

New York Public Library Retirees Association Newsletter

Fall 2020

Issue 45

OF BOMBS AND PLEASURE: MY TWO YEARS IN THE NYPL SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY DIVISION

By Alan Pally



Story on page 3

Antiwar demonstration in Bryant Park, taken from Sci-Tech stacks

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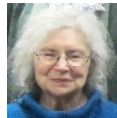
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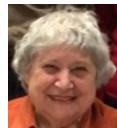
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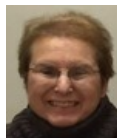
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PRESIDENT'S NOTES

GREETINGS!

Here is your latest wonderful Newsletter, the Fall 2020 issue. I hope this finds you all in good spirits and getting ready for whatever weather the winter months bring us. We get cold winds and snow here in the New York City area, but we have members all over the country, so some of you will be enjoying warm weather. And I have a new winter coat to keep me warm and snuggly! For now, as I am writing this, most things are going fairly smoothly except for our Presidential Election, but let's hope that's settled in a positive manner, too!

The executive board and I wish you all a wonderful and happy fall and winter. Enjoy your latest Newsletter, and please keep in touch. Everyone loves to hear from you!

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IN MEMORY OF

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OF BOMBS AND PLEASURE: MY TWO YEARS IN THE NYPL SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY DIVISION



By Alan Pally

As those of us of a certain age struggle through the *annus horribilis* that is 2020, we also recall other equally turbulent times. Fifty years ago, on March 6, 1970, a townhouse exploded on Eleventh Street in Greenwich Village. Although at first the blast was attributed to a gas leak, it quickly became evident that the explosion was the result of bombmaking gone awry, with three of the bombmakers themselves being the victims rather than the targets that they, the radical group called the Weather Underground, intended. It took days to identify the bodies at the horrific crime scene. The FBI's detective work led them to the Science & Technology Division of The New York Public Library. There, for nearly two weeks (as I recall), two FBI agents parked themselves at the big oak conference table behind my desk in the division's administrative office, where they were served trays of call slips. Somehow the FBI suspected, in those far-off pre-Internet days, that the members of the Weather Underground used certain books on explosives in the collections of the Science Division to aid their research. The FBI agents believed that the call slips might point them to the culprits and perhaps accomplices. The memory of those agents sitting behind me represents one of the vivid memories I have of my time working in Sci-Tech, a time which also featured the lunchtime chanting of Hare Krishna devotees marching down 42nd Street; antiwar demonstrations in Bryant Park, including the

Moratorium Rally in October 1969; and rolls of toilet paper being thrown from windows of office buildings on the other side of 42nd Street to celebrate, in those newly post ticker-tape days, the New York Mets first World Series victory, also in October 1969. And, also in that eventful month, there was the first Bryant Park Flower Show, to which NYPL staff were invited to enjoy champagne and ladyfingers as we admired the beautiful, gigantic dahlias in the huge tent that was erected for the show.

But I am getting ahead of myself. For much of 1968, I worked as a clerk in Central Circulation, Room 80 of the Central Building (now the Celeste Bartos Forum). I had decided to take a gap year from full-time college and enjoyed the luxury of my \$4325 salary. I was, however, encouraged to peruse the *Staff News* for promotional opportunities and noticed an advert for two Library Technical Assistant I positions in the Science & Technology Division that offered the annual salary of \$4900. I applied.

I was summoned for an interview with Robert G. Krupp, Chief of the Science & Technology Division, in his grand office in Room 120, directly above the Library's 42nd Street entrance. Mr. Krupp had two positions on offer, one in the Division's periodicals section, reporting to Miss Ballarene, and one reporting directly to him. He told me he was interested in me for his position. I was kind of awed. He was a large, imposing man of about fifty and had on his desk a

copy of *The Arms of Krupp*, a new book about the German munitions family that had been heavily involved with the Nazis. Mr. Krupp told me he was distantly related to the Krupp family, a fact that made me a little nervous. But the job on offer, which involved diverse duties, sounded fascinating, and I loved the office with its combination of solid old oak furniture, rare books, and balconies inside and out. So, when a young personnel rep named Priscilla Southon phoned to offer me the position, I accepted and began working in Sci-Tech on December 2, 1968.

Although I had already worked in two NYPL units—Donnell and CC—I walked into a different world on that late autumn day in 1968. Mr. Krupp showed me around the office that I would share with him and Genevieve Leniec, his Secretary II. Mr. Krupp had a special interest in transportation technology, and the east wall of the office consisted of the Parsons Collection, an impressive set of volumes about trains, protected under glass. On the balcony above the work space, there was a collection of rare science books, as well as a new acquisition, only recently catalogued: The Walter Weichsel Transfer Collection, a series of 50 scrapbooks consisting of train and bus tickets, transfers, and photographs from around the world. In addition to the administrative office, the divisional spaces consisted of a large and attractive reading room with a balcony (Room 121); a dark and musty room (119); a suite of cubicles for staff (118, which was at the end of the public corridor, later removed during the Gregorian renovations); and Stack III, which housed the bulk of the Sci-Tech collections.

The collection policies of the Division were explained to me. It was basically physical sciences, including physics, chemistry, mathematics, technology etc., including subscriptions to 5,000 periodicals. We also had the *Women's Wear Daily* and occult sciences books, as well as materials on air pollution but not water pollution. We also had the Patents Collection, housed in the Annex. But in those days the Science & Technology Division did not collect life sciences, which were housed in Room 315, then called the Information Division. Since the science classes I had enjoyed at school were mostly biology, health sciences, etc., I was out of my element. However, I think that's what made it all the more interesting to me. Each of the librarians and LTA III's specialized in one of the Division's subject areas, and I learned a lot from them. It schooled me in the importance of having subject specialists in research divisions.

In addition to Mr. Krupp, who was a chemist, our large staff included Assistant Chief (Librarian IV) Dr. Vitaut Kipel, a Belarusian émigré with a doctorate in mineralogy; Catherine Ballarene (Librarian III), who was in charge of periodicals; Arnold Sadow (L III), who was Editor of *New Technical Books*, the Division's journal; librarians Suzanne Barry, Elizabeth Bentley, Kendal Funk, April Katsura, and others; LTA III's John Chropovka and Gerald Hurley; Emanuel Rapaport ("Mr. R."), LTA in charge of stack operations; and many other LTAs, clerks, and pages. Mr. Krupp informed me that Robert Foy, who went to work in the NYPL branches, had had a version of my job a few years earlier.

In my first week, Mr. Krupp explained my duties to me. I was to be an editorial assistant to *New Technical Books (NTB)*, the Division's journal, which featured reviews of new books in the field. We had agreements with many publishers, who sent review copies that I would then assign to the appropriate specialist for review. I would also order new books and request sample copies of science periodicals from around the world. Each month, I curated a small exhibit of new science books in two exhibit cases out in the main corridor, near the Map Division, where a young librarian named Alice Hudson would also curate an exhibition in her subject.

A major part of my work was serving as liaison between the Science Division and Preparation Services. On my second day, Mr. Krupp gave me a tour of Prep Services, a sprawling department run by Joe Rosenthal, which was housed on the southwest side of the building on the first and second floors and on the mezzanine between them. Mr. Krupp introduced me to many of the Prep Services staff, including Juanita Doares, Otilia Pearson, Evelyn Coleman, Mrs. Szabo, Sigrid Slivka, Bohdan Melnyk, Bill Trott, Olga Howard, and others in the totally new world to me that was Preparation Services. I learned how to use the CSR (Central Serials Records) card catalogue as well as the in-process catalogues up on the second floor, where I met Zora Kipel, Abe Fox, and many others. Many of the Prep Services staff came from other parts of the world, bringing to NYPL the language skills that were so necessary to their work. I remember being particularly impressed by a woman named Hinda who spoke Ladino (Judeo-Spanish). Staff in other departments who loomed large in the Science milieu were Hannah Friedman, Lou Mintz, Dawn Pohlman, and Clare Rodgers. Mr.

Krupp's boss was James Henderson, Director of the Research Libraries.

Early during my tenure in Science, a man named Dr. Myron Pleasure began to visit Mr. Krupp regularly to give him flyers about books on horology. Mr. Krupp instructed me to make a "Pleasure File" to keep in my desk. After each of Dr. Pleasure's visits, Mr. Krupp would give me the new brochures, saying "Put these in your Pleasure File." And speaking of pleasure, Mr. Krupp (I never called him "Bob") occasionally had lunch at the Bird Cage in Lord & Taylor. Once he came back from lunch, quite excited. He had been looking at ties, and whilst twirling a rotating tie rack, a hand alit upon his. He was delighted to report that it was the actor Anthony Perkins.

Occasionally, I was given a special project. One memorable one focused on work for Chemical Abstracts Service, a division of the American Chemical Society, for which I had to provide bibliographic information obtained by going through hundreds of chemistry periodicals. It brought back memories of my childhood, when a friend and I, with our Gilbert chemistry sets, accidentally set fire to the floor of his bedroom on Walton Avenue in the Bronx. (Just a small fire, quickly snuffed out.) I was also the Division's liaison with Springer-Verlag, the German publisher of academic science texts. Mr. Krupp liked the way the Springer books smelled—he actually taught me how to judge a well-made book by its smell.

While I was working in Sci-Tech, Iris Pettiford Cox, a former colleague in Central Circulation, suggested that I run for Secretary of Local 1930, the NYPL union that had been formed in 1968. Iris was Secretary and intended to run for President. I told her I didn't know much about unions and didn't feel qualified. I was, however, interested in politics, having been a volunteer for the Lindsay for Mayor campaign a few years earlier, before I was even old enough to vote. So I ran unopposed for Secretary, for the term beginning in January 1970. I remember that the union was regarded with suspicion in certain quarters, particularly by those refugees from the Soviet Union, whom I dealt with in Prep Services. Union membership was voluntary at that time, and many of my colleagues did not join. The Local participated in the anti-Vietnam War protests of the day, and I remember once being responsible for

bringing the union banner to an afternoon demonstration near City Hall. Mr. Krupp was a little surprised when he came into work that morning and saw the large Local 1930 banner leaning against the wall of his office.

In the summer of 1970, I took my first trip to Europe. Around that time, I decided to go back to school full time to finish my degree. I hadn't mentioned that to Mr. Krupp yet, and when I returned from my trip, he was on vacation in Norway. Since the best sort of schedule for me would be as a half-time clerk in the branches, I was put in touch with Walter Roziewski, Assistant Coordinator of the Manhattan Borough Office, who offered me a choice of five branches: Cathedral, Fort Washington, Ottendorfer, Tompkins Square, and Yorkville. I did a lot of research, including phoning former fellow Donnell page Louise Studer, who was a clerk at Yorkville. She said "Come to Yorkville." I'm sorry to say that when Mr. Krupp returned from vacation, he was rather frosty about my impending departure, but those were pre-email days, so no one was able to reach him. I regretted that he was offended and began work at Yorkville in October, 1970.

Many years later, I was working late one night at Lincoln Center. A colleague who was also working that night told me that he had just heard a terrible story. The head of the Science & Technology Division had had an accident, going home on the train to New Jersey, and had lost parts of both of his legs. I was devastated to hear that. I later learned that, after a long period of treatment, it was thought that Mr. Krupp might return to work, but that never happened, and he died not long after.

Over the decades since I left Science, the collection policies evolved, in ways that I am not familiar with. Before I left the division in 1970, Mr. Krupp said that there were long-range plans to relocate to the Annex at some point, possibly with assistance from the Rockefeller Foundation, and that my position would be upgraded when we moved. That never came to pass. The Science, Industry, and Business Library (SIBL) opened in the old B. Altman building in 1996. As time went on, I believe the collecting of science materials, which were expensive, was minimized. When Bill Walker, who was SIBL's founding director, became the Mellon Director of the Research Libraries, he came to our division chiefs' meeting at

the Performing Arts Library to meet us. Each LPA department head was introduced. We talked a bit about our jobs. I, of course, talked about LPA's public programs but threw in the information that I had worked in Sci-Tech and that one of my most enjoyable tasks there was to work on *New Technical Books*. "I killed that publication!" he snapped gleefully. [I resisted the impulse to say, "Well, that was a stupid thing to do; not only did it give the specialists the opportunity to become intimately familiar with new works in their fields, it also provided hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of free books to the division!"] The Milstein Division of U.S. History, Local History & Genealogy opened to the public in the old Science spaces on January 2, 2000.

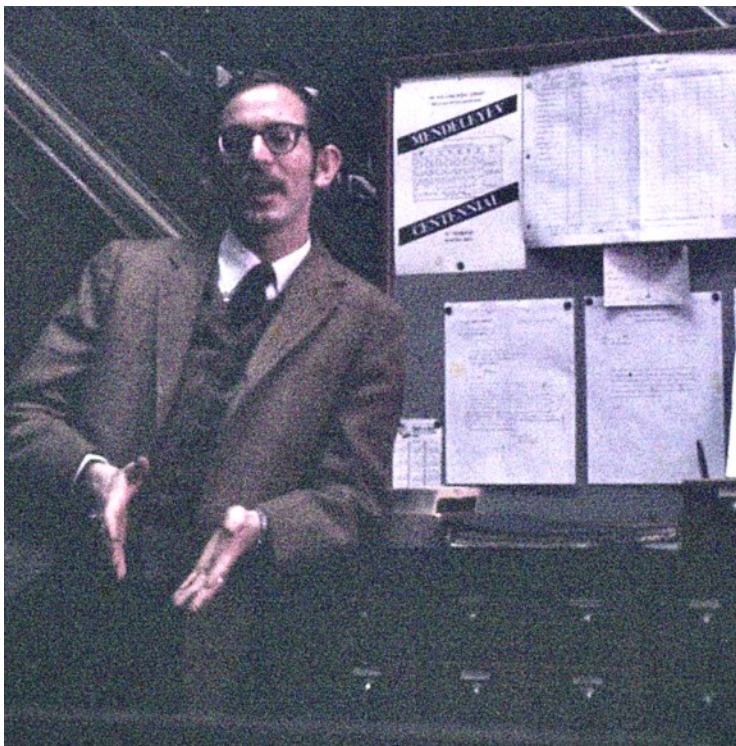
In 1971, when I was at Yorkville, the budget crises caused NYPL to announce the closure of several units, including the Science & Technology Division and the Library of Performing Arts. At that time, Mr. Krupp was interviewed by *The New York Times*. He

talked about how the division was used by students and scholars and how it had been used by government officials during World War II in planning the invasion of Japanese-held islands. When *Times* reporter Gene I. Maeroff informed Mr. Krupp that the closing of the performing arts library had been postponed because entertainment personalities had promised to raise funds through benefit performances, Mr. Krupp remarked, "That works for them, but not many of our scientists can do a soft-shoe dance."

Thinking back on my time in Sci-Tech, I realized I learned a lot there about subjects and library processes that were useful to me later in my career. I enjoyed working with the Sci-Tech staff and loved the Central Building, even in those days before air conditioning. And I am probably the only staff member of The New York Public Library ever to have had a "Pleasure File" in his desk!



Catherine Ballarene, Librarian III in charge of Sci-Tech periodicals; and Genevieve Leniec, Secretary II



Gerald Hurley, LTA III



Suzanne Barry, librarian, sitting at Mr. Krupp's desk



Taken from Sci-Tech balcony, clockwise from left: Dorothy Eosefow (with shopping bag), Thelma Alexander (Thomas), Margaret Kruh, Veronica Albat, Katherine Brown, Catherine Ryan

POLLY BOOKHOUT

As I was alone when the lockdown began, a bright spot for me was walking in our garden, alive with spring flowers, and watching the sparrows who nest in my neighbors' air conditioners and perch on the elm tree outside my windows.

My childhood friend Grace Imokawa phones me every Friday from Santa Rosa, California. She had to evacuate two years ago, but so far she has survived the nearby fires and the orange skies. Fortunately, her senior development has central air conditioning so she didn't swelter when the PG&E shut off her electricity for two days.

With more time for reading and watching movies, one item stands out, a book on the archaeology of New York City, *Unearthing Gotham*. A large debt is owed to the amateur archaeologists from Staten Island, the Bronx, and upper Manhattan who found artifacts that provided the story of coastal Native Americans before Europeans arrived.

SALLY CAMPBELL

Thank goodness for Riverside Park, just two blocks away. I loved watching spring as I walked in the park, and I posted A.E.Housman's poem, "Loveliest of Trees, the Cherry Now" on blooming cherry trees.

Every day my husband goes out in the afternoon to read—unless the weather is too hot or wet—but comes home for tea and cookies (some that I baked).

I have gotten in the habit of going down to the Hudson River at 94th Street to watch the sunset every evening that I'm free.

My husband, my music, my cat, and my apartment all have appreciated the extra attention I've been able to give them. Zoom has allowed me to go to Quaker worship at Pendle Hill every morning and Morningside Meeting every Sunday, as well as joining song swaps with Peoples Music Network.

There are still plenty of projects I continue to procrastinate on, and email seems to fill up too much of my time. Oh, and then there are naps. I love naps and phone calls. I've been able to give blood three times and was part of The Ribbon International's commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. I also have been going to the "Say Their Names" rally on Broadway and 96th Street on Fridays.

Chuck and I have been very careful and do enjoy being together. He continues to read aloud to me as I do my morning exercises. Philip Pullman is our current favorite. Chuck is, however, glad I'm now back to helping people to declutter and am making some money again.

I have only two friends who have died of COVID-19, both quite old (one of them was 106 1/2). I did help a friend who was ill by bringing her groceries.

There's more, but that's enough!

VIVIAN CONAN

Current News

The big news for me is that my memoir came out on September 29, 2020, from Greenpoint Press: *Losing the Atmosphere: A Baffling Disorder, a Cry for Help, and the Therapist Who Understood*. [More at VivianConan.com]

Other News

I had been working as a part-time librarian in the Bronxville Public Library in Westchester County until COVID hit. Now, for the first time since I was fourteen—I am seventy-eight—I don't have a job. It feels very strange. Technically, there's still a line for me on the payroll, and when I'm comfortable taking public transportation again, I can work again. But I don't know when that will happen. So now I'm doing volunteer work for the library from home—creating elec-

tronic flyers that they post on their website for whatever is coming up on the calendar—Labor Day, Banned Books Week, etc. At least it lets me keep my hands in things, but I do miss interacting with the public and the staff in person.

I have also been a volunteer with Girls Write Now, an organization that pairs girls who want to write and are from underserved neighborhoods with mentors who are women writers. I mentored one girl for three years. Then, when she graduated from high school, I got my second mentee, whom I was with until she graduated four years later—for a total of seven years. I am still in contact with both girls.

Past News from NYPL

This goes way back to 1976. There were severe budget cuts during Mayor Beame's tenure. I was laid off twice and re-hired twice. Three branches were closed, one of which was the Columbia Branch, then housed in the Butler Library on the Columbia University campus. The community protested the closing by staging a sit-in. They ate and slept in the library for many weeks. They got a lot of media coverage: TV news, newspapers, radio stations. They eventually prevailed, and the Library made plans to reopen that branch, but it didn't have the staff yet. When I was rehired the second time, my assignment was to be the branch librarian of the Columbia Branch. My first day back, I was told to go to the branch and tell them it would be reopening, and I would be the librarian, but we couldn't officially open until they hired some clerks. So for two weeks, I reported to work each day as the only staff member, but the sit-in people and organizers were still there. They weren't going to leave until we got the clerks and opened officially. I organized them into helpers—to unpack the boxes of books that had been returned during the sit-in and sort them according to Dewey numbers. It was a very interesting time. On the day the library finally reopened, all the media were there, and my picture was on the front page of *The New York Times*.

I knew there might be more layoffs, and I didn't want to stick around for them, so I found a job in Westchester as director of a village library, and I never worked at NYPL after that. I had started at NYPL in 1970, so I worked there for a total of six years before decamping to Westchester.

MARY K. CONWELL

Sundays in the Hall with Dan and Monica



In late March, my neighbors, Dan and Monica, and I watched as others on our floor fled to country homes or to stay with family or friends. Suddenly we realized we were the only ones left at our end of the hall, so we decided to meet on Sunday evenings for the luxury of in-person visits. We pull our chairs outside our doors—which are at least seven feet apart—bring our



own wine and snacks, and catch up on the week. As neighbors begin to return, we simply ask them to ignore us as we continue what has become a valued ritual.

ESTELLE FRIEDMAN

Columbus Day weekend every year is “fall foliage time” in the Berkshires, when the leaves of the trees begin to turn wonderful shades of gold, red, and orange.

My daughter and I decided to drive up to the Berkshires, in Western Massachusetts, to view this spectacular sight. As we drove higher and higher, the trees became more and more colorful. When we arrived at the Highest point of the Berkshires, Mt. Greylock, the area resembled a fairyland. We drove through a forest where every tree had its own individual charm and color. We seemed to be going through a long multicolored tunnel framed by trees with leaves of gold, red, and orange, like an enchanted forest in a fairy tale.



It was even possible to forget the pandemic for a while and appreciate this wonder of nature that lasts such a short time.

KAREN PHELAN

I am newly retired as of May 30, 2020. I worked for NYPL from September 1992 through May 2020. I spent twenty-two years as the children’s librarian at the Spuyten Duyvil Branch Library in the Bronx.

My interests are many, but here are just a few: music, travel, films, theater, walking, adult coloring pages, word searches, fairs and festivals, and amusement parks.

JEAN PINCKNEY

Hello, everyone. I hope you are all staying safe. We here in South Carolina had some diehards who refused to wear masks even though the cases were rising. But their disobedience soon came to a halt when our mayors placed a fine on them for not doing so. So we are now trying to get back to normal. In the meantime, I have learned to sew cloth masks. I have made quite a few and have given them freely to family and friends who thought they were great, surprisingly to me. We have also been holding church services, bible studies, and meetings online, which I enjoy as a new experience. We finally got the younger ones to use some of their technology skills. We are waiting patiently for orders to return to business as usual. In the meantime, we shall obey Isaiah 40:31 as it is all in God’s hands. Keep safe and wear your masks. Best wishes,

MIRIAM TULIAO



ALA May 2020 press release, detailing the 125-mile run Miriam completed in June:

“As The New York Public Library (NYPL) celebrates 125 years, Miriam Tuliao has announced that she will run 125 miles during the month of June to raise funds for the Spectrum

Scholarship Program. Her run will honor 125 current and former NYPLers who have dedicated their lives in service to New York City and communities all across North America. These inspiring, indefatigable library veterans include adult, children’s and teen specialists, managers, technical and reference services staff, readers’ advisors, programmers, and directors. This is Ms. Tuliao’s 13th consecutive year organizing an annual fundraiser for Spectrum.”

For more of the press release and to see the names of the 125 NYPLers, go to:

<http://www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2020/05/tuliao-run-125-miles-support-spectrum-and-honor-nypl-anniversary>.

ARLINE WILSON

These events took place at the Baychester Library during the 1980's.

I don't need to remind those who worked with children about "The Animal Show." For years it was one of NYPL's most popular special programs for children. Putting children and animals together certainly wasn't a novel idea. But inviting a menagerie into the library? Now that was novel.

John was a one man show: creator, producer, director, animal keeper, scriptwriter, and presenter. He always arrived with his menagerie, a variety of small mammals and assorted reptiles secured in multiple duffel bags. On this particular day, the room was arranged with the audience facing the long table where John stood lecturing and displaying his subjects. As he spoke about each animal, he removed it from its bag, held it up for all to see while describing its distinguishing features, habitat, and other assorted facts and giving the youngsters a deeper understanding of its uniqueness. John's enthusiasm for his subject was infectious, and the room bristled with excitement with children fidgeting in their seats.

Everything was going perfectly, as usual. Suddenly a small fluffy rabbit got out of its bag while John was holding up the ferret. The ferret jumped out of John's hands, streaking after the rabbit, and the chase was on. John frantically began chasing the ferret. The room was in pandemonium, rabbit and ferret racing around the room with lecturer in hot pursuit, children shrieking and jumping up and down in excitement, staff running from other parts of the building to see what the ruckus was about. Suddenly the ferret caught up with the rabbit and snapped its neck! Literally, it happened in a flash. Then there was John holding the ferret in one hand and the dead body of the rabbit in the other. I was horrified. I thought the children would be traumatized by this horrendous experience. I couldn't have been more wrong. They were screaming in excitement. They loved it, especially the rabbit-ferret ending! What bloodthirsty little creatures they were. When everyone calmed down, John explained that the ferret was only behaving as he would have in the wild. He cleverly incorporated the whole episode into his lecture.

Later, when John was packing up his gear, we laughed about the chaos we had experienced but assessed the afternoon a success for everyone in spite of it. Well, maybe not so much for the rabbit.

OPPORTUNITIES

Do you like enhancing photos? Are you shut in with a need for diversion? We have many photos from past retiree events that could be on the Photo Page of our website, nyplretirees.org. If you would like to join other members in improving our website, please email retireesnypl@gmail.com.

Volunteers are needed to listen to our unedited oral history narratives in order to compile a list of names mentioned in them. Having such a list would be greatly appreciated by our transcribers and would help speed up the editing process. If you are interested, please contact Mary K. Conwell at mkconwell@yahoo.com.



"Shirley, when was your last vacation?"



"I like scary books. Do you have any by ghostwriters?"

13 OF THE BEST LIBRARY SCENES IN MOVIES

Excerpted from an article on Bustle.com
By Dina Gachman Sep. 8, 2015

Thankfully, libraries full of books are not one of those ancient artifacts that you see in old movies and think, “Man, that seems dated.” If a character in a movie set in 2015 started riffling through an actual card catalog it might seem bizarre, since most everything today is digitized. Unless, of course, the librarian character is a rebellious Luddite who makes it her mission in life to save the mighty card catalogue, technology be damned! I wouldn't mind seeing that character, actually. So get to it, Hollywood.

There are some classic library scenes in movies, where detectives piece together the clues that will lead them to that “Aha!” moment and lead them to the killer! Or where invisible guardian angels listen to people's innermost thoughts as they browse the stacks and read from aging library books.

In honor of the fact that libraries are (hopefully) here to stay, here's a look at 13 of the best library scenes in film.

PARTY GIRL



Early '90s “Queen of the Indies” Parker Posey plays Mary, a broke Manhattan party girl who likes drugs “that will make my unborn children grow gills.” When she gets evicted from her place she reluctantly takes a job as a librarian, and in between reorganizing the card catalog (which is so retro now), she whisper-screams eloquent, librarian-ish things like, “You don't think I'm smart enough to work in your fucking library?!” She's basically a '90s version of Ilana from *Broad City*. When she starts to take her job seriously, it's pretty hilarious.

GHOSTBUSTERS

While you're waiting for the all-female *Ghostbusters* to come out, check out the original just for fun. There's a scene in a library where they see a floating apparition checking out a book, and proceed to argue about how they're going to talk to it. Because they're professionals. Bill Murray steps up to the task and faces the floating old lady, saying, “Hello, I'm Peter. Where are you from, originally,” before he gets shushed by the ghost. Then Dan Aykroyd has a plan, which doesn't work out so well...



BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S



This one happens to have two great library scenes. In the first, sexy writer Paul takes Holly Golightly/Audrey Hepburn (who is rocking an awesome bright orange coat) to the New York Public Library, and as they enter and stand in front of those old-school card catalogs, Holly says, “What is this place anyway?” Girl, come on. Later on, Paul finds Holly brooding and reading books about South America (she’s wearing very stylish, giant sunglasses of course) in the library, and professes his undying love.

KILL YOUR DARLINGS

This 2013 indie is about the early friendship between Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, and William Burroughs. Daniel Radcliffe sheds his Harry Potterisms and leaves the Hogwarts Library (which you can check out too... for more cinematic library scenes) to play Ginsberg, and Dane DeHaan plays Ginsberg’s poetic and mysterious love interest and BFF Lucien Carr. Lucien jumps on top of the tables in the Columbia University library and does a sexy, erotic impromptu Henry Miller book reading, which scandalizes everyone but Ginsberg, of course.



FOUL PLAY



Goldie Hawn and Chevy Chase were a pretty cute rom-com team back in the late '70s and early '80s, and in this one Hawn plays a San Francisco librarian who falls for a goofy cop. In one scene, Hawn’s shy librarian has to beat a crazy-eyed, white-haired kidnapper off with a bright yellow umbrella. It’s pretty ridiculous, in the best way.

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE



There are the unmistakable lamps with emerald green shades, the bitter old librarian (this time played by a mustachioed fella), and, of course, glorious shelves full of books. Harrison Ford is trying to break the floor apart, and the librarian thinks all that banging is coming from the little stamp he's using on the books. It's not, like, sophisticated funny, but it's a true Spielberg moment.

SOYLENT GREEN

This futuristic sci-fi thriller is loosely based on a book called *Make Room! Make Room!* (you can see why they changed the title) and stars Charlton Heston as a detective in 2022 (seven years from now — yikes) investigating a murder. His buddy Sol remembers the good old days before everything got all dystopian, and inside a little personal library he tells Heston's character about the days when there were actual books made of paper. So sad!



ATONEMENT



Passion in the stacks! Keira Knightley (in a badass emerald green dress, which perfectly matches those green lamps you always see in movie libraries) and James McAvoy get it on in a dimly lit library, and it's hands down one of the sexiest — if not the sexiest — library scenes on film. That is, until they get a visitor.

SE7EN



The movie is dark and broody and of course so is the library. Morgan Freeman and Brad Pitt are trying to hunt down a brutal serial killer who uses the seven deadly sins as his clues. The dark and broody library scene is complete with those ubiquitous emerald green lamps. Freeman heads there after hours and tells the guards, “Never understand it. All these books... a world of knowledge at your fingertips. And what do you do? Play poker all night.” He then sits down and reads a bunch of books about the seven deadly sins and Catholicism. He also Xeroxes some important pages and gets closer to cracking the serial killer’s code. The music makes it *very* dramatic.

THE MUSIC MAN

Marian the librarian (yes, really) gets serenaded by a dude who croons sexy lyrics like, “I need you badly badly madam librarian!” Marian is not having it though — she’s got way too many books to stamp. Until she starts dancing on tables...



CITIZEN KANE



The Thatcher Memorial Library looks and sounds like a crypt. It's haunting and the lighting is gorgeous. The creepy place holds a manuscript with pages about the mysterious newspaper tycoon Charles Foster Kane. It's one of the most ominous libraries on film.

THE BREAKFAST CLUB

This whole film is pretty much one long library scene (except when they're running through the hallways of the school or crawling through the air ducts) and it's also like the Citizen Kane of high school movies. Five students (the jock, the nerd, the princess, the outcast, and the rebel) spend a Saturday in detention (in the library!) and if you haven't seen this classic, seek it out immediately.

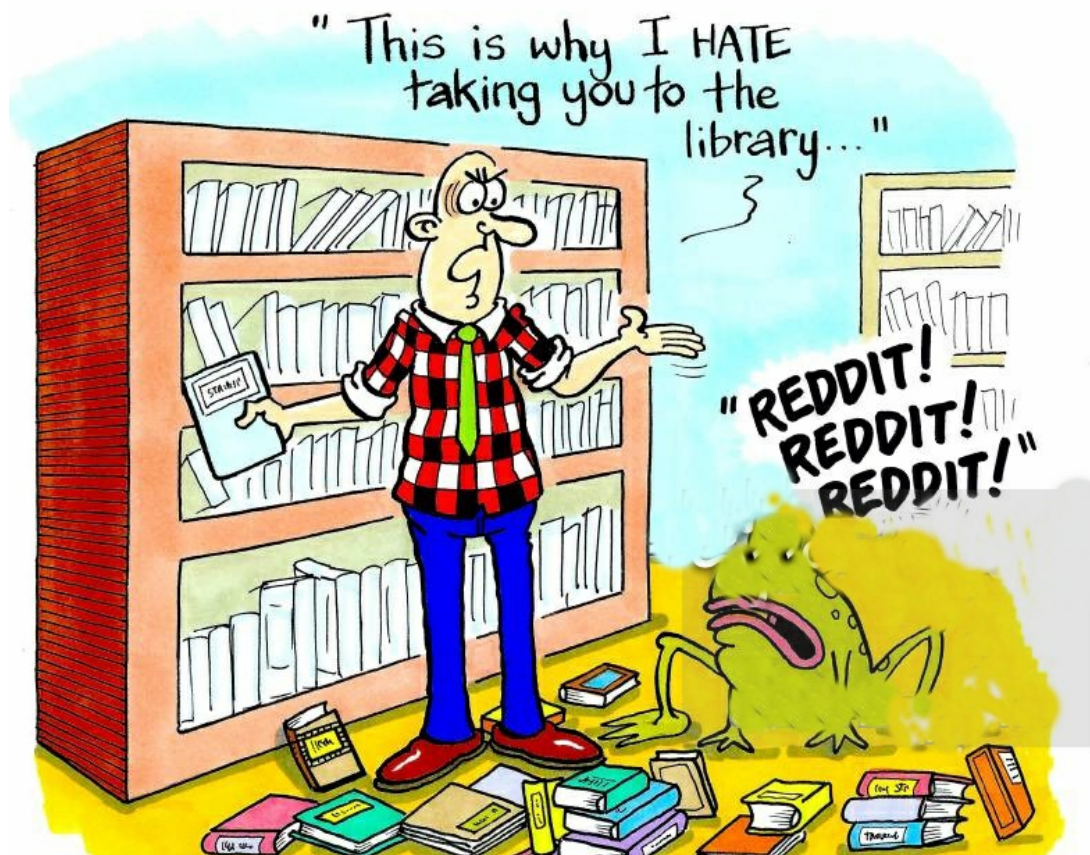


WINGS OF DESIRE



One of my all-time favorite library scenes on film. This German movie is about a guardian angel that wants to become human after he falls in love with a woman. The angels wear black coats and they can overhear humans' thoughts, and when two of them wander into a library they can hear a symphony of inner fears and desires. It's pretty great. Don't watch that Meg Ryan movie *City of Angels* (it was based on the German film) thinking you'll get the same scene, though. Stick to the original.

So whether it's *Breakfast at Tiffany's* or *Soylent Green*, there are tons of great movie scenes that take place in libraries. Sometimes people are reading up on the seven deadly sins, and sometimes they're declaring their undying love — the one you watch is up to you.



LIBRARIAN

COMPLETE, AUTHORITATIVE TEXT FOR LIBRARIANS,
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SINCE 1937 ARCO HAS PREPARED OVER 3 MILLION GOVERNMENT JOBHOLDERS

Question III: As a unit supervisor, answer each of the following by writing the name of the most appropriate office or unit in The New York Public Library to which the described cases should be referred.

1. A reader would like to give \$100 in cash to your branch.

2. A 16 year old page wishes to work 5-8 during his Easter vacation. His working papers list his hours as 2-5.

3. A local High School Parent-Teacher group asks for a speaker at their next meeting to discuss Books for the Teen Age.

4. A newspaper reporter wants to do a feature article on "The Public Library and Juvenile Delinquency."

5. A librarian who has slipped on the library stairs returns to work within a week's time. A statement of the amount of time lost through injury must be submitted.

6. A policeman wants to consult the most complete collection of Civil Service material.

7. A staff member asks for a salary advance.

8. You are offered an exhibit valued at \$7,000.00

9. Several readers wish to join an adult discussion group.

10. An evening elementary school principal wishes to send his classes to your branch.

11. You are asked by an assistant to change his vacation period.

12. A staff member wishes to contribute to the Library Blood Bank.

13. Bonwit Teller asks the salary rate of a staff member who has applied for a charge account. Both the staff member and the store should be referred to

14. A reader has what he believes to be a rare print and would like to identify it.

15. The branch custodian cannot report to work because of illness.

16. A reader wishes to know if any Bronx branch lends musical recordings.

BOB SINK PRESENTS A TALK TO NYPLRA MEMBERS

What a great success our first Zoom NYPLRA meeting turned out to be! There were over thirty retirees in attendance on November 18th to hear former archivist Bob Sink's talk on "The Struggles of NYPL's Pioneering African-American Librarians."

While we waited for latecomers to the meeting, chatting was lively among the attendees. They hailed from as far away as California, Florida, and the Carolinas. It was great to see one another, even though it was on a screen and not in person.

Bob began his talk by explaining that he would be discussing African-American librarians at NYPL who achieved "firsts" in the pre-1950 period. Catherine Allen Latimer was the first African-American employed by NYPL. Augusta Baker was the first to head a children's room and later became Coordinator of Children's Services. In 1948, when Jean Blackwell Hutson was sent to Woodstock, she became the first to head a branch library outside a predominately African-American community. She was described as the equivalent of Jackie Robinson. When Hutson sought a position with NYPL in the 1930s, the community wanted her but there was a quota system and she was told there were "no Negro slots" open. She was hired after community protest.

After World War I, the Harlem community changed from a mainly middle class Jewish one to mostly Southern Blacks and those from the Caribbean, and the residents wanted an integrated library staff—not the Jim Crow system. When Ernestine Rose, who was white, became branch librarian at 135th Street, she was given—by then-Chief Franklin F. Hopper—carte blanche to hire Black women librarians. One of these women was Regina Anderson (later Andrews) who brought cultural activities to the branch and was a central figure of the Harlem Renaissance. There is a movement now seeking to have a street sign with her name placed in Washington Heights. Andrews served as branch librarian at Washington Heights from 1948 to 1966. Of the eight African-American librarians employed during the 5 years after Latimer was hired, all were women and all worked in the branches. They were twice as likely as the other librarians to have attended library school and attained a degree. These credentials were not required of the 344 white women librarians.

We were interested to learn that from 1911 to 1926 NYPL ran its own library school. After a study

recommended that a library school should be in university settings, the NYPL library school and the New York State Library School in Albany combined and moved to Columbia University. There was no Southern library school open to African Americans until the Hampton Library School in Virginia, which was founded in 1925 at the historically black Hampton Institute, now Hampton University.

If you were not able to attend this meeting but would like to hear Bob Sink's talk, it can be found online; you can get the link from Jane Kunstler at j.kunstler@att.net. Let's build on the success of this meeting! If you think of a subject and/or a speaker of interest to our members, let our program chair Estelle Friedman know. Her contact information is on page 2.

IN CASE OF A RETIREES DEATH

In the event of a retiree's death, it is important that the following be contacted by the next of kin.

NYPL Human Resources Service Center (212) 621-0500, prompt 4, for general NYPL questions.

DC37 (212) 815-1234, for union benefits information.

New York State Retirement System (866) 805-0990, toll-free, for pension questions and to inform NYSRS of the person's death date. A death certificate will be required as proof of death. Callers will need to listen to several prompts and choose the option that best suits their needs.

The NYSRS website is:
<http://www.osc.state.ny.us/retire/retirees/index.php>

The New York Public Library Retirees Association would also like to be contacted so that we may inform the deceased's former colleagues. This may be done by emailing or calling President Becky Koppelman at blekopp@gmail.com or 212-874-6199.

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