

WilmerHale Assists Pepe the Frog Creator in Enforcing IP, Striking Back at Islamophobic Children's Book

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On behalf of client and artist Matt Furie, the creator of Pepe the Frog, WilmerHale has enforced Furie's intellectual property rights to shut down distribution of Eric Hauser's controversial children's book *The Adventures of Pepe and Pede*. Hauser's book, which featured a character named Pepe the Frog, espoused racist, Islamophobic and hate-filled themes, included allusions to the alt-right movement and was deliberately targeted at children. Under threat of litigation, Hauser admitted infringement. He agreed today to stop distribution of his book in all forms.

Under US copyright law, Furie is entitled to all of the profits that Hauser made by selling his infringing book. Instead, per the agreement—and at Furie's insistence—Hauser will be required to give all of his profits to the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the nation's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization.

Furie created the Pepe the Frog character in the early 2000s, and Pepe appeared in Furie's comic *Boy's Club* from 2005 through 2012. Pepe is a “peaceful frog-dude”—a kind and blissful cartoon character—who appeared alongside three animal roommates, and became famous in part because of his catchphrase, “feels good man.” By 2014, Pepe featured prominently in various internet memes. Beginning in late 2015, Pepe's image started appearing in hateful depictions associated with the alt-right, including alongside white supremacist language and symbols and other offensive imagery. Since then, Furie has made attempts short of legal action to counteract the spread of Pepe the Frog's association with the alt-right, including initiating the #SavePepe campaign to restore Pepe as a character representing peace, togetherness and fun. Hauser's book is the first instance in which Furie has threatened litigation to enforce his intellectual property rights.

Furie is represented on a pro bono basis by an experienced intellectual property litigation team led by Partners [Louis Tompros](#) and [Don Steinberg](#), and includes Counsel [Jeremy Moorehouse](#), Senior Associate [Elaine Zhong](#), and Associates [Will Kinder](#) and [Stephanie Lin](#).