

Books & People

IN THIS ISSUE



Book Funds
PAGE 4



Summer Reads
PAGE 6

Receptions
PAGE 8

A York and a Lancaster Rose: A Treatment Story

by Christina Amato, Conservator

In *Books Will Speak Plain*, Julia Miller calls the nineteenth century the “last great period of the handmade book” because it was a period in which innovation and centuries-old tradition were combined. Even as machines took hold in the book manufacturing industry, books continued to be sewn by hand throughout the century, and covers often show traces of the human hands that decorated them. The “publisher’s cloth binding,” a hybrid of old and new technologies, survives as a book structure to tell this story. By examining the materials, cover construction, decoration, and sewing of these books, we can gain insight into the evolution of the book structure into its modern form. For a book conservator, knowing the context of a binding’s creation is also crucial in making an informed treatment decision. Our 1882 copy of *A York and a Lancaster Rose* by Annie Keary is a typical victim of decades of enthusiastic readers. Before diving into treatment, it is useful to consider the book’s Victorian roots.

Change was the defining characteristic of nineteenth-century industry. In the early years, book production was carried out fully by hand, much as it was in the preceding century. By 1900, books were almost entirely machine-made. For a trade that was conservative and slow to change, this swift transformation was breathtaking, and it happened as a result of a perfect storm of causal factors. The most obvious was the Industrial Revolution, which, of course, profoundly affected many trades. Higher literacy rates created a demand for more and more books. Innovations in papermaking and printing vastly increased the production of texts, which overwhelmed the hand-binding industry. (The effect this had on the quality of paper is a story for another time.)



Before treatment: Broken into pieces and out of commission.

Greetings from the Head Librarian



It's hard to believe that it's been almost a year since I took over as Head Librarian. I'm grateful to all of you who have shared your Library stories and told me what you think we're doing well, and yes, even what we're not. We're planning a membership survey for the early fall, and we're eager to hear from you about everything from how we communicate with members to the value you place on our building spaces, collections, programs, and other services.

We didn't need to wait for the survey to reach a decision on one long-overdue project. Through the generosity of a number of members, all the furniture in the Members' Room will be reupholstered in phases over the summer.

Remember that we are open seven days a week year-round. Stop in—the staff and I would love to shoot the breeze about what you're reading this summer (see our recommendations on page 6)—and while you're here, drop by the Children's Library for a make-and-take craft, view the exhibition on a New York City grand dame in the Peluso Family Exhibition Gallery, mine the book stacks for treasures, and try out that refurbished furniture!

I look forward to seeing you in the Library.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carolyn Waters".

Carolyn Waters
Head Librarian

A York and a Lancaster Rose: A Treatment Story continued

Faced with intense pressure to increase production, binderies embraced new technologies, and the publisher's cloth binding was born. As its name suggests, publishers were the driving force behind the creation of these ready-made volumes. In prior centuries, booksellers often sold books in unbound sheets or temporary bindings. While the idea of a pre-fabricated binding was not new, books often did not receive permanent bindings until they were purchased. In the nineteenth century there was a shift to the mass production of uniformly bound editions. The case binding was one of the innovations that enabled this development. For centuries, cover boards were generally laced onto text blocks after they were sewn, and they were individually covered and decorated by hand. Case bindings were attached with an adhesive. This allowed them to be created separately from text blocks and decorated as a group.

Another major contribution to the mass production of books was the invention of starched book cloth in the 1820s. Previously, books were covered primarily with leather, parchment, or paper. Leather and parchment were expensive and time-consuming to produce, and as natural products, they could be of inconsistent quality. Bookcloth was cheap and reliable and required less skill to apply. Covers could be efficiently embossed with the same design en masse with heated brass dies and the help of newly developed "arming" presses.

Even with so much innovation, much of the bookbinding process was still done by hand until the end of the century. The brass dies used to stamp decorations on covers were hand-carved. One of the most time-consuming aspects of the book-making process, sewing the text block, continued by hand for most of the century. The turning point came didn't arrive until the 1880s, when the Smyth Manufacturing Company began producing sewing machines. Yet even with mechanized sewing, book spines were still pounded into a semi-round shape by hand for some time, and workers glued text blocks into their covers one by one.

Bindings from this period can present a conundrum for a book conservator. Quite a few survive, due in part to the scale of their production. Many were made from poor-quality materials that have not aged well. Because of their numbers and the sad state they're in, we cannot conserve every single one. As a result, we sometimes send damaged books to a production facility for rebinding in new materials, or discard them because we can refer our patrons to the New York Public Library or a digital copy. At the Society Library, however, rebinding and withdrawing our books is done only after careful consideration. While they are not necessarily rare, these books tell the story of a pivotal time in book and manufacturing history. They are valuable for more than just the words on their pages. They are unique in the way our Library is unique. As time passes, Victorian publisher's cloth bindings grow increasingly scarce on library shelves. We are fortunate to have so many of them here, freely available to our members. They are at the heart of what we are as a library.

Bearing that in mind, you can look over my shoulder as I examine the publisher's cloth binding that's just left my workbench. By the time it reached the Conservation department, *A York and a Lancaster Rose* had seen a century of circulation. It was in pieces, with a torn spine and ripped and brittle pages. Major intervention was needed if this book was to become readable again. The type of treatment it required is time-consuming, however, so I worked with our Acquisitions Department, considering the book's value to our institution before proceeding.

In the case of *A York and a Lancaster Rose*, there are no identical copies available for purchase. Copies exist in other American libraries, but these are American editions, and in even worse shape. The Library acquired this British edition, likely at the behest of our patrons, years before an American edition was made available, just as we do today. It was not difficult to decide that it was worthwhile to spend some time to repair this book.

The photographs you see here illustrate the steps taken to conserve this volume. You may recognize some of the typical characteristics of nineteenth-century bindings discussed above.



1. Cover before treatment. Just a few decades after this cover was made, elaborately stamped cover designs would be replaced by printed book jackets. 2. The sewing had been damaged so much that the book had to be taken apart and completely re sewn. After the old sewing thread was removed, the spine was cleaned of brittle linings, and paper tears were repaired. 3. The book was originally sewn by hand, despite being published late in the nineteenth century. It is re sewn on hemp cords on a traditional sewing frame, following the pattern of the original sewing. Copying the original sewing not only retains the original structure, but also ensures that the book will fit back into its cover. 4. After sewing. Today, most commercially available books are adhesive-bound, while some are machine-sewn. 5. A hollow tube of paper is glued onto the spine to stiffen it and control how far the book opens. 6. After treatment. *A York and a Lancaster Rose* is now back on the shelf in Stack 6 (F K). Feel free to check it out and read it anytime.

New Resource: Zinio for Libraries



We are pleased to announce the newest addition to our electronic resources: Zinio for Libraries. Zinio is a “digital newsstand” allowing Library members to download and read popular magazines on a computer or on most portable devices with a free app.

The Library’s collection includes the current issue and one year of back issues of the *Atlantic*, the *Economist*, *Harper’s*, the *New York Review of Books*, *New York Magazine*, the *Paris Review*, *Poets & Writers*, *Utne Reader*, and *Vanity Fair*.

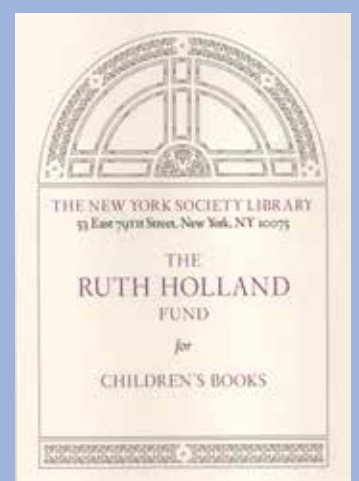
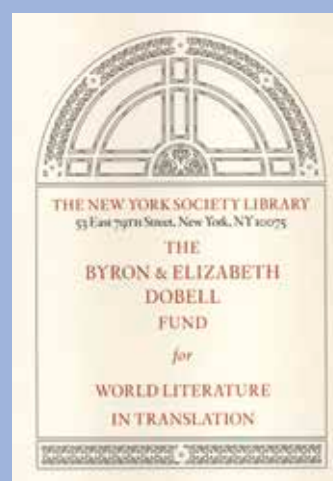
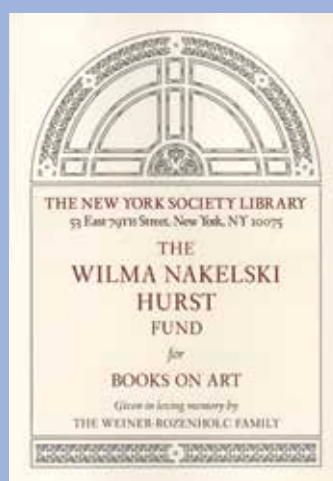
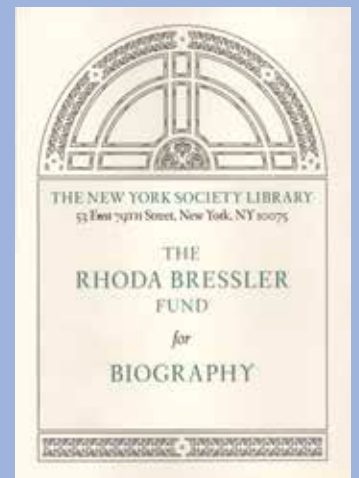
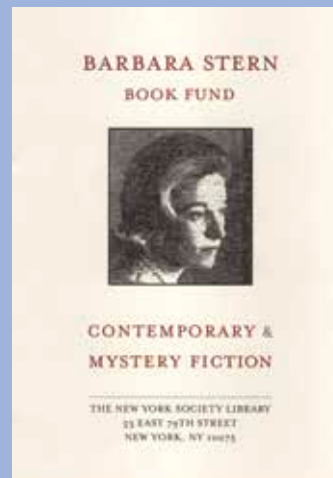
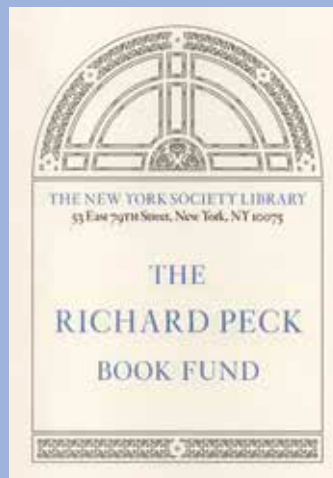
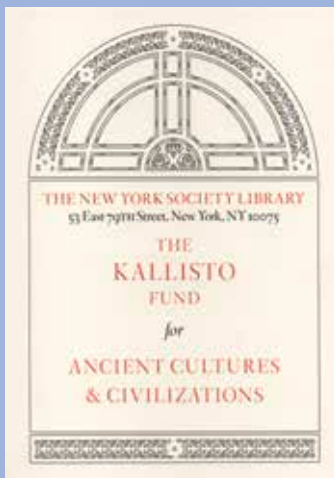
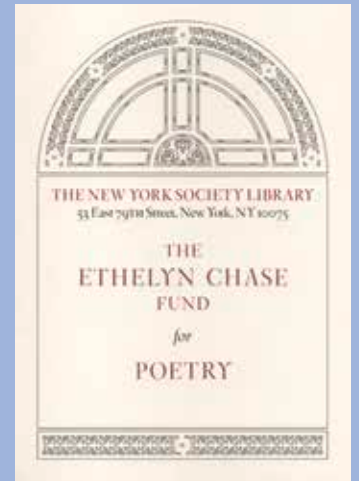
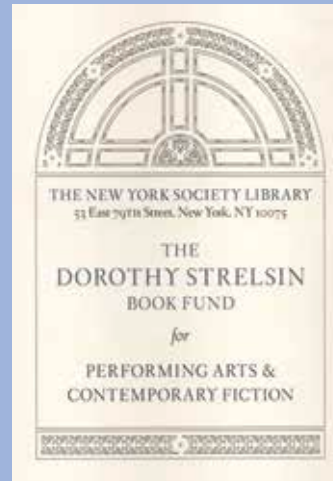
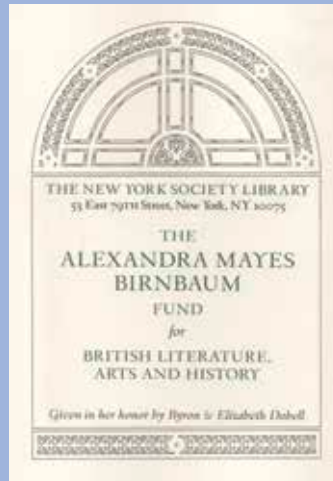
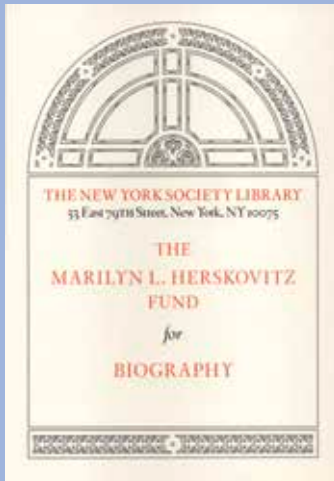
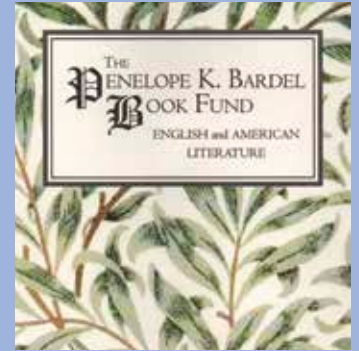
Get started with easy instructions at nysoclib.org/collection/zinio-libraries.

Watch our blog at nysoclib.org/blog for announcements like this one.

Book Funds

add immeasurably to the breadth and depth of the New York Society Library's circulating collection.

To learn more about creating a book fund, call 212.288.6900 x207.



A Life with Books

By Francesca Stanfill



Photo by Michael Waring

Fifteen years ago, I created a frieze of quotes to be painted along the cornice of the library in my Manhattan apartment. Choosing the quotes was a pleasurable, if daunting task: there were many I loved and which, at various moments in my life, had especially resonated. Among them, “The mind is its own place” (Milton, *Paradise Lost*), “It is never too late to be who you might have been” (George Eliot) and “No coward soul is mine” (Emily Brontë). There was one quote, however, which I always knew would be included: “My library is dukedom large enough” from Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*.

Books and the rooms that contain them have always been my favorite places, and where I have felt most at home. I was fortunate to have been born to parents who revered books, language, and learning, and who encouraged me to do the same. When I was a little girl and lived in Peter Cooper Village, my mother frequently took me to the public library in our neighborhood. I have happy memories of trudging home, my arms laden with those wonderful biographies for children, *Landmark Books*. They were my introduction to history, transporting me to the world of young Queen Elizabeth, say, or that of Marie Curie.

When I was almost thirteen, we moved to Pasadena, California where libraries, in every guise, loomed large. To my delight, my new bedroom in our house—my very first “Room of My Own”—had a niche lined with bookshelves. These came to house my own burgeoning library, volumes of the Brontës, Jane Austen, Shakespeare, Tolstoy, as well as a treasured set of the *World Book Encyclopedia*. My new school, Polytechnic, had an airy library surrounded by lawn and oak trees where I often studied and did homework. For special projects, I would ride my bicycle to the splendid public library in Pasadena and search for books from its vast collection.

Later, as an undergraduate at Yale, I delighted in using Sterling Library, with its spires and cathedral-like ambiance, a perfect setting for one with my predilection for the gothic. Even now I can remember making my way through Dante, or Vincent Scully’s *The Earth, the Temple and the Gods*, while nestled in Sterling’s deep, archaic armchairs of weathered leather.

Soon after graduating from college, I began to work as a journalist and moved to the Upper East Side. In the early 1980s, I became a member of the New York Society Library. Then, as now, it seemed an oasis in the middle of the exciting, if frenetic city. How reviving it was to enter the building, with its stately, generous steps, and to spend time combing through the card catalog; or to walk through the cool, silent stacks redolent with the scent of paper and old bindings, searching for a particular book, only to pause here or there at some unexpected, intriguing title that seemed to beckon from the shelf.

During the past several years, the NYSL has been invaluable while researching my third novel, set in twelfth-century Europe. I have used the New York Public Library at 42nd Street as well, but it is remarkable how much has been available to me from the NYSL alone: books from its own collection, others I have been able to borrow with inter-library loans, and electronic resources such as JSTOR and Project MUSE for scholarly articles.

There have been moments, as well, when I have walked to the Library and settled in the reading room simply to think, or to let my mind wander as I unravelled a thorny chapter. For those who work alone, as I do, it can be comforting, even inspiring, to be among others at work in a library—people reading or researching, or teenagers bent over their homework.

I know it is tempting, in the twenty-first century, to dismiss libraries as something of an anachronism. Everything will be online, we are told, and in this digitized universe what need will there be for an actual library, or for stacks? I do not agree. Technology may propel exciting changes, but there will be always be a place, it seems to me, for the institutions which safeguard books and learning—perhaps even more so today, in our increasingly fractious and fragmented world. Libraries serve as both refuge and ballast; they are, in the words of T.S. Eliot from *Four Quartets*, that most precious thing of all: “the still place in the turning world.”

Francesca Stanfill, author of *Wakefield Hall* and other novels, joined the Library’s Board in December 2015.

Book Recommendations *Summer Reads*

Welcome to summer, when days grow longer and the pace of life includes getting lost in a good book. Here are a few that Library staff have enjoyed or plan to enjoy this season.

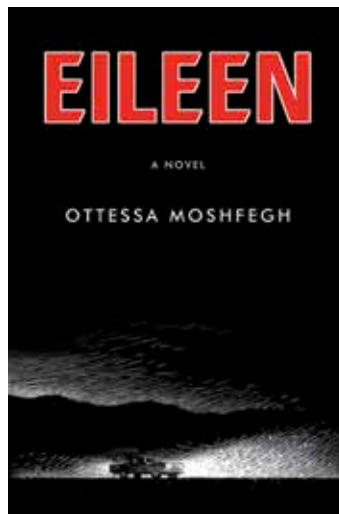
My recommendations are all set in France, not because I'm going there this summer, but perhaps because I wish I was. I loved ***The Only Street in Paris: Life on the Rue du Martyrs*** by Elaine Sciolino (Lobby Nonfiction & e-book), which is a wonderful slice of life on a street steeped in history and a great deal of character. Diane Johnson, Edmund White, David Sedaris, and other writers, well-known and not, pen humorous, insightful essays on the City of Light in ***Paris Was Ours***, edited by Penelope Rowlands (914.436 P). And for a classic, I highly recommend ***The Chateau*** by William Maxwell (F M). In this beautiful novel, Maxwell's perceptive comments on human nature are revealed as a young couple travels to France post-war, innocently misunderstanding their hosts and fellow travelers.

—Carolyn Waters, Head Librarian

Eileen by Ottessa Moshfegh (Lobby Fiction) is full of dark humor and dark deeds. In this fast-moving small volume, an older version of our heroine Eileen recounts a bleak Massachusetts winter in the 1960s that changed her life. As a young woman, her time is split between her work at a grim boy's prison and her equally ugly home life with her alcoholic father. Moshfegh manages to make Eileen likeable through the character's pitch-black sense of humor and self-awareness, and the plot twists are unexpected and ugly but somehow satisfying. It's a beach read for people who like Hitchcock or Highsmith, a quick, engaging and caustic story and one of my favorite books of the year.

—Mia D'Avanza, Head of Circulation

I've rocked & rolled with Philip Norman's books from the Beatles (***Shout!***, 780.921 B) to Buddy Holly (***Rave On***, 780.921 H). So I'm looking forward to carrying around his brand-new hefty tome, ***Paul McCartney: The Life*** (Lobby Nonfiction). Norman has the gift of writing about music and musicians for



the right reasons—the artistry, the cultural importance, and especially in McCartney's case, the fun—without getting hung up in scandals, drugs, and groupies. This is sure to become an essential book for everyone's classic rock/pop shelf.

—Sara Holliday, Events Coordinator/
Head Librarian's Assistant

Alfred Kubin's ***The Other Side*** (F K) came to my attention when I read Roberto Calasso's ***The Art of the Publisher***. Calasso, a heroic reader and author of many acclaimed works, is also the chairman of influential publishing house Adelphi Edizioni. In ***The Art of the Publisher*** he elucidates the goal of finding and publishing *singular books*, and in his eyes the “most eloquent example” is Alfred Kubin's 1908 novel, a “frightening hallucination” that he compares to Walser and Kafka—a description difficult to resist. Written during a “three month state of delirium,” Kubin's book should be good company as the city grows hot and hazy this summer.

—Steven McGuirl, Head of Acquisitions

Lillian Faderman's ***The Gay Revolution*** was just listed as one of the *Times*' Notable Books of 2015. This is the third appearance of a Faderman title on the annual list, and I'm recommending her excellent ***Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth-Century America*** (307.76 F). Faderman is a compassionate and compelling writer, and in learning about the lives of women who defied social norms by loving other women, I learned a lot about what twentieth-century America expected from straight women, too. Especially if you've been following news about the continuing struggles and triumphs of America's LGBT community today, you won't find a better introduction to the American lesbian experience than Faderman's ***Odd Girls***.

—Erin Schreiner,
Special Collections Librarian

I'm thrilled to recommend a couple of books by a favorite writer of mine, **Graham Swift**. He's just published a wonderful book called ***Mothering Sunday*** (Lobby Fiction), a deceptively simple account of one day in the life and the mind of a maid named Jane Fairchild. To say anything else would be to give too much away. I picked up the new one because ***Waterland*** (F S), a 1983 novel by Swift, is a stunner. Either or both of these books would be a great addition to your summer.

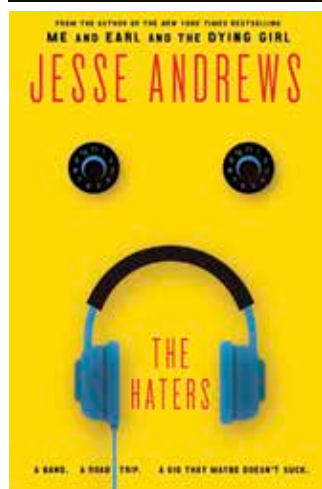
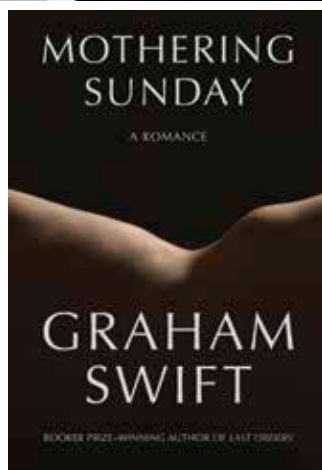
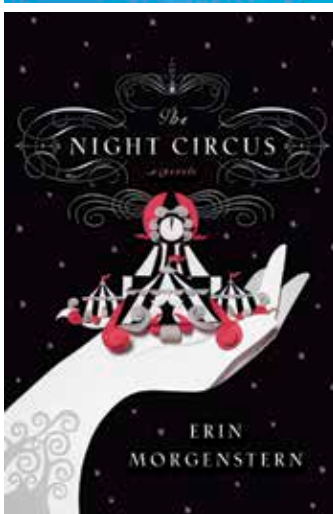
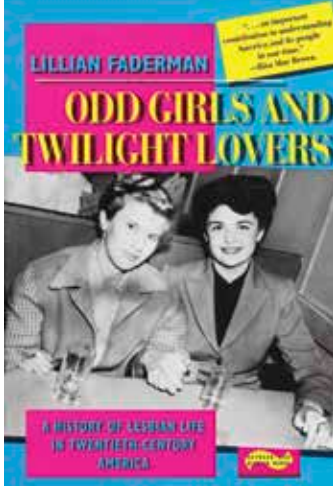
Having recently read ***The Infatuations*** by **Javier Marías**, an author whose work was previously unknown to me, I plan on reading more contemporary literature in translation this summer. I tend to read American and English authors out of habit, and summer seems a ripe time to try something new. Maybe I'll start with a couple of books on the 2016 longlist for the Man Booker International Prize, all of which are in the Library's collection. (*themanbookerprize.com/international*).

—Patrick Rayner, Acquisitions Assistant/Circulation Assistant

The circus appears from nowhere as though born out of a dream in **Erin Morgenstern's** fantasy romance novel ***The Night Circus*** (F M). Wonders fill the black and white tents, acrobats and magicians wander the sawdust-covered streets. But a secret hides behind the canvas. Celia and Marco have been trained since childhood by their mercurial instructors solely to take part in an ancient competition with only one victor possible. Unaware of the danger, Celia and Marco fall in love, setting off ripples throughout their world. Their choices will change the rules of the game and leave everything they know hanging by a thread.

—Liam Delaney, Circulation Assistant

Summer picnics are all the more blissful after a languorous day filled with Debussy. Whether picking out the familiar tune to "Clair de lune" for the first time or revisiting his singular *dissonance très expressif*, Joseph Prostackoff's selections (and translations of performing directions) in ***Selected Works For the Piano*** (786.4 D Oversize) provide a delectable **Debussy** spread of unedited pieces in their original form. Bonus: cool, cavernous churches often let you play



their piano for free in summer when the city experiences mass exodus.

—Sharon Kim, Circulation Page

CHILDREN'S & YOUNG ADULT BOOKS

It's summer in 1930s Monroeville, Alabama, and I'm looking forward to traveling back in time as I dive into ***Tru & Nelle*** by **G. Neri** (Juv-F N), a story about two eccentric and unlikely friends making the most of summer vacation together, complete with a tree-house, mischief, and mysteries in need of solving. This novel should have wide appeal to adventure, mystery and historical fiction fans ages 9-99. A bonus for readers familiar with the works of Truman Capote and Harper Lee: this imagined and imaginative tale is based on their real-life friendship.

—Randi Levy, Head of the Children's Library

Wes and Corey love to hate. And they hate everything, but they're teenagers, so it's normal (and also pretty darn funny). They meet Ash, a girl at jazz camp, and the three musicians flee that trap, hit the road, and head south on an impromptu band tour. Truths are revealed and hilarity ensues, with a strong dose of sex, drugs, and... their unique style of music. In ***The Haters*** (YA-HS A), **Jesse Andrews** (*Me and Earl and the Dying Girl*) delivers another winner in his rollicking tale of a week of love, hate, and much laughter.

—Susan Vincent Molinaro, Children's Librarian

Hiding in our new Young Adult section on stack 9, **Rainbow Rowell's** gem of a novel, ***Eleanor & Park*** (YA HS-R), is about two teenagers who meet on the bus on the way to school and fall in love. Reading about their budding romance made my heart sing and reminded me of how sweet new love is. In the background of their relationship, both Eleanor and Park contend with different, but important, problems at home which force them to discover themselves and fight for one another. I highly recommend this book for anyone who loves the music of the 80s, reading about teens finding themselves, and sighing loudly with longing when they finish their books.

—Danielle Gregori, Children's Librarian

New Staff



Rob Bruno joined the staff in April as Systems Assistant, coming to us from the Foundation Center. He holds a Master's in Library Science from Queens College as well as a certification in web design.



Dana Keith became Circulation Supervisor in May, and you'll see him at the Circulation Desk evenings and weekends. The holder of a Master's from Simmons College in Boston, Dana has previously worked at Boston University's and Harvard's schools of public health as well as at the Strand Bookstore.

Simen Kot has worked as a Library page and Circulation Assistant and has now moved to the fourth floor as a Bibliographic Assistant.

Stephanie Merchant, Circulation Assistant, is a new face at the front desk.

Ashley-Luisa Santangelo is a new page.

The Goodhue Society

Members of the Library's bequest society, named for our generous benefactor Sarah Parker Goodhue, gathered for the annual reception in their honor on April 26th. They were joined by author Mary Norris and later attended her lecture on *Between You & Me: Confessions of a Comma Queen*. To learn more about the Goodhue Society, please contact Joan Zimmett at 212.288.6900 x207 or jzimmett@nysoclib.org. Photos by Karen Smul.

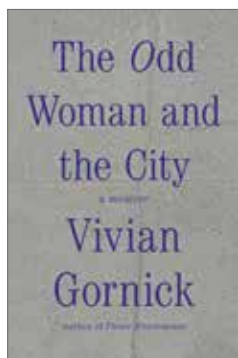
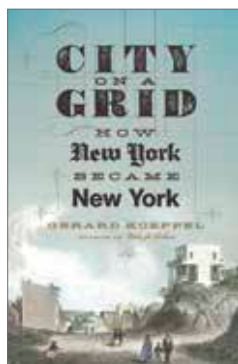
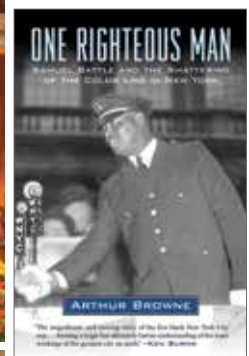
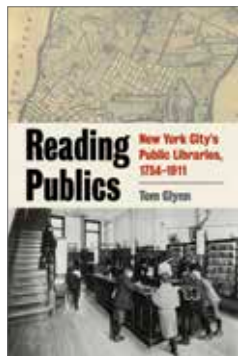
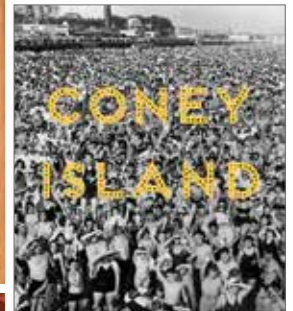
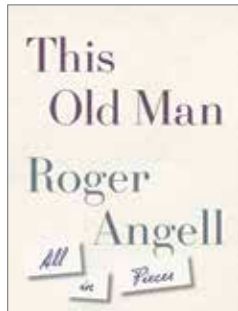


From top left: Head Librarian Carolyn Waters with Goodhue Society chair William J. Dean, Mary Norris, and Jeannette Watson Sanger; Lorrie Bodger; Roger Pasquier and Elizabeth Winthrop; Alden Prouty with Mary Norris; Patricia Volk and Lucienne S. Bloch.

The New York City Book Awards

The New York City Book Awards celebrated their 20th anniversary with a ceremony and reception on May 3. Head Librarian Carolyn Waters, Book Awards Jury chair Lucienne S. Bloch, and Library trustee Ellen M. Iseman spoke about the history and importance of the awards, followed by

presentations from jurors and words from the winning authors about their outstanding New York City books. See nysoclib.org/events/2015-new-york-city-book-awards for full details on the winners and ceremony. Photos by Karen Smul.



From top left: Warren Wechsler with Jury Chair Lucienne S. Bloch; Ellen M. Iseman; presenter Jean Parker Phifer with winner Arthur Browne; presenter James Atlas with honoree Roger Angell; presenter Warren Wechsler with winning author Gerard Koepfel; presenter Ella Foshay with winner Robin Jaffee Frank; presenter Barnet Schecter with Hornblower Award winner Tom Glynn.

THE 2015-2016 NEW YORK CITY BOOK AWARDS ARE GENEROUSLY UNDERWRITTEN BY ELLEN M. ISEMAN.

The Young Writers Awards

The annual Young Writers Awards honor excellent writing by students in the Library community. The winners, honorable mentions, and all who participated were honored at a ceremony and reception on May 19. Authors Dave

Johnson, Robert Quackenbush, and Carol Weston presented awards and offered encouraging words about the writing life. Visit the For Children page at www.nysoclib.org to read the winning entries.

Winners:

Ines Alto, "Where I Am From" (3rd & 4th Grade Poetry)

Avery M. Gallistel, "Life of a Droplet" (3rd & 4th Grade Prose)

Amelia Cogan, "Quiet" (5th & 6th Grade Poetry)

Josephine Ainslie Blough, "Colors" (5th & 6th Grade Prose)

Beatrice Gouverneur, "Why Did She" (5th & 6th Grade Prose)

J.J. Yu, "Constellation: The Birth of the Caliphate" (7th & 8th Grade Poetry)

Henry Platt, "Typewriter" (7th & 8th Grade Prose)

Dora Grossman-Weir, "Triolet for the Last Dance" (9th-12th Grade Poetry)

Tara Shirazi, "Blurred Lines" (9th-12th Grade Prose)

Honorable Mention:

Abigail Zimmerman, "Billboard" (3rd & 4th Grade Poetry)

Samara Choudhury, "A Change in the Air" (3rd & 4th Grade Prose)

Luca Cy Fong-Causone, "If I Were a Bird" (3rd & 4th Grade Prose)

Emily Kilpatrick, "The Library Girls" (3rd & 4th Grade Prose)

Fia de Sève, "Cold New York" (5th & 6th Grade Poetry)

Leonardo Yu, [Untitled] (5th & 6th Grade Poetry)

Rebecca Arian, "Trust Me" (5th & 6th Grade Prose)

Henry Eisenbeis, "Jonah's Move" (5th & 6th Grade Prose)

Lara Thain, "Point of View" (7th & 8th Grade Poetry)



The Young Writers Awards judges and honorees.

THE YOUNG WRITERS AWARDS ARE GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY JEANETTE SARKISIAN WAGNER AND PAUL A. WAGNER.

The New Members Party

Members who joined within the last year enjoyed a reception and building tours on June 6. Welcoming remarks were given

by Head Librarian Carolyn Waters and Janice P. Nimura, author of *Daughters of the Samurai*. Photos by Karen Smul.



From top left: Patricia Jenkins and Libby Dale meet guest host Roger Pasquier; guest hosts Holly Robertson, Ava Chin, and Owen Brunette; member author Janice P. Nimura; Conservator Christina Amato demonstrates her craft to Ramesh Raghavan; Jeanne-Marie Musto looks at rare books with Special Collections Librarian Erin Schreiner; John Guy and Trudi Richardson with guest host Emma Otheguy; trustee George L.K. Frelinghuysen with Leslie Cohen and David Verbitsky.



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One More Picture



Picture book author Elizabeth Bluemle visits with a young fan in the Children's Library in April.