

Editorial

Guardians

By Jacqueline Snider, Editor

Not often does a renowned Medievalist tackle the topic of children's literature and examine the genre in both historical and personal terms. In addition, committees such as those dispensing the National Book Critics Circle Award and the Truman Capote Award for Literary Criticism recognized Seth Lerer's book, *Children's Literature: A Reader's History from Aesop to Harry Potter*, describing the work as an "intellectual autobiography."

Lerer's chapter on literary prizes specifically the Newbery Award, the American Library Association, and libraries, for the most part, is complementary. He describes librarians as "guardians of literacy and culture for the young, and into this culture of guardianship came

another, central feature of early twentieth-century life" (p. 276).

The articles in this issue of *Education Libraries* expand upon the concept of librarians as guardians. We learn how a school librarian helps students develop research skills; and how academic librarians design better learning commons for their students, help improve student retention rates, and adopt new roles as professor-librarians. As these articles demonstrate, our profession changes, influences, and commands an integral role in our educational institutions.

Lerer, S. (2008). *Children's Literature: A Reader's History from Aesop to Harry Potter*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.



Photograph of Taos County, New Mexico. Children crowd into the Harwood Branch Library after school at Ranchos. I . . . , 12/1941 (Courtesy of The National Archives)

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