervised by Stefen Fangmeier,[23] created the film's 505 visual effects shots.[24] The filmmakers used as few digital effects as possible,[23] though the train and smoke for the railroad crossing scene were created entirely by computer animation. ILM also used color grading techniques for the Lake Lachrymose scene, which required complete animation for the leeches. The digital animators studied footage of the 2003 Atlantic hurricane season to accurately depict Hurricane Herman, which was ILM's most ambitious use of computer-generated imagery (CGI) for the film.[24] Nexus Productions designed the opening "Littlest Elf" animated sequence by modeling it after stop-motion animation and completing it with computer animation.[19] The snakes at Monty's house were a combination of real snakes and animatronics. The animatronics, primarily the Incredibly Deadly Viper, were used as reference models that ILM later enhanced using CGI.[20] Because working with infants was sometimes risky in producing a film, four scenes involving Sunny Baudelaire required CGI with motion capture technology.[25] Among these are the shot of Sunny hanging on to a table by her teeth, catching a spindle with her mouth and the scene where she is entangled with the Incredibly Deadly Viper. Animation supervisor Colin Brady used his baby daughter for motion capture recording.[25] Kevin Yagher designed a remote-controlled animatronic of Sunny.[26]Further information: the video game and soundtrackIn October 2002, Nickelodeon Movies hired Activision (which actually had a partnership with DreamWorks) to create the film's tie-in video game. The agreement also included options for sequels.[27] Silberling delivered his first cut of the film to the studio in August 2004. Fearing his original version was "too dark", Paramount and DreamWorks conducted test screenings. The film was then reedited over family-friendliness concerns. Given its December release, the film's marketing campaign was criticized as a deliberately anti-holiday comedy with taglines like "Taking the cheer out of Christmas" and "Mishaps. Misadventures. Mayhem. Oh Joy."[28] The premiere of Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events was held at the Cinerama Dome on December 13, 2004. A 20,000-square-foot (1,900m2) tent display on Vine Street was decorated with pieces from the film's sets.[18]Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events was released on DVD and VHS on April 26, 2005.[29][30] A Portuguese-labeled All-Region Blu-ray was released in 2012 and then an American Region A Blu-ray was released on September 9, 2014.[31] The film was re-released on DVD on January 24, 2017.Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events grossed $118.6 million in the United States and Canada and $92.8 million in other territories for a worldwide total of $211.5 million, against a budget of $140 million.[1]The film was released in the United States and Canada on December 17, 2004, on 4,400 screens at 3,620 theaters, earning $30.1 million in its opening weekend and finishing first at the box office.[1] In its second weekend the film fell to second behind Meet the Fockers, grossing $12.6 million.[32] It was the highest-grossing film under the Nickelodeon Movies banner until The Last Airbender surpassed it.[33]On Rotten Tomatoes, the film received an approval rating of 72% based on 160 reviews, with an average rating of 6.7/10. The site's critical consensus reads, "Although it softens the nasty edges of its source material, Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events is a gothic visual treat, and it features a hilariously manic turn from Jim Carrey as the evil Count Olaf."[34] On Metacritic, the film has a score of 62 out of 100, based on 37 critics, indicating "generally favorable" reviews.[35] Audiences polled by CinemaScore gave the film an average grade of "B+" on an A+ to F scale.[36]Robert K. Elder of the Chicago Tribune praised Rick Heinrichs's production design and Carrey's balanced performance as a scene stealer, calling the film "exceptionally clever, hilariously gloomy and bitingly subversive."[37] Desson Thomson of The Washington Post reasoned over a fellow film-goer's characterization of Count Olaf, "Olaf is a humorless villain in the book. He's not amusing like Carrey at all. To which I would counter: If you can't let Carrey be Carrey, put someone boring and less expensive in the role. In his various disguises he's rubbery, inventive and improvisationally inspired. I particularly liked his passing imitation of a dinosaur."[38] Ty Burr, in The Boston Globe, observed, "Director Brad Silberling has essentially made a Tim Burton movie without the weird shafts of adolescent pain. At the same time, Silberling's not a hack like Chris Columbus, and Snicket has more zip and inspired filmcraft than the first two Harry Potter films. The film's no masterpiece, but at least you're in the hands of people who know what they're doing. The movie, like the books, flatters children's innate sense that the world is not a perfect place and that anyone who insists otherwise is trying to sell you something. How you deal with the cognitive dissonance of a $125 million Hollywood picture telling you this is up to you. At least there are no Lemony Snicket Happy Meals. Yet."[39]Internet reviewer James Berardinelli felt that "the film is first and foremost a fantasy, but there are dark currents running just beneath the surface. I give Silberling credit for not allowing them to swallow the film. Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events manages to remain witty throughout."[40] Roger Ebert gave a mixed review: "Jim Carrey is over the top as Count Olaf, but I suppose a character named Count Olaf is over the top by definition. I liked the film, but I'll tell you what. I think this one is a tune-up for the series, a trial run in which they figure out what works and what needs to be tweaked. The original Spider-Man was a disappointment, but the same team came back and made Spider-Man 2, the best superhero movie ever made."[41] Scott Foundas of Variety gave a negative review, criticizing the filmmakers for sacrificing the story line in favor of visual elements such as set design and cinematography. He wrote, "A Series of Unfortunate Events suggests what Mary Poppins might have looked like had Tim Burton directed it. Not surprisingly, Burton's longtime production designer Rick Heinrichs was responsible for the sets, while ace Emmanuel Lubezki (Burton's Sleepy Hollow) contributed the expressionistic lighting schemes."[42]AwardCategoryRecipientResultRef.Academy AwardsBest Art DirectionRick Heinrichs and Cheryl CarasikNominated[43]Best Costume DesignColleen AtwoodNominatedBest MakeupValli O'Reilly and Bill CorsoWonBest Original ScoreThomas NewmanNominatedVisual Effects SocietyOutstanding Performance by an Animated Character in a Live Action Motion PictureRick O'Connor, Martin Murphy, Indira Guettieri, Sam BreachNominated[44]Saturn AwardsBest Fantasy FilmNominated[45]Best Make-UpValli O'Reilly and Bill CorsoNominatedBest DVD Special Edition ReleaseNominatedParamount Pictures and Nickelodeon Movies hoped that the film would become a series like the Harry Potter film series.[10] Carrey thought his character would be good as the basis for a film franchise since each installment would feature new disguises for Count Olaf allowing him to dive into a new role each time,[16] though he said he didn't "have a deal" for a sequel.[6] In May 2005, producer Laurie MacDonald said "Lemony Snicket is still something Paramount is interested in pursuing and we're going to be talking with them more."[46]In October 2008, Handler said that "a sequel does seem to be in the works. Paramount has had quite a few corporate shakeups, which has led to many a delay. Of course, many, many plans in Hollywood come to naught, but I'm assured that another film will be made. Someday. Perhaps."[47] In June 2009, Silberling confirmed he still talked about the project with Handler, and suggested the sequel be a stop motion film, with each film in a new medium, due to the young lead actors having grown too old to continue their roles, saying, "In an odd way, the best thing you could do is actually have Lemony Snicket say to the audience, 'Okay, we pawned the first film off as a mere dramatization with actors. Now, I'm afraid I'm going to have to show you the real thing.'"[48]Main article: A Series of Unfortunate Events (TV series)In November 2014, Netflix announced its plans for a television adaptation of the entire novel series.[49] The series stars Neil Patrick Harris, Malina Weissman, Louis Hynes and Presley Smith, with Patrick Warburton as Lemony Snicket.[50][51] The series, also titled A Series of Unfortunate Events, premiered on January 13, 2017.[52] The first season consisted of eight episodes, and adapts the first four books of the series. A Series of Unfortunate Events season two was released on March 30, 2018, and contains 10 episodes, adapting books five through nine of the novel series. The third and final season was released on January 1, 2019, and adapts the four remaining books in seven episodes.[53][54]Main article: Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events (video game)A video game based on the film was released in 2004 by Activision for the PlayStation 2, GameCube, Xbox, Game Boy Advance, and Microsoft Windows. The player plays as all three orphans at points in the game.[55]^ Pen name of author Daniel Handler.^ a b c d "Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events". Box Office Mojo. Archived from the original on April 18, 2009. Retrieved April 8, 2009.^ Elder, Sean (December 5, 2004). "A Victory for Terror (the Good Kind)". The New York Times. Retrieved April 7, 2009.^ a b c d e Spence D. (December 16, 2004). "Interview: Lemony Snicket". IGN. Archived from the original on December 8, 2006. Retrieved April 7, 2009.^ a b Otto, Jeff (March 12, 2004). "An Interview with Jim Carrey". IGN. Archived from the original on March 12, 2007. 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Retrieved September 6, 2007.Wikiquote has quotations related to Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events.Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events at IMDbLemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events at Rotten TomatoesLemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events at Metacritic Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events at Box Office MojoRetrieved from " Olaf: I must say, you are a gloomy looking bunch. Why so glum?Klaus Baudelaire: ...Our parents just died.Count Olaf: Ah yes, of course. How very, very awful. Wait! Let me do that one more time. Give me the line again! Quickly, while it's fresh in my mind!Klaus Baudelaire: [uncertainly] Our parents just died?Count Olaf: [gasps dramatically]Sunny: [in baby talk] What a schmuck!Violet Baudelaire: It's the letter! The letter that never came![reading]Violet Baudelaire: 'Dearest children - since we've been abroad we have missed you all so much. Certain events have compelled us to extend our travels. One day, when you're older, you will learn all about the people we have befriended and the dangers we have faced. At times the world can seem an unfriendly and sinister place, but believe us when we say that there is much more good in it than bad. All you have to do is look hard enough. And what might seem to be a series of unfortunate events may, in fact, be the first steps of a journey. We hope to have you back in our arms soon, darlings, but in case this letter arrives before our return, know that we love you. It fills us with pride to know that no matter what happens in this life, that you three will take care of each other, with kindness and bravery and selflessness, as you always have. And remember one thing, my darlings, and never forget it: that no matter where we are, know that as long as you have each other, you have your family. And you are home.'Count Olaf: [meeting the children for the first time] Ah! My dear...[looks at stick figures of children with names on his hands]Count Olaf: Violet. Enchante!Violet Baudelaire: Uh... how do you do?Count Olaf: And this must be Klaus! Young Klaus! Your left side is the good one.[looks with disgust at Sunny]Count Olaf: And... what is *this*?Sunny: [subtitled baby talk] I'm Sunny!Count Olaf: I'm sorry. I don't speak monkey.Klaus Baudelaire: This is ridiculous! Violet's only 14! She can't be legally married!Count Olaf: She can if she has the permission of her guardian. And who's that? Oh, yes. Me![laughs maniacally]Count Olaf: Look it up, bookworm![last lines]Lemony Snicket: Dear reader, there are people in the world who know no misery and woe. And they take comfort in cheerful films about twittering birds and giggling elves. There are people who know that there's always a mystery to be solved. And they take comfort in researching and writing down any important evidence. But this story is not about such people. This story is about the Baudelaires. And they are the sort of people who know that there's always something. Something to invent, something to read, something to bite, and something to do, to make a sanctuary, no matter how small. And for this reason, I am happy to say, the Baudelaires were very fortunate indeed.Count Olaf: Goodbye children. It's been fun.[leans in]Count Olaf: I'm gonna get you kids. No matter where you go, no matter what you do, I'll *find* you! Oh, you are so deceased!Count Olaf: Now that we're a family, I can be the ulll-timate DAD.[first lines]Lemony Snicket: [the Littlest Elf has just come to an abrupt halt] I'm sorry to say that this is not the movie you will be watching. The movie you are about to see is extremely unpleasant. If you wish to see a film about a happy little elf, I'm sure there is still plenty of seating in theatre number two. However, if you like stories about clever and reasonably attractive orphans, suspicious fires, carnivorous leeches, Italian food and secret organizations, then stay, as I retrace each and every one of the Baudelaire children's woeful steps. My name is Lemony Snicket, and it is my sad duty to document this tale.Klaus Baudelaire: Do you think anything will ever feel like home again?[Violet ties up her hair]Lemony Snicket: [narrating] Sanctuary... is a word which here means a small, safe place in a troubling world. Like an oasis in a vast desert or an island in a stormy sea.[Olaf is about to enter the store, leaving the kids in the car]Count Olaf: [to Violet] Soda.Count Olaf: [to Klaus] Soda.Count Olaf: [to Sunny] Banana.Sunny: [subtitled baby talk] Bite me.Count Olaf: Got it.[Leaves and locks the doors][on Stephano, after realizing that he had been caught in a lie]Count Olaf: Damnit. This was such a good character.Uncle Monty: Now, the children will be helping us extensively with the research in Peru. Do you have any experience with children?Count Olaf: [in disguise as Stephano] Children are strange and foreign to me. I never really was one. I do know that they are an important part of the ecosystem.Count Olaf: ...And I realized I have been a bit standoffish, Shall we say. Which in this case is a big, big word meaning...Violet Baudelaire: [interrupting] Pure evil.Lemony Snicket: [narrating] If you have ever lost someone very important to you, then you already know how it feels; and if you haven't, you cannot possibly imagine it.Sunny: [about Aunt Josephine; subtitled baby talk] She's the *mayor* of crazy town!Count Olaf: All that I ask is that you do each and every little thing that pops into my head, while I enjoy the enormous fortune your parents left behind.Count Olaf: [to the room of his troupe of actors] Let us go back to the time when dinosaurs ruled the earth![raises arms like a T-rex and screeches, walking around like a pidgeon]Klaus Baudelaire: [watches, bemused, as Count Olaf heads into the hall, still doing his dinosaur impersonation]Count Olaf: [screeches, then sees Klaus] ... What are you staring at?Mr. Poe: ...So I'm taking you to live with your dear Count Olaf, who resides right here in the city just 37 blocks away.Klaus Baudelaire: I don't think that's what "closest" is supposed to mean.Violet Baudelaire: We don't know a Count Olaf.Mr. Poe: Yes, yes, of course you do. He's either your third cousin four times removed or your forth cousin three times removed.Sunny: [subtitled baby talk] Someone's BRAIN'S been removed!Violet Baudelaire: Sunny!Count Olaf: Looks like you could use a little assistance.Klaus Baudelaire: You're gonna need assistance when we get back to town! Aunt Josephine's gonna tell everyone what happened!Count Olaf: [sarcastically] And then I'll be arrested and sent to jail and you'll live happily ever after with a friendly guardian, spending your time inventing things and reading books and sharpening your little monkey teeth, and bravery and nobility will prevail at last, and this wicked world will slowly but surely become a place of cheerful harmony, and everybody will be singing and dancing and giggling like the littlest elf! A happy ending! Is that what you had mind?Violet Baudelaire: [points to the bobble head "Little Elf" in the rear window of the car] Sunny - bite the head off of that elf!Sunny: [subtitled baby talk] Love to!Count Olaf: This... is a little piece I like to call, "The Electric Chair".[Sits in a chair. Everybody stares at him, while nothing happens]Count Olaf: [Country/Redneck accent] I think ya' might have t' turn it up!Count Olaf: [Regular accent] Is anybody[Pretending to be electrified]Count Olaf: OUT THERE?*!Aunt Josephine: The children are going to serve puttanesca.Count Olaf: [gasps] The very meal I ate before they took me leg!Lemony Snicket: [narrating] I don't know if you've ever noticed this, but first impressions are often entirely wrong. For instance: Klaus, when Sunny was born, didn't like her at all; but by the time she was six weeks old, the two of them were as thick as thieves - a phrase which here means "fetching and biting for hours on end". In the case of Count Olaf, however...Count Olaf: Orphans!Lemony Snicket: [narrating] ... they were correct.Uncle Monty: We can have time for chit-chat later. What I need now is the work of a reader, an inventor, and a biter.Sunny: [in baby talk] My teeth are at your service, sir.Count Olaf: I will raise these orphans as if they were actually wanted! [Olaf parks the car on a grade crossing outside the Last Chance General Store and goes in]Count Olaf: Hello, I'm going on a perfectly innocent ride in the country with my kids... whom I love.[looks at the clock]Count Olaf: Is that clock correct?Count Olaf: [pretending to cry] Take them Mr. Poe, before I lose it big time.Lemony Snicket: [narrating] This is the story of the three Baudelaire children. Violet loved to invent; her brother, Klaus, loved to read; and their sister, Sunny... she loved to bite. My name is Lemony Snicket and it is my duty to tell you their tale. No one knows the precise cause of the Baudelaire fire, but just like that, the Baudelaire children became the Baudelaire orphans.[Jim Carrey sings a sea shanty as Captain Sham towards the end of the end credits]Count Olaf: Oh, the Captain loved the ladies / But he dragged himself a wife / Now he's wishin' he was fishin' / But he's on the hook for life.Count Olaf: Well, I guess he shouldn't 've oughta / But he drowned her in the water / And then a flounder downed her / That's why they never found her.Mr. Poe: Children, I'm afraid I must inform you of an extremely unfortunate event. I'm very, very sorry to tell you this but your parents have perished in a fire that has destroyed your entire home.Aunt Josephine: [the children have gasped at recognizing Count Olaf] The black plague! Is it the black plague?The Detective: [to Violet] Little girl, the big cage door is open. No snake. Dead guy. You know what I'm thinking? I'm thinking, "Who woke me up at nine in the morning for this?"Sunny: [subtitled baby talk] Someone's been to crazy town.Violet Baudelaire: Do you remember when Mum and Dad went to Europe, and we thought they'd abandoned us because they didn't even write? And then we found out they'd written a long letter and it had just gotten lost in the mail. Do you remember how guilty we felt for thinking bad thoughts about them? This is just like that.Klaus Baudelaire: No it's not.Violet Baudelaire: Why?Klaus Baudelaire: Because they're not in Europe. They're not coming back[after telling the children how Ike died]Aunt Josephine: Oh, God, I hate it here.Violet Baudelaire: Well, Aunt Josephine, have you ever thought of, maybe, moving someplace else? Maybe, if you moved away from Lake Lachrymose, you might feel better.Aunt Josephine: Oh, I could never, never, never, never sell this house.[pause]Aunt Josephine: I'm terrified of realtors.Lemony Snicket: There are two kinds of fears. Rational and irrational. Being afraid of realtors is an irrational fear.[in a flashback]Realtor: [shows her card to a tentative Josephine] Is this a bad time?Aunt Josephine: [screams at the top of her lungs][in the present]Klaus Baudelaire: [to Violet] We gotta get her out of the house.Count Olaf: [about Klaus] He's just a boy barely out of his Osh Kosh B'Gosh.[Olaf tosses the children into their room after they fail to prepare a roast beef dinner and threaten to call Mr. Poe]Count Olaf: I'm very disappointed in you children.Klaus Baudelaire: Violet, nothing happens by coincidence.Count Olaf: [through closed front door, after bell rings] In-trude!Suggest an edit or add missing contentYou have no recently viewed pages Share copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially. Adapt remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. 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We dont recommend it, but if you feel you must hear word from Lemony Snicket on any misfortunes, you may enter your details here: We dont recommend it, but if you feel you must hear word from Lemony Snicket on any misfortunes, you may enter your details here: By submitting your email address, you understand that you will receive email communications from HarperCollins Publishers. You may unsubscribe from these email communications at any time. If you have any questions, please review our privacy policy or email us at Lemony Snicket / Daniel Handler HarperCollins (North America) Egmont (United Kingdom) A Series of Unfortunate Events is the collective volume of thirteen books written by Lemony Snicket, which is a pen name for Daniel Handler.The series follows theunfortunate lives of thethree extremely unlucky Baudelaire orphans, Violet, Klaus, and Sunny, trying to get by in their difficult lives and survive the pursuit of their nemesis Count Olaf and his various associates who attempt to steal their inherited fortune.The books were published between 1999-2006 by HarperCollins in North America and by Egmont in the United Kingdom. The main thirteen books in the series have collectively sold more than 60 million copies and have been translated into 41 languages.The books have been adapted in various ways, including audiobooks, a video game, a film, and aTV series, among others.The books also apparently exist within the universe of the series as well. According to Lemony Snicket: The Unauthorized Autobiography, the books were on a banned list of books at Prufrock Preparatory School. Considering how The Unauthorized Autobiography was published in May 2002, this implies only the first eight books were available around the time of its fictional banning, although the books have been banned in some locations in reality as well (see controversy). Genre[] The main thirteen books in A Series of Unfortunate Events. Dear Reader, If you have just picked up this book, then it is not too late to put it back down. Like the previous books in A Series of Unfortunate Events, there is nothing to be found in these pages but misery, despair, and discomfort, and you still have time to choose something else to read. Lemony Snicket, The Ersatz ElevatorAlthough A Series of Unfortunate Events is most commonly classified as "children's" fiction, it has also been classified as teen/young adult and having a quality that older adults can enjoy, similar to the Harry Potter series. There is a level of complexity in the series, such as the relations between characters and how it is all connected, which can be sometimes hard to understand. A Series of Unfortunate Events could be seen as a parody of children's literature or pseudo-children's literature. For example, there is a lot of mature content and characters dying in horrible ways. These include: People dying in fires, being poisoned, drowned in a swamp, being eaten by leeches, almost being buzz sawed to death or gored by lions, and Lemony Snicket is the type of who uses complicated language that many people wouldn't know, such as "augmented", "furtive", "rivulets", "verdant", "accoutrement", etc. In addition, the child protagonists of the series are often portrayed as being intelligent and more mature and "adult-ish" than many of the actual adults in the series. Some of the humor in the series may also be lost on less knowledgeable audiences; for example, in the TV series, Monty asks Stephano where he studied herpetology, and Stephano replies that he does not know anything about sores, which is a joke about herpes.It may be considered mystery due to many mysterious themes and elements surrounding V.F.D.Some have classified it into specific genres such as: gothic fiction, or some variety thereof, whether it is mock-gothic, a satire of gothic literature, neo-Victorian or "suburban gothic". There are also some slight steampunk elements.Another genre that the series has been described as is absurdist fiction, because of its strange characters, improbable storylines, and black comedy due to the morbid nature of the series.Others have classified this as surrealistic fiction because of the fact that the events in the books could happen to unlucky people, even if it doesn't seem like it. The books often have a wonky and creepy existentialist vibe to them, exemplified by all the strangeness and oddities the Baudelaires encounter, giving them a surreal, unsettling, alien or otherworldly vibe. This can make the series feel like a strange dream or nightmare.Some have categorized the series as "horror" and "suspense", due to the amount of suspense, danger, death, violence, dread and tension in some of them.Characterized by Victorian Gothic tones and absurdist textuality, the books are noted for their whimsical dark humor, sarcastic storytelling, and anachronistic elements, as well as frequent cultural and literary allusions. They have been classified as postmodern and meta-fictional writing, with the plot evolution throughout the later novels being cited as an exploration of the psychological process of transition from the idyllic innocence of childhood to the moral complexity of maturity.Plot[]Setting[] The Baudelaires in the city. A Series of Unfortunate Events is set in an unusual, anachronistic time period that is ambiguously set sometime in the 20th century, with old and new inventions used. A variety of inventions and technology are mentioned. For example, there are helicopters, cars, phones, a microphone, and an advanced school computer (in the TV series, the computer looks like a computer from the 1990s and early 2000s). At another point, typewriters, telegrams, and carriages pulled by horses appear. This paints a very changing landscape of an industrial time, with technology not yet homogenized in all places in the series. In addition, the Baudelaire children are illustrated wearing very Victorian-era clothing. This aspect is made even more absurd in the TV series, as Count Olaf mentions he bought an hourglass "online" (implying the Internet) and he prefers "streaming television in the comfort of his own home", a reference to Netflix. In The Miserable Mill: Part One, Pink Floyd The Wall is mentioned, suggesting the series is not set before 1982. The cars that some characters drive is also confusing as well. At the end of book 1, Mr. Poe is seen driving a car that looks like a 1910 Royal Model, while Count Olaf drives a car resembling one from the 1980s.The location is the series is unknown; three of the books (1, 6, end of 11, 12) are set in an unspecified urban city. The Baudelaires visit a myriad of locations, such as a lakeside town, a boarding school, hinterlands, mountains, etc.The 2004 film, however, is an exception. During acourtroom scene where a judge grants Count Olaf custody of the orphans, an American flag is present. In the finale, a letter addressed to the Baudelaires mentions the city is Boston, Massachusetts, meaning the Baudelaires are American in at least this continuity.The ambiguity of both the time and the setting are likely intentional decisions by Daniel Handler, who when asked, said, "A Series of Unfortunate Events takes place in the city and regions surrounding it, during the week and sometimes on weekends. All The Wrong Questions takes place earlier, in a smaller town."A Series of Unfortunate Events is also depicted as being full of diverse and multicultural mentions, from its locations, food, language and people. For example, Peru is mentioned in the second book, a Vietnamese restaurant is mentioned in the sixth, Hector may be of Hispanic descent as he cooks Mexican food in book seven, there is an Indian restaurant in book twelve, etc. Charles and Sir in book four are heavily implied to be a gay couple. There are mentions of rabbis throughout the series and different religions, traditions and culture. Handler also wanted a more ethnically diverse cast in the TV series.Premise[] The Baudelaires feeling terrible and missing their parents very, very, very much. The series focused on Violet, Klaus, and Sunny Baudelaire. Violet has a talent for inventing, Klaus has a talent for reading, and Sunny has a talent for biting (though she is later shown to have a talent for cooking). While they are portrayed very intelligent children, they are not perfect "superhumans" and have their own flaws. For example, Violet can overlook the obvious and doesn't know what leeches are, Klaus can be rude and doesn't know what a "xenophobe" means, etc. Sunny could be considered a superhuman to a degree, as she is a baby who has a sword fight with her teeth in the fourth book and climbs up an elevator shaft with her teeth in the sixth. They may also be interpreted as a tiny bit spoiled, as they later complain about doing chores for Count Olaf, although he did force them to do so and treated them like slaves.They become extremely unfortunate, unlucky and depressed children after their parents perish in a fire that destroys their entire home, going on to live lives full of sadness, stress, misfortune, misery, and woe.The Baudelaires are soon brought totheir (claimed) third cousin four times removed, the treacherous actor Count Olaf. However, the Baudelaires soon discover that Olaf is an abusive adoptive father and is after their inherited fortune which Violet will obtain when she turns 18. In addition, Olaf claims that once he finds a way to obtain their fortune, he won't hesitate to kill all three of them. The first 7 books follow the same plot line, where the Baudelaires are sent to a new home with a new guardian. However, at the end of book 7, the series reaches a turning point, as the children are framed for murder, and the last 6 books is about them on the run from the police as well from Count Olaf. Lemony Snicket 12 Books in 120 Seconds 12 books in 120 seconds. The main thirteen books of the series describe the treacheries that the children face through their young lives while trying to prevent Olaf and his many associates'attempts on getting his hands on the Baudelaire fortune while trying to avoid death along the way while at the mercy of the world. Meanwhile, the Baudelaires must deal with absurd situations, a secret society known as V.F.D., and gullible and incompetent adults, many of which refuse to believe the Baudelaires and are unable to see through Olaf's disguises.Dystopic elements[] A mob of residents prepared to burn rulebreakers at the stake. The world in the series often feels dystopic, hostile, corrupt, chaotic and cruel, leading many readers to call it a "crapsack world". However, it is set in a conventional setting without any war, famine, etc (where the Baudelaires live, at least). Most of the dystopic elements are often found in sociology, human behavior and often barbaric and nonsensical laws which humanity follows obediently and submissively, and the vast majority of people lack critical thinking skills.For example:In Book One, when Olaf attempts to marry Violet with an official marriage certificate, Justice Strauss reluctantly accepts it and says, "I'm afraid this dreadful nonsense is the law" despite that it was a scheme in a play and Violet was forced to sign under duress or else her baby sister would be killed.In Book Four, a 14-year-old, a 12-year-old, and a baby are forced to work at a dangerous lumbermill, making one wonder how this is legal, as the oldest (Violet) isn't even of age to work. One may also wonder if child protective services and child labor laws exist in the world of the series.In Book Four, a lumbermill illegally pays its employees with chewing gum and coupons. It is revealed in the TV series the employers are under hypnosis to accept this, and the entire mill is slave labor through mind control. However, in the book series strictly, it would make wonder why the employees continue to work in a terrible place and simply not leave as they are not being paid money.In Book Five, a baby is forced to become a school secretary because she is too young to attend a normal school, and while some members of the administration staff think this is absurd, they do not challenge Vice Principal Nero. This is very confusing as Sunny is not even able to perform half of the things a secretary could actually do such as stapling, picking up the telephone, etc. Along with this there are many other confusing things as well: Students are also

forced to listen to Nero play the violin horridly for 6 hours each night. If they fail to listen to his recital, they are forced to give Nero a bag of candy. If students go to the administration building without an appointment they can't use silverware at meals. Other punishments include having their beverages served in large puddles, having their hands tied behind their backs, and eating their food as a dog. One might wonder if these punishments are even legal considering how the surface of tables would contaminate the food and drink with grime.In Book Six, many people are interested in what's "in" and "out" (fashion) that it is often prioritized over functionality, and the Baudelaires can't use an elevator because elevators are "out", forcing them to walk up and down many flights of stories, although they later discover that sliding down the railing is faster.In Book Seven, there is a village that burns people to death if they don't follow its thousands of ridiculous and contradictory rules. They also advocate book burning. The majority of villagers are fine with this, and those who aren't like Hector are cowardly, complacent and unwilling to try to change anything.In Book Seven, the world of the series is apparently so terrible that Hector intends to build a mobile home to last over a hundred years where he will spend the rest of his life away from human society, except for the Baudelaires and Quagmires. Violet about to get her head cut off against her will. In Book Eight, Heimlich Hospital is a hospital which, in the world of the series, naturally plays on real fears such as inadequate healthcare and medical malpractice.In Book Eight, an audience gathers to see a girl getting her head cut off in hopes of curing mental illness. No one audibly questions the practice or asks if the girl even consented to it.In Book Nine, when Violet attempts to use a phone to call for help during their emergency about how she and her siblings are lost, stranded in the hinterlands with no money and unsure what to do, and how they've been framed as murderers, the operator hangs up on her.In Book Nine, people gather at a carnival for the sole purpose of seeing someone being mauled to death by lions. Later when the carnival is set on fire, one man says "I enjoy it when other people are in danger, not me!".In Book Nine at the lion show, someone questions if the show is even legal, however she is told to shut up and wait in the car by her husband if she has any more "ridiculous" questions.In Book Nine, when Count Olaf claims that whoever pushes someone into the pit will win a special prize, the audience fights among itself to push someone in.A newspaper seen throughout the series, called The Daily Punctilio, is full of errors, inaccuracies, exaggerations, and distorts the truth. The tabloid begins smearing and defaming the Baudelaires with lies. The series in a nutshell. Many of the adults in the series often come across as severely flawed, such as being stupid, corrupt, selfish, greedy, incompetent, ignorant, delusional, psychopathic, lack common sense, overly pedantic, cannot make exceptions, follow rules too easily, vulnerable to peer pressure and follow mob/herd mentality, etc. The Council of Elders is a strong example of this. In The Vile Village, the Baudelaires attempt to use "mob psychology" by shouting in a crowd, suggesting that humanity in the series is incapable of free independent thought.Even if an adult is kind-hearted, they often have some other trait which negatively impacts the Baudelaires and endangers their lives, such as Josephine Anwhistle being cowardly. If an adult in the series is on the more kind and sensible side, such as Uncle Monty, they are usually doomed and will probably die over the course of the series, or their death is implied.It is unknown if the adults seen in the series are intended to be "normal" or "average" in the world, or if the Baudelaires are simply unlucky when it comes to meeting decent people, as Lemony Snicket calls them magnets for misfortune.The dismal psychology of humanity in the series even extends to children, such as a girl named Carmelita Spats whom Lemony Snicket calls rude and filthy, as well as the students who bully the Baudelaires at school.After The Vile Village, the Baudelaires' living situation changes drastically, essentially become homeless with an uncertain living situation as they seek food, shelter, and jobs wherever possible in order to survive.Development[]The author of the series, Daniel Handler (who uses the pseudonym Lemony Snicket), has said in an interview with The A.V. Club that he decided to write a children's story when he was trying to find a publisher for his first novel, The Basic Eight. One of the publishers, HarperCollins, passed on The Basic Eight, but they were interested in him writing a story for children. Handler thought it was a terrible idea at first, but met with the publishers to discuss the book. They challenged him to write the book he wished he could have read when he was 10.[1]He retooled a manuscript he had for a mock-Gothic book for adults,[2] which became "the story of children growing through all these terrible things", a concept which the publishers liked, to Handler's surprise.[1]When asked what inspired him to write the series, Handler said, "I thought it would be interesting if terrible things happened to three helpless children over and over again."[3]Handler was not heavily focused on a moral message while writing the series, although he was forced to think about this aspect at times. Instead, he preferred to focus on the actual events of the plot instead of trying to craft the story around a moral message which could seem shoehorned and forced.[4]Handler was inspired by authors like Roald Dahl, Edward Gorey and Zilpha Keatley Snyder, who wrote books about creepy but nonsupernatural circumstances. He did not want to write a book about people casting spells or finding three rings to defeat a dragon. His original contract was four books, so if his series was not successful, it would have stopped at The Miserable Mill, although support eventually got him to write the full series.[5]Mature content[] The Snicket Emergency "The Snicket Emergency" Despite that A Series of Unfortunate Events is often categorized as a "children's book series", there is a lot of questionable, disturbing, distressing, violent, and mature content in the series. Lemony Snicket warns the reader on each book cover that the Baudelaires' lives are unpleasant - there is no happy beginning, no happy end, and very few happy things occur throughout the series.Daniel Handler admits that he wrote the series because he was sick of how "sappy", "dumbed down" and "optimistic" children's books are, as they tend to always have happy endings, be overtly cheerful and uplifting, and give unrealistic expectations. Handler was inspired to write the series after watching news stories on TV about the lives of unfortunate children around the world.In Lemony Snicket: The Unauthorized Autobiography, Lemony Snicket parodied a non-real series called The Luckiest Kids in the World! where three children are treated to a fun party, a big prize, a pony ride, several kind and sensible adults, and all the cake they can eat. The Littlest Elf is also a parody of these themes. In The Carnivorous Carnival, Lemony Snicket mentions a story called "The Story of Queen Debbie and Her Boyfriend, Tony":The story of the Baudelaires does not take place in a fictional land where lollipops grow on trees and singing mice do all of the chores. The story of the Baudelaires takes place in a very real world, where some people are laughed at just because they have something wrong with them, and where children can find themselves all alone in the world, struggling to understand the sinister mystery that surrounds them. Lemony Snicket, The Carnivorous CarnivalAlthough there is no official minimum age rating on the series, recommendations are often 8/9/10+.[6] There are parents who read the series to their children as young as 6, which others argue is too young. Individual children have different levels of maturity.Throughout the series, the children encounter abuse (e.g. child abuse), death, murder, people dying in horrible ways, violence, arson, horror, suffering, loss, pain, grief, misery and despair in a series of unfortunate events. The books also contain slight suggestive themes, mainly in Count Olaf's attempt to marry a 14-year-old Violet. Examples of mature content include (spoilers): Sunny trapped in a bird cage. In The Bad Beginning, the Baudelaire parents supposedly burn to death in a fire. Child abuse is shown in Klaus being slapped across the face, and Sunny's mouth being duct-taped, having her body tied with rope and hung in a birdcage which Olaf threatens to drop. The bookends with Olaf telling Violet he intends to kill her and her siblings with his own two hands. There are also suggestive lines:When Count Olaf proposes his marriage play, there is this line: "Violet imagined sleeping beside Count Olaf, and waking up each morning to look at this terrible man."When Violet signs the marriage certificate, Count Olaf says, "Now, if all of you will excuse me, my bride and I need to go home for our wedding night."When Violet reveals she signed the document with her left hand, Count Olaf says to Violet, "You may not be my wife, but you are still my daughter, and-"In the film adaptation of The Bad Beginning, Count Olaf attempts to murder the Baudelaires by trapping them inside a car on train tracks.In The Reptile Room, Uncle Monty is poisoned to death. When Stephano attempts to kidnap the Baudelaires, he orders them to "get in the damn Jeep", and when the car doesn't run, he screams, "BLASTED FURNACES OF HELL!" It is also mentioned that during dinner, under the table, Stephano rubs the blade of his knife against Violet's knee during their entire meal, as a way to psychologically terrify her. The TV series adaptation even has a distressing close-up shot of Uncle Monty's dead body.In The Wide Window, the watcher/reader is led to believe that Aunt Josephine jumped to her death and drowned herself in a lake, with a suicide note about how she finds life unbearable. Although she survives that, Aunt Josephine is heavily implied to have drowned or eaten by leeches anyway. Georgina Orwell about to throw Sunny into a furnace. In The Miserable Mill, Charles is almost sawed to death, while Dr. Georgina Orwell actually is, and it is mentioned that later, the Baudelaires were still shuddering how she met her demise. In the TV adaptation, Sunny is almost thrown into a furnace, while Dr. Georgina Orwell actually burns to death in the furnace.In The Vile Village, both Jacques Snicket (Count Omar) and the Baudelaires are almost burned to death at the stake. Jacques ends up being killed anyway; in the books, the details of his death are unclear, but the TV series reveals he was physically beaten with a crowbar. In the TV series, suicide imagery is also seen with a noose in a jail cell. The noose is the reason why it is called a "deluxe" cell.In The Hostile Hospital, Violet almost gets her head cut off, and much of the book involves Klaus and Sunny worrying about their sister being decapitated and murdered. In the TV series, the book is adapted like a horror movie, and has a scene in which the viewer is unsure if Olaf will torture Violet, as he even activates an electrical surgical instrument in her presence. The hospital is set on fire, and there is no reason to believe everyone (such as all the patients) survived, especially the Henchperson of Indeterminate Gender who disappears after.In The Carnivorous Carnival, there is a pit of lions which maul two victims to death. The starving lions, who have been whipped so hard that their bodies have scars, perish in a fire.In The Grim Grotto, there are disturbing and terrifying descriptions of Sunny almost suffocating to death.In The Penultimate Peril, Dewey Denouement bleeds to death after a harpoon gun gores him in the stomach, and then proceeds to drown in a pond. Later, there is a hotel fire which probably killed many residents. The book ends with the implication that there are hundreds of people either burning to death or about to be burned to death.In The End, there are implications of an entire island being poisoned to death. The book also ends in quite a dark way, with the Baudelaires burying the bodies of Kit Snicket and Count Olaf. The series ends with the ambiguous possibility that the Baudelaires died after leaving the island.Reception[]Praise[] The Baudelaire orphans have become cultural icons of unfortunate children. Reviews for A Series of Unfortunate Events have beengenerally positive, with reviewers saying that the series is enjoyable for children and adults alike, and that it brings fresh, mature and adult themes to children's stories. The books sold 60 million copies and were translated into 41 languages. They were also shared and taught in certain classrooms and were purchasable at Scholastic book fairs.The series became a literary cultural phenomenon of sorts in youth literature in the early 2000s, and was considered to be an unofficial competitor with the Harry Potter series. The series' boom would eventually be followed with series such as Eragon, Twilight, and The Hunger Games in the same decade. Adding to the phenomenon to the success of the series were mysteries such as the anonymity of Lemony Snicket, due to his identity as Daniel Handler being unknown to the vast majority of people at the time, as well as the uncertain ultimate fate of the Baudelaires, leading to mass speculation and theorizing. Fans also had much hype towards the releases of The Grim Grotto, The Penultimate Peril and The End which had longer gaps in their release dates and these books would answer many plot threads. The popularity of the series was referenced in a 2005 episode of The Simpsons called "The Bonfire of the Manatees" and later in a 2006 episode of Arthur called "Fern and Persimmony Glitchet", showing how A Series of Unfortunate Events captivated both adult and child audiences.Although the first few books were criticized and notorious due to their controversial aspects, they gradually gained a cult following over the years as the series continued, leading to the 2004 feature film being produced only a few years after their initial launch, which boosted the popularity of the series further. This also led to a full Netflix adaptation of all thirteen books in 2017, which had a similar effect.Fans often claim the books are intelligently written, humorous, full of interesting plot twists, engaging mysteries, cliff hangers, complex characters, and themes which force the reader to question their own morality with heavy grey-on-grey morality.In regards to the children who read the series, the books have often been categorized as "coming-of-age" stories, and are in the "Growing Up & Facts of Life" section on Amazon.com. The Baudelaires go through a lot of character growth; they start off as wealthy and innocent and somewhat naive children who are dependent on their parents and after their parents die, the Baudelaires are unable to rely on their money and live in many dismal and impoverished circumstances. They gradually learn about the horrors and corruption in their world and, by the end, have become incredibly strong, brave, outspoken and mature teenagers. The Times Online refer to the books as "a literary phenomenon", and discuss how the plight of the Baudelaire orphans helps children cope with lossciting the rise in sales post September 11, 2001 as evidence. A fan article compares the series to being a "guide for grief."[1]The series can help teach children critical thinking skills, such as skepticism, as well as a wide variety of vocabulary. Others noted that it can help children to become more independent and learn how to not only voice their own values, but also act on them, due to the themes about the consequences of inaction and complacency, even when it seems the whole world is against them.In addition, the books may help to generate sympathy and understanding towards those who are unfortunate in life. The reader is forced to experience the constant tragedy of the Baudelaire orphans. For example, in The Austere Academy, the Baudelaires are forced to deal with bullying.Criticism[]A Series of Unfortunate Events has received its fair share of criticism.The series has been criticized for formulaic and repetitive storytelling. Similar events occur repeatedly. In Books 1-7, the Baudelaires appear with a new guardian, Count Olaf appears in a disguise, no one believes the Baudelaires, someone is killed or almost killed, and Olaf escapes. In defense, the formula being recycled makes The Vile Village and the latter books more dramatic. Another example of repetitiveness is that when someone says something, "cried" is often used as a descriptor, such as "Violet cried, 'It wasn't us!'"Lemony Snicket constantly defines words, even ones such as "rickety", "blanched" and "simmered". In defense, this is meant for the younger readers who probably do not have a large vocabulary. Handler appears to have taken this criticism seriously during development, in order to balance the story so younger readers know what is occurring, while at the same time, trying not to come off as too patronizing and condescending to older readers. In later books, definitions are moreso used in a fashion to describe the events that are unfolding, rather than the specific definition itself.Some claim and criticize that the books teach children to not trust adults and that it's useless to come to them for help. The series portrays young people (the Baudelaires, the Quagmires, Fiona) as being more sensible and open-minded than the often irrational adults, even going so far to include a nightmarish village run by 25 nonsensical elderly people (the Council of Elders), as well as Ishmael. However, another interpretation is that it teaches children to be wary of certain adults instead of all adults, and the idea of why blindly respecting and trusting someone, simply because they are older than you, can be a bad idea.A woman also once approached Daniel Handler and said, "In one of your books, you teach that it is sometimes necessary to lie."[7] The books do not always portray "honesty as the best policy", showing how at times, not telling the truth is sometimes can be the better option, and why dishonesty can help. For example, the Baudelaires decide to build a trap for Esm Squalor in order to rescue Sunny, but Quigley has a moral dilemma and decides to be honest. Esm calls him an idiot for telling her they built a trap, and this begins a chain dangerous of events occur which almost leads to Sunny being thrown off a mountain to her death, because Quigley thought being honest is the "right" thing to do. Violet questioning Klaus' views on morality. The series contains elements of "moral ambivalence", often dismissing the idea of "right" and "wrong". For example, at the end of The Wide Window: Part Two, Klaus wonders if ditching Mr. Poe in order to catch a ride to Lucky Smells Lumbermill was the "right" thing to do. Violet replies that it does not really matter, what matters is what will happen to them.While the series features some developed characters, it has also been criticized for keeping some characters rather one note. Two developed villains are the Hook-Handed Man and White-Faced Women, who eventually change their ways and leave Olaf. In contrast, Esm Squalor and Carmelita Spats are introduced as selfish and bratty and go through little character growth. However, one-note characters can be a positive thing, in the sense that they portray the truth that some people will never change.Controversy[] Uncle Monty's murdered corpse. A Series of Unfortunate Events has come under criticism from both parents and some school districts for its dark themes. Upon its release, many were quick to deem the series as "sick" and "demented", due to the often overwhelming feelings of despair, children under constant threats of death and violence, people dying in gruesome ways, etc. This was especially true during the time when only books 1-4 were released, in which someone explicitly dies.The finale of book 5 is perhaps the first turning point of the series; while Duncan is being kidnapped, he shouts "V.F.D.!" which adds a heavy sense of mystery, and the series begins to introduce increasingly complex themes and heavier social commentary. Although book 4 had commentary about corruption in the workforce, the latter books contain social commentary on corruption in aspects like education (book 5), fashion and wealth (book 6), herd mentality (book 7), healthcare (book 8) and entertainment (book 9). Olaf forcefully gets Violet to marry him under duress. Perhaps most controversial aspect was the suggested incest, referring to Olaf's attempt to marry his supposed distant cousin Violet in The Bad Beginning. Although his main motive is to gain the Baudelaire fortune and not sexual in nature, readers note that are suggestive lines.There is some low-level profanity used in the series. For example, "damn" and "hell" are said in The Reptile Room. Handler later commented that the word's use was "precipitated by a long discussion of how one should never say this word, since only a villain would do so vile a thing! This is exactly the lily-liveredness of children's books that I can't stand."Since its release, access to the books have been banned and restricted in similar school districts; these include:Katy ISD Elementary School in Katy, Texas, due to having "violence/horror"[8]T.M. Clark Elementary in Portland, due to the extremely vague reason "mysticism"[8]Decatur, Georgia, due to Count Olaf attempting to marry Violet[9][10]Religious controversy[]The books have drawn the ire and praise of fundamentalist Christians, some of whom believe the books to be Christian allegories and some of whom believe them to be long-winded insults against Christianity. Despite this, Handler, who is a secular humanist, and does not consider himself a religious person, claimed the books are not supposed to be Christian allegories or attacks on Christianity.[2][3]The Baudelaire family have been confirmed to be of Jewish descent, although Violet, Klaus and Sunny do not mention deities or "God", implying religious ambivalence. For example, when the Baudelaires encounter tough situations, they resort to brainstorming and using their wits, instead of prayer and begging a higher power for help. The End mentions the Baudelaires do not believe in magic:"The Baudelaires, as a rule, did not believe in magic... Like all people who have seen something of the world, the children had come across plenty of things they had been unable to explain, from the diabolical hypnotism techniques of Dr. Orwell to the way a girl named Fiona had broken Klaus's heart, but they had never been tempted to solve these mysteries with a supernatural explanation like magic."Some religious comparisons include: VFD eye. Count Olaf has been seen as a parallel to Satan or some dark god-like figure. He is tall, has animalistic features that appear demonic, almost goat-like with his goatee and sideburns. He stalks the children mercilessly, is a psychopathic serial killer, and his eyes in his house make the children always seem like they are being watched. No matter where they go, he always seem to find them, implying omniscience. He is also involved with the secret society known as V.F.D.In The Ersatz Elevator, the Baudelaires live at 667 Dark Avenue, which is one number away from 666. This may have been intended to foreshadow Esm being evil, living one number away from a number viewed by many as being evil.The Vile Village can be seen as a commentary on organized religion, cults and extremism, as it essentially contains a cult of old people who worship crows and want to burn people to death for not following their ways as part of their hive mind.The Hostile Hospital can be seen as commentary on "the power of prayer", as the Volunteers Fighting Disease simply hope and tell the patients to feel better, but neglect actually giving them physical medicine like water and painkillers. Violet receiving an apple from a serpent. The End is often theorized to be an inversion of the Book of Genesis. For example, the Island is theorized to be a parallel to the Garden of Eden. Ishmael is theorized to be symbolic of God. During the story, Violet receives an apple which is a "cure" of a fatal disease from a snake, which could be interpreted as an allusion to Eve receiving the "fruit of knowledge" from the serpent. However, the islanders reject the apples, leading to their possible deaths.There is a church mentioned in the series called the Cathedral of the Alleged Virgin, which is likely a satire of the concept of religion pushing beliefs as truth.When asked if A Series of Unfortunate Events is a "world without God", Handler replied, "God is not a character in A Series of Unfortunate Events. The narrator mentions at one point that the characters often felt as if there was something powerful over them, which made no move to help them and was perhaps even laughing at their misfortune. But whether that person was God or the author is up for grabs."[3]Books[]A Series of Unfortunate Events consists of thirteen novels and and one epilogue chapter at the end of the series that is considered by Daniel Handler as a separate book. Releases and packaging[] North American cover of The Bad Beginning. The series carries a unique feel, not only in content, but also in packaging.The original covers were made to look old fashioned, with Victorian designs throughout. They were originally released in paperback, but those have now become harder to find, with hardcovers becoming the standard for the series.Several hardcover box sets were released in the US. The first four box sets came with three books each, and were each referred to as "A Box of Unfortunate Events." Books 1-3 were released as The Trouble Begins, books 4-6 were released as The Situation Worsens, books 1-6 were re-released as The Loathsome Library, books 7-9 were released as The Dilemma Deepens, and books 10-12 were released as The Gloom Looms. Shortly after publication of the last book, The End, the entire series was released in a box set called The Complete Wreck. Penny Dreadful release of The Reptile Room; or, Murder! The series's illustrator Brett Helquist returned to illustrate another release of the series in paperback form, made to mimic the penny dreadful--a common nineteenth-century British publication that was usually released in parts, each of which cost a penny. Books one, two, and three saw releases in this form, as well as secondary names: The Bad Beginning; or, Orphans!, The Reptile Room; or, Murder!, and The Wide Window; or, Disappearance! Penny Dreadful releases were never released for the remainder of the books.Promotional Items and Merchandise[] A Series of Unfortunate Events 2004 calendar. Numerous promotional items and merchandise has been released including calendars, buttons, dust covers, postcards, puzzles, board games and many more. An unofficial website focused on merchandise is here.Adaptations[]There have been two major adaptations of A Series of Unfortunate Events: the Paramount film, and the Netflix series. While the film is not canon to the books, the TV series has debatable canonicity as Daniel Handler was involved with some of it, although he was taken off the development team, and many things in the TV series are different from the books.2004 film (non-canon)[] Film poster. Main article: Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events (film)The first three novels of the series, The Bad Beginning, The Reptile Room, and The Wide Window, were made into a film, entitled Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events, and starring Emily Browning, Liam Aiken, and Jim Carrey.Video game (non-canon)[]Main article: Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events (video game)The film was consequently adapted into a video game.The game is based primarily on the movie, which in turn is based on the plots of the first three books of the series: The Bad Beginning, The Reptile Room, and The Wide Window.Players take the roles of Violet, Klaus, and Sunny Baudelaire, solving puzzles, fighting villains and finding objects.Television series[] Netflix cover of The Bad Beginning. Main article: A Series of Unfortunate Events (TV series)On January 13, 2017, Netflix released a TV series based on the books. Because of the canceled franchise of films, Daniel Handler was happy with the idea and joined production as one of the executive producers and a writer for the first season which contains eight episodes, although he was less involved with the next two seasons.Each book is broken up into two episodes (except for The End), and season 1 adapts the first four in the series: The Bad Beginning, The Reptile Room, The Wide Window, and The Miserable Mill.Season 2 adapts the next five books: The Austere Academy, The Ersatz Elevator, The Vile Village, The Hostile Hospital, and The Carnivorous Carnival.Season 3 adapts the final four books: The Slippery Slope, The Grim Grotto, The Penultimate Peril, and The End.Directors of the series include Barry Sonnenfeld, Mark Palansky, and Bo Welch. Violet is played by Malina Weissman, Klaus by Louis Hynes, and Sunny by Presley Smith, while Sunny's voice is performed by Tara Strong.Other works by Snicket, set in the VFD universe[]All the Wrong Questions[] Main article: All the Wrong QuestionsAll the Wrong Questions is another series written by Daniel Handler set in the same universe as A Series of Unfortunate Events, and includes several characters from it, although mainly in the form of small cameos. This series depicts the childhood of Lemony Snicket himself as a student in the V.F.D. organization. He is taken by his chaperone S. Theodora Markson to the town Stain'd-by-the-Sea, where he solves mysteries on his own and asks all the wrong questions.[] External links[] This wiki in other languages[]Portuguese WikiaFrench WikiSpanish WikiaRussian WikiaGerman WikiaSources[] Jump toSummaries (6)Synopsis (1)EditSuggest an edit or add missing contentYou have no recently viewed pages

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