

# Sheila A. Egoff

*Judith Saltman*

**Résumé:** *Judith Saltman nous présente la carrière de Sheila Egoff, qui a joué un rôle majeur dans l'établissement et la reconnaissance des études consacrées à la littérature-jeunesse canadienne.*

Sheila Egoff has just been appointed Officer of the Order of Canada in honour of her work as an educator and author. Sheila Egoff was born in Auburn, Maine, grew up in Galt, Ontario, and was educated at the University of Toronto and University College in London, England. After working at Galt Public Library, she came to Toronto Public Library in 1942, where she was a children's librarian, a reference librarian, and the first



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Curator of the Osborne Collection of early children's books. She then worked for four years as an editor for the Canadian Library Association. When the School of Librarianship was established at the University of British Columbia in 1962, Sheila became one of its founding faculty members. She taught courses there in Children's Literature and Librarianship until June 1983.

Internationally known as a teacher, lecturer, critic, and author, Sheila has left her mark on the field of public library services for children through her education and inspiration of a generation of librarians working today with children in libraries across Canada. She has deeply influenced the field of children's literature through her many publications. Sheila set the standards for evaluating Canadian children's books with her first book, *The republic of childhood: a critical guide to Canadian children's literature in English*. *Only connect: readings in children's literature*, which she co-edited with G.T. Stubbs and L.F. Ashley, became a basic source book. In 1976 Sheila organized the first Pacific Rim Conference on Children's Literature and edited the papers from the conference in *One ocean touching*. *Thursday's child: trends and patterns in contemporary children's literature* received the Ralph Shaw Award for Excel-

lence in Library Literature. In 1988 Sheila authored a critical history of fantasy literature in *Worlds within: a study of fantasy for children and young people*. With co-author Judith Saltman, Sheila critiqued contemporary Canadian children's literature in a wholly new work, *The new republic of childhood: a critical guide to Canadian children's literature in English* in 1990. Her most recent work is a bibliographical catalogue of early and rare children's books which she edited in 1993: *Canadian children's books, 1799-1939, in the Special Collections and University Archives Division, The University of British Columbia Library: a bibliographical catalogue*.

Sheila has also contributed many articles, reviews and essays to Canadian and American journals and has served on the Board of Judges for the Hans Christian Andersen Award. In 1979 she gave the Arbuthnot Honor Lecture at the University of South Carolina. The Children's Literature Center in the Library of Congress invited her to give the honorary 1993 Children's Book Week Lecture at the Library of Congress. She has received the Alumni Jubilee Award of the University of Toronto Faculty of Library Science Alumni Association, the Eliot Landau Award, and the Claude Aubry Award for a Distinguished Contribution to Children's Literature. Sheila has been awarded the Doctor of Laws from the University of Alberta and the Doctor of Letters from the University of New Brunswick.

**Judith Saltman** teaches in the School of Library Science at the University of British Columbia. She co-authored, with Sheila Egoff, *The new republic of childhood: a critical guide to Canadian children's books in English*; she is the editor of *The Riverside* anthology of children's literature (1988) and the author of *Modern Canadian children's books* (1987) and *Goldie and the sea* (1987).