

The New Criterion

Features

May 2008

Introduction: What was a liberal education?

by [Roger Kimball](#)

An introduction to our special issue on education.

The real difficulty in modern education lies in the fact that, despite all the fashionable talk about a new conservatism, even that minimum of conservation and the conserving attitude without which education is simply not possible is in our time extraordinarily hard to achieve.

—Hannah Arendt, “The Crisis in Education”

To be deceived about the truth of things and so to be in ignorance and error and to harbor untruth in the soul is a thing no one would consent to.

—Socrates, in *The Republic*

‘Everybody has won, and all must have prizes.’

—The Dodo, in *Alice in Wonderland*

When I ponder the recent itinerary ...

Roger Kimball is co-Editor and Publisher of *The New Criterion* and President and Publisher of Encounter Books.

[more from this author](#)

This article originally appeared in *The New Criterion*, Volume 26 May 2008, on page 4

Copyright © 2008 The New Criterion | www.newcriterion.com

<http://www.newcriterion.com/articles.cfm/Introduction--What-was-a-liberal-education--3830>