

2017

Review of *Balderdash!: John Newbery and the Boisterous Birth of Children's Books* by Michelle Markel

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Balderdash: John Newbery and the Boisterous Birth of Children's Books
Markel, Michelle
Illustrated by Nancy Carpenter
San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2017

John Newbery was born in a time where fun children's books weren't published. But, John loved reading and publishing and decided that he wanted to publish beautiful, engaging books geared towards children. He created a book with games, proverbs, ABC's, and a Giant-Killer, and the book flew off the shelves, especially since John included a toy with purchase. John expanded his offerings to include magazines, full-length novels, joke books, and geography books, effectively changing the publishing industry and paving the way for children's literature today. Throughout the book, the illustrations and text are sprinkled around the page, sometimes creating a chaotic scene. However, the overall design of the book is incredibly pleasing with beautiful endpapers and page edges that look like old, antique books. The whimsical text and language make this book best suited for older elementary school children, but younger students could enjoy the playful illustrations.

Optional
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