



United States Authors Series: Shel Silverstein

Ruth K MacDonald

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A volume in "Twayne's Authors Series" of literary criticism offers a critical introduction to the life and work of a particular writer, to the history and influence of a literary movement, or to the development of a literary genre. Primarily devoted to critical interpretation and discussion of an author's work, the study not only takes account of major literary trends and important contributions in scholarship and criticism but also provides new critical insights and an original point of view. "Authors Series" volumes are rooted in the original works themselves and address readers ranging from advanced high school students to university professors. The book suggests to the informed reader new ways of considering a writer's work. A reader new to the work under examination will, after reading the "Authors Series" study, be compelled to turn to the originals, bringing to the reading a basic knowledge and fresh critical perspectives. Rakish humor, easily interpreted illustrations, a variety of credible voices that appeal to children these are the hallmarks of Shel Silverstein s poetry. In "Where the Sidewalk Ends" and "A Light in the Attic," Silverstein addresses life's pleasures and pitfalls by focusing on a schoolchild's humor; employing simple cartoons and mischievous jokes, he mentions the unmentionable but never preaches. Moreover, the versatile Silverstein who in his time has been a "Playboy" cartoonist and correspondent, a songwriter and performer, and a writer of film scores and plays also continues to reach children through picture books and other prose works. In this first book-length study devoted to Silverstein, Ruth K. MacDonald presents a thought-provokingappreciation of Shel Silverstein's contributions to children's literature, particularly children's poetry and humor. Arguing that Silverstein's works will endure because they speak for children so precisely and without historical limitations, MacDonald gives much attention to the poetry collections while also treating the picture books and other works that preceded and followed them.



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