

The Florida Bibliophile

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IN THIS ISSUE

Minutes of the May 2024 Meeting of the Florida Bibliophile Society: the 40 th Anniversary Banquet	p. 2
American Printing History Association Turns 50!	p. 7
Florida Book Banning: An Update	p. 9
The Future Library: An Update	p. 11
The New Euripides Fragment: "Most Important in 50 Years"	p. 13
The Ancient Origins of Sheet Music	p. 15
FBS Publications	p. 18
Books in Brief	p. 19
Upcoming Events	p. 23
Book Events and Podcasts	p. 24
...And More	p. 26
FBS 2024–2025 Season	p. 27
Endpaper • Another Great Year Ahead!	p. 28

October newsletter deadline: September 27, 2024 (see p. 29)

Membership in the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies is included with your FBS membership. The FABS Journal is now electronic as well as in print. Access a PDF of the Spring 2024 FABS Journal [here](#).



ANNUAL DUES for the 2024–2025 FBS Season are due by **December 31, 2024!**

Membership is \$50 U.S. per household per year. Send inquiries and payments to Florida Bibliophile Society, P.O. Box 530682, St. Petersburg FL 33747. Dues may also be paid using our PayPal account: floridabibliophiles@gmail.com.



Florida Bibliophile Society
A community of book lovers

Minutes of the May 2024 Meeting of the Florida Bibliophile Society by Charles Brown, FBS president



FBS 40 Years!

FBS had a lot to celebrate when we met on a beautiful Sunday afternoon in May at the St. Petersburg Marriott Clearwater for our 40th FBS Annual Banquet.

The Marriott provided a spectacular stage for FBS Vice President Ben Wiley to produce an outstanding event. (If he's not in the business, he should be!)



Ted Wray

We began with a mixer on the mezzanine. Red and white wine were served as we greeted each other and met guests, Harrer essay contest winners, and former speakers. After a few minutes, Ben used the traditional tapping of the glass to gain the group's attention for the president's remarks, which were merely to thank everyone for

attending and to present a simple toast to 40 more years of FBS! The toast was greeted with "Here here" and much clinking of glasses as well as some visible relief that the remarks were unusually short! And we returned to conversation and laughter.

We also had an opportunity to



Jude Bagatti



Stephanie Montor

David Hall

Jeanne Simons Kimberlee Rau

Minutes, *continued*



Elliott Smith and Roslyn Franken. Roslyn is an author and inspirational speaker. Her husband Elliott is a professional magician and comedian.

peruse the table set up by our guest speaker, Roslyn Franken, and the display of her book, *Meant to Be: A True Story of Might, Miracles, and Triumph of the Human Spirit*, and other materials.

Next to Roslyn’s display was a round table with the cake the Marriott staff had promised. I should say they surpassed expectations with a beautiful cake iced in blue in the shape of a book, inscribed “Happy

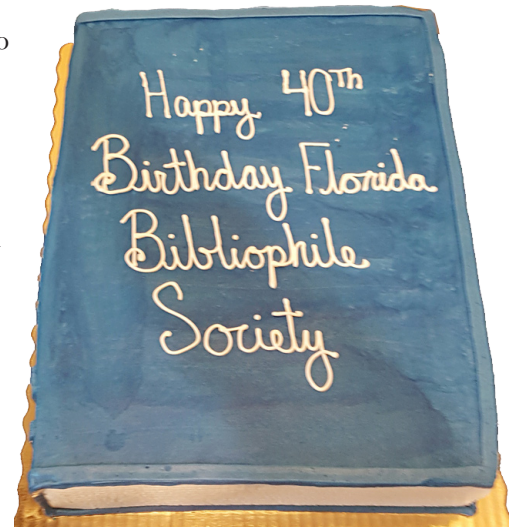
40th Birthday, Florida Bibliophile Society.” Perfect! One of those cakes that it’s a shame to cut (but it was delicious! more on that later).

Soon the doors to the banquet room were opened, and we were ushered into a large square room laid out with large round banquet tables. Each table was decorated with a stack of rectangular gifts (could they be books?) sporting oversized red bows – their ruby color emphasized the occasion: the 40th anniversary of FBS.

Along the back wall of the room, Sean Donnelly had set out a fascinating array of carefully selected books for the silent auction (we often say “curated” these days – maybe too often?). Sean had managed last year’s auction, and his bookseller’s keen insight told him that we could do better. Did we? We shall see.

Of course, the bibliophiles in the room (which would be everyone in this room) were drawn to the auction books like bees to honey. Books were examined – sometimes over other people’s shoulders – and opening bids were placed.

The happy chattering continued as people settled into place at the tables, and dinner was served. It began with a tropical salad: traditional salad vegetables mixed with orange and mango, garnished with an edible orchid.



Sean Donnelly and the silent auction table

Minutes, *continued*



For the main course, diners had selected from a pork, chicken, or a vegetarian entrée when they registered for the banquet. By all reports, all three were delicious.

As we finished our meals, plates were cleared, and coffee was offered. Slices (pages?) of chocolate cake from the blue book cake were distributed.



After dinner, we took a break before the afternoon's program began. That gave

everyone an opportunity to check the auction table and update their bids.

The afternoon's program began with the presentation of awards to the Lee J. Harrer Student Book Collecting Essay Contest winners. Roxanne Rhodes, who coordinated this year's competition, introduced three wonderful young book collectors whose essays were judged best of the submissions. The first prize winner was Ashley Fransen, and the two runners-up were Bilge Akyol and Natalia Benavides, both students at New College of Florida. Their essays were printed in a special keepsake booklet that was distributed just before the presentation. Ashley



Minutes, continued



Ashley Fransen



Bilge Akyol



Natalia Benavides



Keepsake Essay Booklet

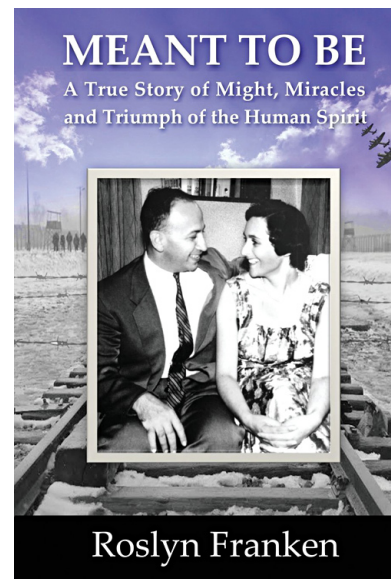
was not able to attend the banquet, but Bilge and Natalia read their essays for an appreciative audience. (Ashley’s essay appears later in this newsletter.)

After the essays were read, Roxanne presented Bilge and Natalia with their cash awards. The audience responded with round of applause. Well deserved awards and applause!

It was then time for our guest speaker, Roslyn Franken, author of *Meant to Be: A True Story of Might, Miracles, and Triumph of the Human Spirit*, Roslyn’s book about her parents, John and Sonja Franken, and their remarkable stories of survival.

Sonja, a native of the Netherlands, survived Auschwitz and other death camps, where she was scheduled to die three times and made it through. It’s a moving story of courage and kindness. On the other side of the world, John, a young Dutch naval recruit in the Dutch East Indies, was captured by the Japanese and interred as a prisoner of war. His courage was also called upon to survive the rigors of life as a Japanese POW, including the atomic blast at Nagasaki! These harrowing stories were followed by the charming story of how John and Sonja met and married. In later years, their lives were challenged once again: Sonja’s by cancer and John’s by heart disease. Again, their resilience and courage carried them through.

Roslyn told her own story of drawing on her family’s remarkable character when



Minutes, continued

she was diagnosed with cancer at 29. The daring and determination exemplified by her parents helped her to beat cancer and live a life enriching and inspiring the lives of others.

After this moving presentation – told with humor and sincerity – Roslyn responded to audience questions in a lively session that underscored the interest her talk had generated.

After a generous round of applause, Ben called on Sean Donnelly to report on the silent auction. Sean shared that last year's auction had earned FBS just over \$200, and this year's earned over \$500! Sean was gratified, and we were impressed, but of course, he felt that he could do even better next year – and we look forward to it!

At that point, it was time to adjourn, But wait! One more surprise. Charles explained that the gift-wrapped items in the centerpieces were indeed books that were gifts for those in attendance, and he invited everyone to dive in and open the packages and do some trading – with an added instruction: all the books must go home with someone.

The staff came in to remove glasses, plates, etc. during the gentle frenzy of tearing paper and comparing books. Auction winners settled up with Sean. Our treasurer, Irene Pavese, and Ben settled up with the Marriott. Many went out to Roslyn's table to thank her and to buy books and have them signed. All the while, saying our good-byes to old friends and new, arms full of books and hearts full of memories.

FBS would like to express its sincerest thanks to the staff of the Marriott hotel – banquet managers, wait staff, and cooks – for their part in creating a memorable event!



American Printing History Association Turns 50!

Since 1974, the American Printing History Association has encouraged “the study of the history of printing and related arts and crafts, including calligraphy, typefounding, typography, papermaking, bookbinding, illustration, and publishing.”

To celebrate the occasion, the APHA will host a special hybrid conference “featuring curated in-person and live-streamed events” from both the West Coast and the East Coast. The conference will take place on October 17–19. The eastern venues will be in New York City, at the Grolier Club and the Center for Book Arts (also celebrating its 50th anniversary this year). In the west, events will take place at the CODEX Foundation in Berkeley, California.

The conference theme is described by the APHA website as exploring “the ever-evolving story of print across time. APHA welcomes the participation of everyone with a passion for printing and book history, including seasoned scholars, librarians and archivists, conservators, students, and hobbyists.”

The schedule is still being finalized, but the list of guest speakers and titles presented below is worth perusing to get an idea of the scope and excitement of the program. The list includes many stars of the typographic and printing history world. Full descriptions of the speakers and presentations are available on the [APHA conference webpage](#). Registration will be available soon through the same page.

APHA held its first conference in 1976. Featured speakers were scholars, rare book dealers, and experts, including Terry Belanger, founder of Rare Book School. If the name “American Printing History Association” suggests a staid, scholarly enterprise, titles from recent conferences will demonstrate the liveliness and relevance of APHA and members:



- Impresos: Printing across Latin American and Caribbean Cultures (2021)
- One Press, Many Hands: Diversity in the History of American Printing (2019)
- Making Artistic Noise: Printing and Social Activism from the 1960s (2022)
- The Printed Weird (2023)
- The Black Arts and Printers’ Devils: The Magic, Mysticism, and Wonders of Printing History (2016)

The APHA is an affiliate of the American Historical Association (AHA), the oldest professional association of historians in the United States and the largest such organization in the world. Visit the [APHA website](#) to learn about membership and their programs and publications.

APHA 50th Anniversary Speakers and Topics

— Lisa Gitelman —

Typographic Hallucination, or, A
Conversation Imagined between Artificial
Intelligence and the Printing Trades

— Paul Shaw —

The History of Type in Twelve Type
Specimens

— Macy Chadwick & Felicia Rice —

Vibrant Women in Print and Their
Influences: In Conversation with Macy
Chadwick and Felicia Rice

APHA at 50, concluded

— **Robbin Ami Silverberg & Carole Naggar** —

Vico's Spiral: A Half Century of Artists'
Books

— **Xena Becker** —

Honing Her Craft: Women in the Arts and
Crafts Printing Movement

— **Josef Beery** —

The Two-Thirds Press and the Book Beetle

— **Ryan Cordell & Isabella Viega** —

The Past Is Ever Present: The Resurgence
of Letterpress Printing in Higher-Education
Institutions

— **Helena de Lemos & Jocelyn Pedersen** —

The History of Printing Inspires a New
Generation at an Undergraduate Liberal Arts
College

— **Joost Depuydt** —

Wonderful Woodblocks and Curious Copper
Plates: The Hidden Gems behind Printed
Maps

— **Maggie Erwin** —

Fallen Type and Sloped Feet: A Case Study of
Wynkyn De Worde's *De Proprietatibus Rerum*

— **Berta Ferrer** —

The Unconventional Novel in the Twenty-First
Century: Printed Narratives Influenced by
Digital Media

— **Sandra Wilson & Robert Jackson** —

Correspondences between Damascening and
Mezzotint

— **Megan E. Fox** —

Commas, Daggers, and Stars: Shakespeare on
the Popean Page

— **Seth Gottlieb** —

A Stop-Press Correction: Looking beyond
Letterpress in Printing History

— **Mallory N. Haselberger** —

Women's Private Printmaking and the
Republic of Letters: Jeanne Antoinette
Poisson's *Suite d'estampes*

— **Kitty Maryatt** —

Slow Printing: Pochoir and Collotype in
France; Katagami and Silkscreen in Japan

— **Julie L. Lellby** —

Fit to Print: The Museum of the History of the
Recorded Word

— **Robyn Phillips-Pendleton** —

The Role of Printing History, Archives, and
Research in the Imprinted: Illustrating Race
Exhibition

— **Anne Ricculi** —

"Mimeographed and Securely Bound": The
Printing History of the Unwritten History of
Slavery (1945)

— **Katherine M. Ruffin** —

The Bibliographical Press Movement: A
Twenty-First Century Perspective



Florida Book Banning: An Update

Technically, Florida’s governor reminds us that Florida does not ban books. It simply creates a mechanism by which books can be removed from school libraries and public libraries – by the thousands. If the books are not removed, the penalties are severe: prison or fines for “distributing” books that have been ruled “obscene.” Anyone can challenge a title, and then a review process begins which can result in the book being listed on Florida’s version of the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, the list of books maintained by the Catholic Church of books deemed heretical or “contrary to morality”. The Index was active from 1560 until 1966. But it is just one of the many efforts by many organizations to control minds by controlling books.

Books that have sexual content must be removed within five days while the review takes place. The expense of the responding to thousands to challenged books has caused many schools and libraries to proceed with removal and avoid review.

Interest groups have promoted similar laws across the U.S., but with 75% of the nation’s bans, Florida maintains its ranking as first in the nation for books that have been removed, censored, banned – it all comes to the same thing. Over a million books have been removed from school and library shelves, including works of Shakespeare and prominent American authors – Escambia County school district has included five dictionaries, eight encyclopedias and *The Guinness Book of World Records*, in its list of more than 1,600 books to be banned.

By removing books, young people are forced to consult the Internet. It’s hard to imagine that anyone has been protected. Sorry to digress.

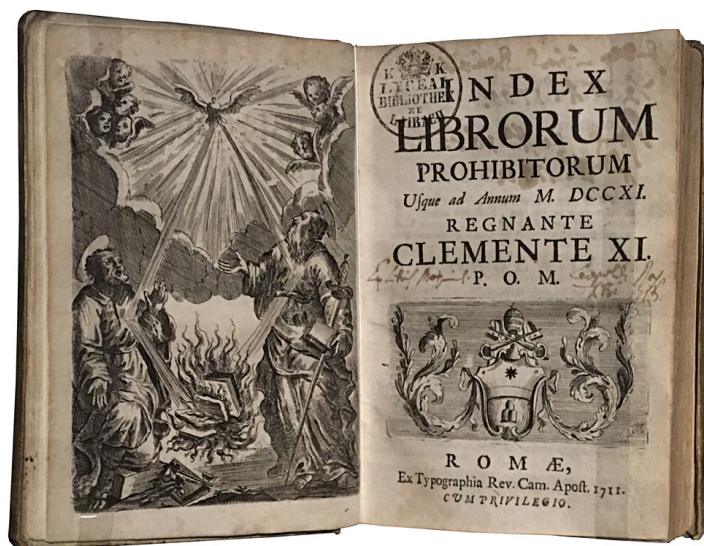
Book Bans, July–December 2023

Nationwide – 4,349 in 23 states

Florida – 3,135

Escambia County – 1,600

— CNN



The Index Librorum Prohibitorum (List of Prohibited Books), 1711. The Index was published regularly by a special council of the Catholic Church and ranked each according to how offensive it was. It was first issued in 1560 and effectively discontinued in 1966. Titles included ranged from science and medicine to theology and witchcraft. There was some flexibility in the application of the Index at the discretion of the local bishop. In the frontispiece, seen above, beams of energy emanate from the Holy Spirit, represented as a dove, reflect off the bodies of the saints, and burn a group of banned books.

Book Banning Backlash

The response of the Florida’s book bans quickly matured from outrage to lawsuits, which have had an effect. Here are a few recent actions.

May 2024 – PEN America, Penguin Random House, and a group of authors and parents filed a lawsuit in federal court against the Escambia County School District and school board for violation of the First Amendment and the Equal Protection Clause of the Constitution because books targeted for removal were disproportionately written by nonwhite and LGBTQ authors and addressed themes of race, racism, gender, and sexuality.

June 2024 – Three parents of children attending Florida public schools filed a lawsuit in federal court against the Florida Board of Education, claiming that a 2023 education law discriminates against parents who oppose book bans and censorship.

August 2024 – Six major book publishers

– Penguin Random House (PRH), Hachette Book Group, HarperCollins Publishers, Macmillan Publishers, Simon & Schuster, and Sourcebooks – teamed up to sue the state of Florida over an “unconstitutional” law that has seen hundreds of titles purged from school libraries following challenges.

September 2024 – Nassau County settled a federal lawsuit out of court over accusations of unconstitutional censorship and will return 36 banned books to library shelves.

Cumulative Effect

By spring 2024, the number of bans, the number of lawsuits, and general backlash convinced Florida’s governor that the book-ban law might have gone too far, and he signed a bill limiting book challenges: Florida residents without children in schools may only challenge one book per month. A Band-Aid.

Local Hero

Recently, one of our Harrer essay contest winners, Natalia Benevides, was caught up in a book removal drama at New College in Sarasota, where she is a student of architecture. Opened in 1960, New College is an open curriculum college where students chart their own path with the support of a talented faculty. In January 2023, the current governor of Florida began the process of transforming New College according to his own conservative vision. He fired the president and the board and installed his own hand-picked people.



Natalia Benevides

Thousands of books – state property – illegally culled and and tossed fill a dumpster outside New College’s main library.



Natalia Benevides

The transformation began with a program of conservatizing the campus itself: emblems were changed to prosaic nautical images, school colors were darkened, and murals were painted over. Of course, gender studies had to go. Many students transferred out, and about half the faculty resigned. Other faculty felt they should remain out of a sense of commitment to the students.

During the summer, students noticed small changes at the Gender and Diversity Center (GDC), which had been created by students, faculty, and donors over years through the donation of books and decorated as a comfortable space which hosted special gatherings. Then on August 13th, 2024, Natalia heard that people were coming and going from the GDC. She wondered if another “renovation,” i.e., erasure, was beginning. A visit to the center confirmed her fears. As an archivist for the center, she used her key to enter and began to rescue student art and furniture. An hour later, she saw that two large boxes of books had been moved to a dumpster filled with books, many from New College’s main library. Natalia got help to gather and begin rescuing the books. The police came, but officials decided to let the students take the books.

The dean of the library was fired for not following protocols in disposing of the library’s books. The administration made statements. The future of New College of Florida is not clear.



The Future Library: An Update

In 2014, Scottish artist Katie Paterson had an idea. Many of her artworks involved ideas of remoteness and the processes of time. For example, she placed a mobile phone in a cave under a glacier and made it possible to call the phone and hear the sound of the glacier melt dripping.

The Project

Her new idea was a 100-year-long project, the Future Library. (1) Every year for 100 years, a highly regarded author would produce a manuscript which would be kept – unread and unpublished – until 2114. (2) Trees would be planted in 2014 and harvested in 2114. The wood would be converted into paper to be used to publish the one hundred books collected during the previous century.

A trust to support the library was established by the City of Oslo, Norway, and a forest of 1,000 trees was planted in Nordmarka, a natural area just north of Oslo. The 100 manuscripts will be printed in limited-edition anthologies using paper made from the trees. The trees felled to make room for the Future Library planting were manufactured into the wood used to build “The Silent Room,” in which the manuscripts will be kept until 2114. The project was covered in detail in *The Florida Bibliophile*, May 2022.

The Authors

Each year, the trustees of the Future Library select a new author based on “outstanding contributions to literature or poetry, and for their work’s ability to capture the imagination of this and future generations.” A new author is announced each fall. To date, the authors and the titles submitted are:

2014 • **Margaret Atwood**, *Scribbler Moon*

2015 • **David Mitchell**, *From Me Flows What You Call Time*

2016 • **Sjón**, *As My Brow Brushes On The Tunics Of Angels or The Drop Tower, the Roller Coaster, the Whirling Cups and other Instruments of Worship from the Post-Industrial Age*

2017 • **Elif Shafak**, *The Last Taboo*

2018 • **Han Kang**, *Dear Son, My Beloved*

2019 • **Karl Ove Knausgård**, *Blind Book*

2020 • **Ocean Vuong**, *King Philip*

2021 • **Tsitsi Dangarembga**, *Narini and Her Donkey*

2022 • **Judith Schalansky**, *Fluff and Splinters: A Chronicle*



Katie Paterson in the swirling, cavelike Silent Room in Oslo’s Deichman Library, which will hold the project’s 100 manuscripts until 2114. the room was constructed from the wood provided by the trees felled to make room for the Future Library forest.

Future Library, continued

2023 • **Valeria Luiselli**, *The Force of Resonance*

Author Selected for 2024

The author chosen for 2024 was recently announced. It is **Tommy Orange**.

Orange, born and residing in Oakland, California, has heritage in the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes of Oklahoma. His first book, *There There* (2018), tracks the lives of Native Americans living in and around Oakland, paired with essays on Native American history and identity. *There There* was a 2019 Pulitzer Prize finalist and received the 2019 American Book Award. Orange received the John Leonard Prize and PEN/Hemingway Award in connection with the publication of *There There*.

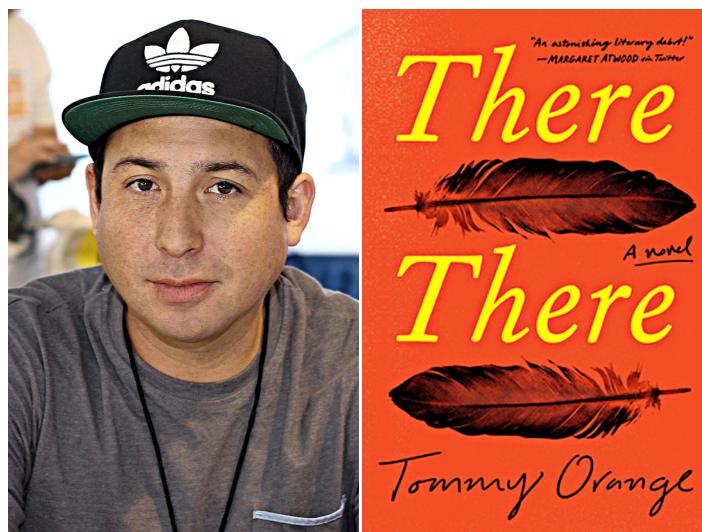
Until Then . . .

Until 2114, why not clear a space on your bookshelves and begin collecting a select work from each of the Future Library authors. We might suggest the following – all highly regarded and award winning (take note book clubs):

Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985)



Katie Paterson holds a sample of fossilized wood, destined to be pulverized and added to one of the jars behind her. Paterson collected minerals representing eras, locations, and events throughout Earth's history. The powders produced from these minerals were used in 2022 artworks, notably *Requiem* – a large handblown glass jar in the shape of an ancient funerary urn in which the powders are layered in a chronicle of everything until now.



Tommy Orange, winner of the American Book Award for *There There* (2018)

David Mitchell, *Cloud Atlas* (2004), his most famous, but consider the more accessible *Ghostwritten* (1999)

Sjón, *CoDex* (1962)

Elif Shafak, *The Forty Rules of Love* (2009)

Han Kang, *The Vegetarian* (2007)

Karl Ove Knausgård, *Death in the Family* (2009)

Ocean Vuong, *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* (2019)

Tsitsi Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions* (1998)

Judith Schalansky, *Atlas of Remote Islands* (2010)

Tommy Orange, *There There* (2018)

Stay Tuned . . .

We promise a special issue of *The Florida Bibliophile* in 2114 devoted to the publication of the Future Library anthologies. It's very possible that someone reading this issue of the newsletter will be reading that Future Newsletter.



The New Euripides Fragment: “Most Important in 50 Years”

In November 2022, Basem Gehad, an Archaeologist with the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, was excavating a pit grave at the site of ancient Philadelphia near modern Fayum in Egypt. During an excavation, a clump of material was found stuffed in a corner of the grave.

In the clump of material was a sheet of papyrus written in Greek. Gehad had recently been involved in another excavation with Yvona Trnka-Amrhein, assistant professor of classics at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Trnka-Amrhein is a specialist in Greek literature of the Hellenistic and Imperial periods, running altogether from about 300 BCE to 500 CE.

Gehad sent a high resolution image of the papyrus to Trnka-Amrhein, who found about 100 lines of Greek text. Using an online database of ancient Greek writing, Trnka-Amrhein was able to identify some of the material as coming from two plays by the ancient Greek playwright Euripides: *Ino* and *Polyidos*. Euripides lived in the 5th century BCE, and the papyrus was dated to the 3rd century CE based on the writing style and the archeological context. Names and other clues made it clear that many lines of text were part of the plays but not in the database – about 80% of the text on the papyrus was previously unknown.

When Trnka-Amrhein recognized the texts and their significance, she called in her fellow faculty member John Gilbert, a specialist in Euripides



The new Euripides fragment at actual size. This small piece of papyrus is the most significant fragment of Euripides found in the last 50 years.

fragments. Together, they worked for many months to establish the text and translate it.

A word of explanation: “Establish the text” refers to transcribing the handwritten text into standard Greek letters. Any time we have to read someone else’s writing (or even our own!), it can be difficult to exactly what word the writer intended. A word that could be “dig,” “dog,” or “dug” can often be interpreted from the context, but when the writing is in a 2000-year-old language from an equally old culture where the context isn’t always clear, there are special challenges. Then there’s the physical damage to the document, which can include gaps, wormholes, erasures, stains, etc.



The new Euripides fragment enlarged to make it clearer how challenging the process of transcription can be.

Euripides, concluded

Trnka-Amrhein has explained that *Ino* and *Polyidos* were known only by plot summaries and a handful of quotations. Close examination suggested that the papyrus she had received from Gehad may have been used by learners of Greek because some of the words had been broken into syllables.

The Colorado team recognized the papyrus as the longest fragment recovered – and perhaps the most important discovery in ancient Greek literature in the last 50 years – an indication of how rare such discoveries are. News of the discovery spread quickly through the classics community. Other scholars were eager to view images of the papyrus and the proposed translation. In June, Trnka-Amrhein and Gilbert traveled to Washington, D.C., where they met with a dozen other scholars to review the text and translation.

Comments that emerged from this meeting helped Trnka-Amrhein and Gilbert finalize their work, and they published it in the *Journal for Papyrology and Epigraphy* in August 2024.

Further discussion was held in September 2024 at a classics conference at Boulder, the Ninth Annual Celia M. Fountain Symposium, entitled “Greek Myths from Egyptian Sands: Discovering the New Euripides.”

Euripides lived in Athens during the 5th century BCE, the golden age of Athenian culture. It was a period famous for its theater, and yet among writers of tragedy, only the work of three writers – Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides (in age order) – have survived in complete form, and those plays represent only a fraction of the plays that they are known to have written. When any unknown material comes to light, it is an important discovery.

In Euripides case, he is believed to have written over 90 plays, but fewer than 20 are in virtually complete form. Fragments exist of many of his other plays because his popularity lasted well

beyond the Golden Age. Euripides was an innovator and devised techniques of playwriting and staging that influenced these arts down to modern times. He represented mythological characters as ordinary people confronted with extraordinary situations and explored the inner lives and motives of characters. This is very common now, but at the time it was a new approach. There were many “required” formal elements in Greek tragedy, but Euripides experimented with these elements, adapting or omitting them to create new dramatic forms. These innovations were criticized by many contemporaries, but they influenced other writers who extended them creatively.

Euripides’s plays have been performed and adapted for centuries. His play *Medea* alone, in which an abandoned mother kills her two children to revenge herself on a faithless husband, has been adapted dozens of times in the past 100 years.

Polyidos is taken from an ancient Cretan myth. King Minos (famed for the labyrinth and his man-bull monster the Minotaur) and his queen Pasiphaë want the seer Polyidos to resurrect their son Glaucus, who has drowned in a vat of honey. Unlike most tragedies, the play ends with Glaucus restored to life when Polyidos applies an herb which he discovers under mysterious circumstances. The papyrus contains part of a scene in which Minos and Polyidos debate the morality of resurrecting the dead.

Ino was one of Euripides’s best-known plays. Ino was aunt to the Greek god Dionysus and part of the royal family of Thebes. In the play, an evil stepmother is intent on killing the children from a previous marriage of her husband, the king of Thessaly. In some fragments, Ino is the stepmother, but in the new fragment, a new wife of the king is trying to eliminate Ino’s children. Ingeniously, Ino tricks the new wife into killing her own children and committing suicide.



The Ancient Origins of Sheet Music

It's not clear when humans started making music. The earliest musical instruments that have survived are two flutes, one made of mammoth ivory and one made of bird bone, discovered in a cave in Germany and dated to 42,000 years ago.

This is thousands of years before agriculture was practiced, the first cities were founded, or writing was developed around 6,000 years ago. For millennia, troupes of humans wandered, hunted, and encamped, and when they had time, they made music.

By the time music was being written down, it was probably highly developed because music is associated with religious practice, which goes back at least 50,000 years. So it may be no surprise that the earliest written music we have – not just the words, but the musical notes – is a hymn from 1400 BCE, the Nikkal hymn discovered in 1948 at the city of Ugarit in Syria.

At that time the hymn was written, musical notation was composed in letters and letter-like symbols, usually immediately above the lyrics. There are samples of this system from ancient Greece, medieval Korea, and other cultures. Other systems indicated the direction of the melody, but not specific pitches. Today, we take for granted



The oldest musical instruments known.

The Nikkal Hymn of Ugarit

(Once I have) endeared (the deity), she will love me in her heart,
the offer I bring may wholly cover my sin,
bringing sesame oil may work on my behalf in awe may I...

The sterile may they make fertile.

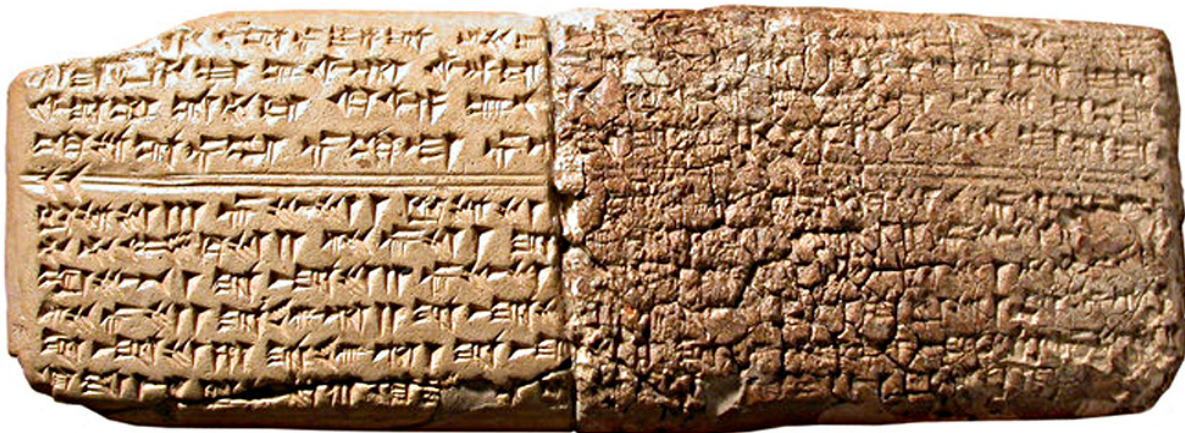
Grain may they bring forth.

She, the wife, will bear (children) to the father.
May she who has not yet borne children bear them.

— *Hans-Jochen Thiel, translator*

the standards for pitch which allow all pianos and other instruments to be tuned so that they can play together. But even in the medieval era, there was not yet a system for universal pitch. Tuning varied from place to place.

Another challenge was how to reproduce musical texts. As we saw earlier, the only musical notation that survives from the ancient and classical periods



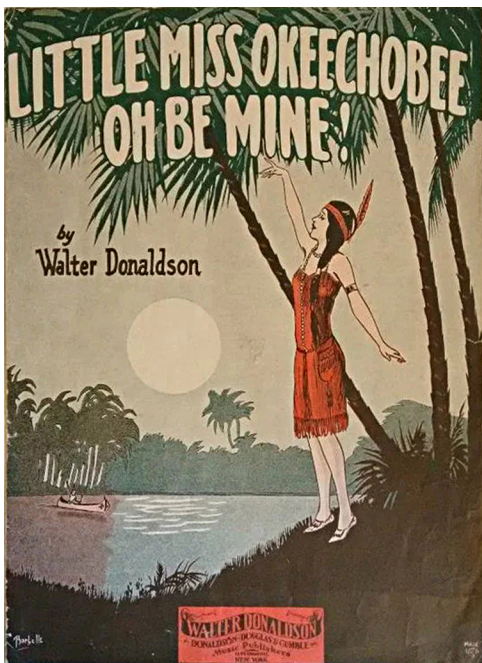
This stone tablet – approximately life size – is dated to 1400 BCE. The words and music of a hymn to the Hurrian goddess Nikkal are inscribed in cuneiform (“wedge-shaped”) writing. Note the double horizontal lines. The words are above, and the music is below. The music has been translated into standard notation, and performances of the Nikkal hymn are available on YouTube.

Sheet Music, concluded

not make a living through sales of sheet music for the most popular songs of his era.

By the end of the 19th century, copyright protection had matured. New York publishers of popular music began to cluster along 28th Street, forming what would become known as Tin Pan Alley. By that time, about 25,000 songs were being offered each year. Homes were more likely to have a piano and family members that were trained to play it. Gathering around the piano to sing popular songs was a common form of entertainment.

Publishers started using a form of promotion called “plugging.” Singers and instrumentalists would be hired to perform songs in department stores and other public venues to create a demand for the sheet music. In 1893, Charles K. Harris’s song “After the Ball” became the first sheet music to sell one million copies. By 1903, it had sold 10 million!



“Little Miss Okeechobee Oh Be Mine” (1926), written by Walter Donaldson

and devices to play them were introduced in the late 1880s. By the early 1910s, records surpassed cylinders as the main medium for music reproduction. Sheet music publishing was going

The appetite for sheet music exploded. Increasing sales and competition demanded more attractive covers. The sheet music cover became an artform in its own right.

However, a new technology began to pose a serious challenge to sheet music: the phonograph. Cylinders and records

strong, with top titles selling a million copies or more each year. By 1925, sales of sheet music began to drop, but it took several more years for sales of records to replace the lost revenue, and the publishers of Tin Pan Alley had to weather an economic downturn.



“Fire Away Galop” by J. de Jasienski, published by Wm. Hall & Son, New York, 1866 (Library of Congress)

Publication of sheet music continued throughout the 20th century and into the 21st, but at steadily lower volumes. “How Much Is That Doggie in the Window” (1953) is often considered the last million-selling sheet music, and by the end of that decade, industry experts considered the million seller a thing of the past.

During the main sheet-music decades from 1890 to 1950, hundreds of thousands of titles were published, including many of America’s most popular and significant songs in attractive and highly collectible covers. Also, sheet music documents a half a century of American culture and is collected for its historical interest as well.

In addition to the many private collectors, there are many large collections of sheet music in American libraries. For example, the Library of Congress holds 22 million items in its notated music collection, of which well over 100,000 are sheet music in categories ranging from early American sheet music to ragtime to Civil War and more.

Among ephemera, sheet music is an inexpensive, attractive, and easy-to-find collectible. Lyricists, composers, artists, publishers, and sources are among the many topics that the collector will find rewarding to research.

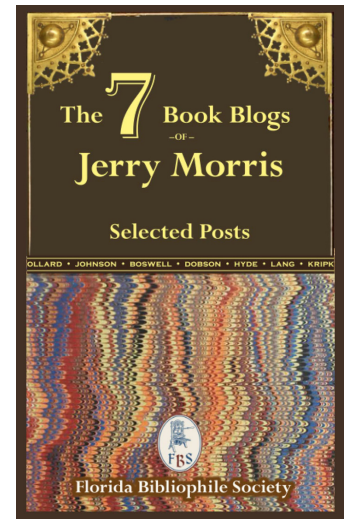


FBS Publications

The 7 Book Blogs of Jerry Morris

FBS. May 2023. 312 pp. \$50.00 (hbk), \$30.00 (pbk). Color illus.

The *7 Book Blogs of Jerry Morris* collects 29 out of the more than 300 blog posts that Jerry published over a 20-year period. Selected by Jerry's devoted readers, these posts display the range of Jerry's bibliophilic interests and his many contributions to the history of books and bibliophiles such as Mary and Donald Hyde, J. O. Halliwell-Phillips, Adrian H. Joline, and Madeline Kripke. Larry McMurtry and his famous bookshop, Booked Up, in Archer City, Texas, and John R. Lindmark and his ill-fated shop in Poughkeepsie, New York, as also included. And of course, Jerry's personal passions: Samuel Johnson, James Boswell, Charles Lamb, and William Strunk, author of *The Elements of Style*. Jerry's meticulous research throughout the world of bibliophiles allows him to illuminate many fascinating individuals and publications. Available on Amazon: [hardback](#) & [paperback](#).



“I Contain Multitudes....”



Selections from the Ed S. Centeno Walt Whitman Collection



“I Contain Multitudes ...”: Selections from the Ed S. Centeno Walt Whitman Collection

FBS. April 2022. 58 pp. \$20.00 (pbk). Color illus.

In April 2022, the Florida Bibliophile Society hosted a special exhibition of items from the Ed S. Centeno Walt Whitman Collection at the Largo Public Library. This book contains photographs, descriptions, and history of 100 items in Ed's collection, including editions of *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman ephemera, period collectibles, and commissioned works of art. This is an excellent introduction to Whitman, with information on his creative process and output and his

outsized impact on American and world poetry. Order from the Florida Bibliophile Society by sending a check for \$20.00 to Florida Bibliophile Society, P.O. Box 530682, St. Petersburg FL 33747. You may also request a copy via email at floridabibliophiles@gmail.com and use the same address to pay through PayPal.

The Florida Bibliophile

Nine issues per year, September–May. \$75.00 per year with membership.

Among the best bibliophile newsletters in the U.S., the digital edition of *The Florida Bibliophile* is received by hundreds of book lovers. We now offer a print edition for members. Each month's issue contains 30–40 lavishly illustrated pages of news, book events, book history, original articles, and much more. As convenient as digital is, there's nothing like print. Beautifully printed on quality paper, it's a book lover's delight!

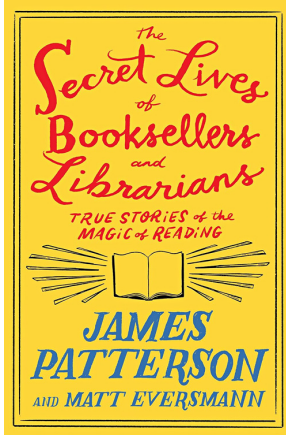
Order from the Florida Bibliophile Society by sending a check for \$125.00 to cover membership and subscription. Send your membership form and check to Florida Bibliophile Society, P.O. Box 530682, St. Petersburg FL 33747. You may also request a subscription via email at floridabibliophiles@gmail.com and use the same address to pay through PayPal.



Books in Brief

The Secret Lives of Booksellers and Librarians: True Stories in the Magic of Reading

James Patterson and Matt Eversmann
 Little, Brown and Company
 352 pp., April 2024



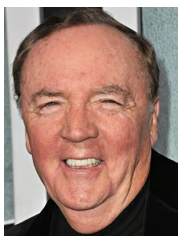
A James Patterson book with “Secrets” in the title must surely be about a superspy assigned to protect or find or destroy some supersecret files or . . . But no. In his latest book, Patterson celebrates booksellers and librarians: “professionals on a mission to get people of all ages excited about books and reading.”

This is a timely message.

Booksellers have had to navigate the rise of national chains and the Internet. More recently, librarians have been attacked by a rash of book bannings, for which, sadly, Florida has been a hotspot.

Patterson has experienced both. To support independent bookstores, he contributed \$500,000 to the Save Indie Bookstores campaign, which provided grants to booksellers during the Covid pandemic in partnership with Reese Witherspoon’s book club, the American Booksellers Association, and the Book Industry Charitable Foundation. He was touched by the book bans in 2023, when his young adult Maximum Ride series was removed from Martin County schools in response to a single complaint.

This series of stories – “comfort food for bookworms” – shows the thriving passion of librarians and booksellers for books and booklovers. As Patterson wrote on Facebook: “Let us all praise our booksellers and librarians!”



James Patterson is a prolific, award-winning, best-selling author.

Army veteran **Matt Eversmann** has authored several books, including five with James Patterson.

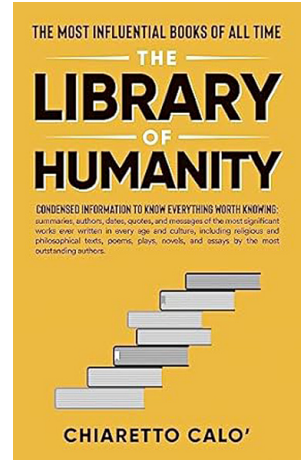


Sources: Little, Brown, and Co.; Facebook; *Publishers Weekly*

The Library of Humanity: The Most Influential Books of all Time

Chiaretto Calò
 Independently published
 432 pp., July 2023

“From ancient myths and legends that transcend time to the ageless classics that still grace our bookshelves today, stories have carried the weight of human experiences: offering insights into the human condition, exploring the depths of our emotions, and transporting us to realms that are at times familiar and at times fantastical.”



These words introduce *The Library of Humanity*, a survey of 4,000 years of literature, from the Epic of Gilgamesh through the early 21st century. This period divided into 10 eras: Classics, Middle Ages, Renaissance, 17th century, 18th century, 19th century, WWI, WWII, Post-war, and Contemporary. About 300 works are presented with essential data, plot summary, a quote, and each book’s message and significance.

A survey of this kind can be useful as a guide for self-education, exploring a wide range of cultures and genres or a specific era or type of literature.

Mystery writer Mel Caudle commends this “literary odyssey”: Whether you’re a seasoned bibliophile or someone looking to deepen your understanding of humanity’s intellectual heritage, *The Library of Humanity* is an indispensable companion. Its pages hold the keys to unlocking the power of knowledge, empathy, and imagination that lie dormant within us.”

Chiaretto Calò is a theoretical philosopher, economist, and finance expert. He lives in Switzerland and – in addition to consulting for individuals and institutional clients – is a passionate researcher and nonfiction writer.

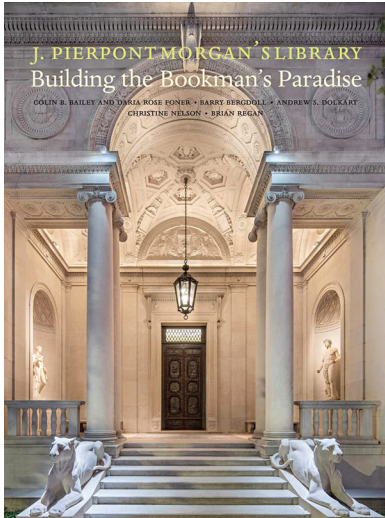


Sources: Yale University Press; Bryn Mawr University

Books in Brief, *continued*

J. Pierpont Morgan’s Library: Building the Bookman’s Paradise

C. Bailey, B. Bergdoll, A. Dolkart, C. Nelson, and B. Regan
 Scala Arts Publishers
 246 pp., June 2023



The Morgan Library has stood as a significant cultural landmark ever since it was commissioned by J. Pierpont Morgan for his personal use in 1906. Its transition to a public institution in the 1920s has led to an even greater flood of admiration and patronage by both local and international audiences.

The elegant design by Charles Follen McKim stands as one of the finest examples of neoclassical architecture in the U.S., significant for its distinctive Italian Renaissance style and its opulent interior period rooms. The site has been designated both a National Historic Landmark and a New York City landmark, and it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Morgan (1837–1913) dominated corporate finance in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He led formation of U.S. Steel, International Harvester, and General Electric among others. His business continues to the present as J. P. Morgan and Co. The Morgan Library’s collections are equally impressive.

This beautifully illustrated publication celebrates the first-ever restoration of the exterior of The Morgan Library – the historic heart of the Morgan Library & Museum. The multiyear project concluded in June 2022 with enhanced surrounding grounds, improved exterior lighting of the building, and increased public access to and appreciation of this historic architectural treasure.

Source: Scala Arts

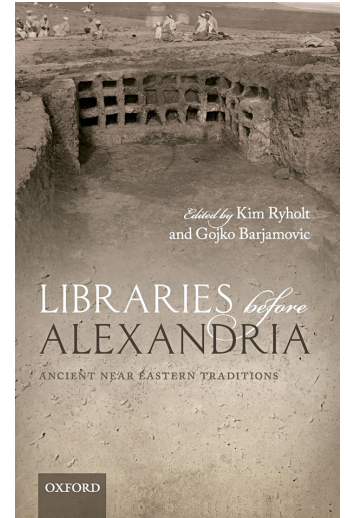
Libraries before Alexandria: Ancient Near Eastern Traditions

Kim Ryholt and Gojko Barjamovic, eds.
 Oxford University Press
 512 pp., January 2020

The Library of Alexandria is widely regarded as one of the great achievements in the history of humankind – an endeavour to amass all known literature and scholarly texts in one central location to preserve them and make them available to scholars. This event has been viewed as a historical turning point separating the ancient world from classical antiquity.

While the Library in Alexandria is the most famous of ancient libraries, such repositories of knowledge were an age-old tradition in the Near East where libraries can be traced back to the 27th-century BCE. So Alexandria’s library was not so much a genesis as the impressive culmination of a very long tradition.

This volume presents the first comprehensive study of ancient libraries across the Near East, tracing their institutional and scholarly roots to the early cities and states and the advent of writing itself. Leading specialists discuss the enormous textual and archaeological material available on early collections, offering a readable account intended for a broad audience of readers interested in Near East libraries as impressive centers of knowledge prior to the more famous Library of Alexandria.



Kim Ryholt is Professor of Egyptology, University of Copenhagen.

Gojko Barjamovic is Gojko Barjamovic, Senior Lecturer on Assyriology, Harvard University.

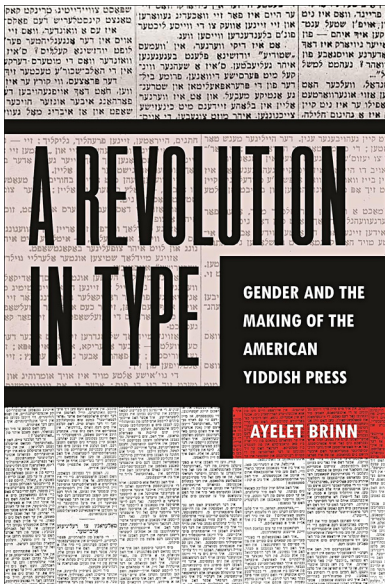


Source: Oxford University Press

Books in Brief, concluded

A Revolution in Type: Gender and the Making of the American Yiddish Press

Ayelet Brinn
NYU Press
328 pp., 2023



Women shaped the widely read Jewish newspapers of 1880–1930 in complex and unexpected ways.

Yiddish-speaking immigrants came to view newspapers as essential to daily life, as did many other immigrant groups in their respective languages. The newspapers and their staffs became a fusion of friends, religious, and political authorities, tour guides, matchmakers, and social welfare agencies.

Brinn argues for women’s central role in the Yiddish press. Through debates about women readers and writers, producers of the Yiddish press explored how their newspapers could reach a large, diverse audience. Women’s columns and other features, seemingly aimed at a female audience, were read by males and females alike. Editors and publishers often used these articles to test new content. The book explores newly discovered or unattributed work by female writers in the Yiddish press; it also examines the work of men who wrote under women’s names in order to break into the press. Brinn shows that we must view gender framing as central to understanding how the American Yiddish press developed into the influential, complex, and diverse publication field it eventually became.

Ayelet Brinn is Philip D. Feltman Assistant Professor of Modern Jewish History in Judaic Studies and History at the University of Hartford.



Source: NYU Press

[Bookish fiction]

Requiem for a Mouse (Cat in the Stacks Mystery)

Miranda James
Berkley
288 pp., June 2024

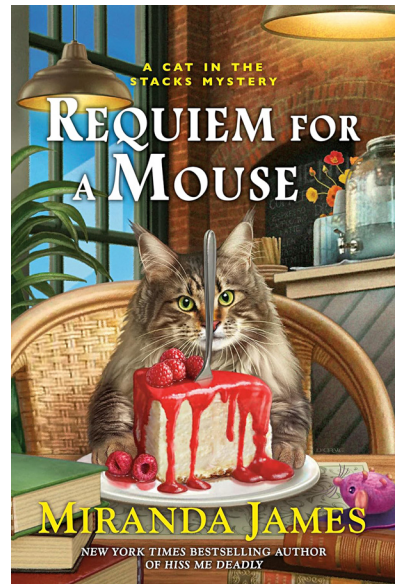
In their 16th outing, librarian Charlie Harris and his ever-intuitive feline friend Diesel must catch a killer in a deadly game of cat and mouse where no one is who they seem.

Charlie and Helen are busy preparing for their upcoming wedding. The last thing Charlie needs is a new mystery to solve.

Enter Tara Martin, who has recently started working part-time at Helen Louise’s bistro and with Charlie in the archive. Tara seems friendly, but an angry outburst at the library leaves Charlie baffled. Later, she abruptly leaves a catered party that Charlie’s son Sean is throwing to celebrate his new home. Tara’s terrified look as she leaves makes Charlie wonder if she’s deliberately trying to escape notice. Is she hiding from someone?

When Tara is viciously attacked and lands in the hospital, Charlie knows his instincts were correct: Tara was in trouble, and someone was after her. With the help of his much beloved cat, Diesel, Charlie digs deeper, and discovers shocking glimpses into Tara’s past that they could never have predicted. Will they catch the villain before Charlie’s own happily-ever-after with Helen Louise is ruined?

Miranda (Dean) James is *New York Times* bestselling author of the *Cat in the Stacks* and the *Southern Ladies* mysteries.



Source: Berkley



Giuseppe Archimboldo (1527–1593) was an accomplished and successful Renaissance painter in the Hapsburg court of the Holy Roman Emperor at Vienna and Prague. He painted portraits of Ferdinand I, Maximilian II, Rudolf II, and other nobility. He painted religious subjects and many drawings in his role as decorator and costume designer. But among his many works, the most famous are his “grotesques,” portraits created from fruits, vegetables, and various plant materials.

In perhaps his most famous portrait, he uses books to create a work called *The Librarian*. Painted in the 1560s, the original title is unknown; it was assigned in the early 20th century. Archimboldo started painting these portraits shortly after his arrival in Prague, probably in the mid-1560s. He executed several of these paintings as gentle satires of members of the royal court. The person represented in *The Librarian* is, like the title, unknown.

The painting was long appreciated for its cleverness and charm and often interpreted as a commentary on the power of books during the Renaissance, a time when information was exploding thanks to the invention of the printing press in the mid-1400s. The growing production of books was matched by the number of librarians and scholars, who may be the targets of the satire. However, in 1957, art historian Sven Alfons proposed that the painting pokes fun at Wolfgang Lazius, the court’s official librarian. K. C. Elhard has suggested returning to metaphorical interpretation, i.e., the painting parodies “materialistic book collectors more interested in acquiring books than in reading them.” Sorry, K. C., FBS finds that argument ridiculous!



This Month’s Writers and Contributors

Many thanks to those who contributed words, pictures, and ideas to this month’s newsletter!

Wesley Brown

Sean Donnelly

David Hall

Maureen E. Mulvihill

Carl Mario Nudi

Irene Pavese

Gary Simons

Ben Wiley

Have an idea for an article for *The Florida Bibliophile*? Contact Charles Brown, cbrown@atlantic.net, to submit or for assistance in preparing your article.

Join FBS!

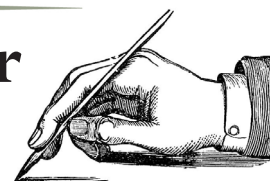
Love books? Take your interest to the next level by joining a group of dedicated book lovers (i.e., bibliophiles). You will meet serious collectors, dealers, scholars, and readers, and you will discover a lively, fun group.



It’s easy to join – just send an email with your name, mailing address, and phone number to Floridabibliophiles@gmail.com. Annual dues are \$50 for membership or \$125 for membership plus print subscription. Use Paypal to send your payment to the gmail address, or mail a check to Florida Bibliophile Society, P.O. Box 530682, St. Petersburg, FL 33747.

Joining FBS also makes you a member of our national organization, FABS, the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies.

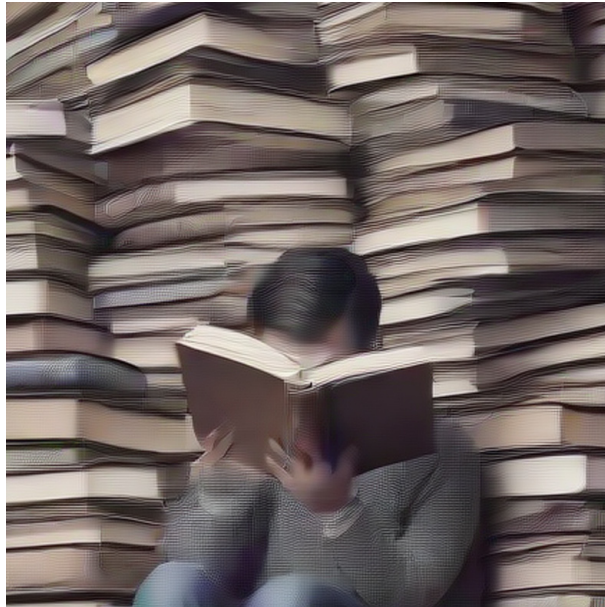
Write for Your Newsletter!



Your input and content are needed. FBS is about participation, about discoveries, about passionate interests, and sometimes the deliciously obscure. Why not write about it!?

Upcoming Events

September 2024



Hackernoon: @josech

Break away from the books and share a couple with us at . . .

Summer Treasures: Show and Tell

Seminole Community Library
9200 113th St N, Seminole, FL
September 15, 2024, 1:30 p.m.

(also available on Zoom)

While FBS was taking a summer break, you’ve been busy . . . at book sales, bookstores, thrift shops, and antique malls, discovering hidden treasures!

Share the wealth with your fellow bibliophiles. Select one or two of your favorite finds and bring them along to **Summer Treasures Show and Tell**. From the truly rare to the delightfully obscure, we’d all like to know what you found!

October 2024



Sean Donnelly: Tales of a Bookseller

Macdonald-Kelce Library
401 W. Kennedy Blvd., Tampa, FL
October 20, 2024, 1:30 p.m.

(also available on Zoom)

Sean has been engaged in bookselling in the Tampa-St. Pete area for over 20 years, including 12 years as a partner in DoraLynn Books at Madeira Beach.

Sean’s love affair with books began when he was a teenager. It was at that age that he knew he wanted to be a bookseller. In his later teen years, he befriended book scout Harry Nash and the mentoring process began as they worked the book trails of Pinellas, Hillsborough, and Pasco counties. Sean came to know all the best places to find books as well as a very colorful cast of bookstore owners. Sean will share his memories of the books, the places, and the people and might spark a few memories of your own.



Book Events and Podcasts

Know of any events of interest to book lovers? Send corrections and additions to Charles Brown, cmbrown@atlantic.net.

Florida Book Events

September is National Literacy Awareness Month

Go to the library, pick up a good book, and explore new worlds!

— September 31 —

St. Augustine Book Festival

Ximenez-Fatio House Museum, St. Augustine, FL
(www.visitstaugustine.com/event/st-augustine-book-festival-ximenez-fatios-house-museum)

— opens September 21 —

Audubon's Birds of Florida

Museum of Arts and Sciences, Daytona Beach, FL
(www.moas.org/Audubon-s-Birds-of-Florida-6-26031.html)

— September 22 —

Amelia Island Book Festival: Kick-off

Events continue fall-spring
(www.ameliainlandbookfestival.org/)

— September 22–28 —

Banned Books Week : "Freed between the Lines"

(www.ala.org/bbooks/banned)

— September 27–30 —

39th Annual Necronomicon

Tampa, FL (necronomicontampa.org/)

— October 18–20 —

Florida WritersCon

Hilton Orlando, Altamonte Springs, FL
(www.floridawriters.org/florida-writerscon)

— October 26–November 14 —

JCA Jewish Literary, Film, and Arts Festival

Jacksonville, FL (jcajax.org/jcafest/)

— October 26–30 —

Alachua Co. Friends of the Library Book Sale

Gainesville, FL (folaclid.org/)

— October 26–30 —

National Authors' Day

(www.awarenessdays.com/awareness-days-calendar/national-authors-day-2024/)

Rare Book Cafe Coffee Break

RBC was begun several years ago by Florida booksellers and FBS members Steve and Edie Eisenstein. It continues as "Coffee Break," the brainchild of T. Allan Smith.

"Coffee Break" is co-hosted by long-time RBC regulars Lee Linn (The Ridge Books, Calhoun, GA) and Ed Markiewicz (Montgomery Rare Books & Manuscripts, Portland, OR). Get a cup of coffee and join [RBC Coffee Break on Facebook](#).

COFFEE BREAK No. 71: Carol Mobley and Rocky Mountain Book & Paper Fair

Carol Mobley runs the Rocky Mountain Book & Paper Fair, Aug. 17–18 in Castle Rock, CO, featuring antiquarian booksellers from Colorado and across the country. They're offering a variety of used and rare books as well as ephemera at all price points. Ed and Lee also discuss the latest issue of *Book Lovers' Paradise Magazine*, now available and including an article by Carol about collecting kitchen appliance ephemera.

COFFEE BREAK No. 72: The Appeal of American Ephemera

Guests include Penn. ephemera dealer Scott Brasseur and RBC regular Richard Mori, organizer of Books in Boston, Nov. 9 at the Boston Hilton Back Bay, during the Boston International Book Fair, Nov. 8–10. Scott shares items he's bringing to BIB, such as a vintage industrial sales photo album and a small American flag, probably from the 1876 centennial celebration in Philadelphia. Richard shows an industrial manufacturer's booklet from 1888.

COFFEE BREAK No. 73: David Hess, bookseller, video host, filmmaker and artist

David owns The Book Man in Orange, Calif. An RBC segment by David called "Things Found in Old Books" continues on his social media (55david) along with short promotional films that David created. David's cartoon-like art is gaining a following. You can see some of his work in this video. For more of David's art, follow David (@hairhess) on Instagram.

See p. 25 to learn about *Book Lovers' Paradise*, the new magazine from the producers of RBC.

Book Events and Podcasts, *continued*

The Biblio File, with Nigel Beale

THE BIBLIO FILE is one of the world's leading podcasts about "the book" and book culture.

Host Nigel Beale fosters wide-ranging conversations with authors, poets, publishers, booksellers, editors, collectors, book makers, scholars, critics, designers, publicists, literary agents, and others who just love books. The website provides podcasts back to 2006, lists of reading, links, etc.

Recent episodes

Aug. 12 – Karen Etingin: Running a Vintage Poster Shop – Etingin owns L’Affichiste, a vintage poster shop in Montreal, providing sales and evaluation services to a global clientele. The gallery is a member of the internationally recognized International Vintage Poster Dealer Association, and Karen is author of *Beyond Poster Art in Vienna: The Life and Art of Julius Klinger*. We talk about her love and passion for posters, and her experience collecting and selling them.

Aug. 20 – Jonathan Rose: Who Used to Read *Playboy* Magazine and Why – Rose is an accomplished student of books. His groundbreaking and award-winning book, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (2001), is in its third edition. He recently told Nigel about his work on *Playboy* magazine and pointed his article "Readers, Magazines, *Playboy*, Market Research: The Daniel Starch Reports as Tools for Reading Research." That became the basis of a wide-ranging and fascinating interview.

Aug. 27 – Richard Charkin: Lessons Learned from 50 Years in Book Publishing – Charkin has held senior posts at many major publishers. He is former President of The Book Society, the International Publishers Association, and the UK Publishers Association – a publisher's publisher, if you will. Richard pays great attention to what's going on in the big world and the book world. He attends to what people are doing, reaches out, and takes an interest. Simple and important. We glimpse the daily life of a high-powered publisher.

Book Lovers' Paradise – Magazine for Bibliophiles Releases Issue 2

Wearing the slogan "Produced in Paradise for Book Lovers Everywhere," the second quarterly issue of *Book Lovers' Paradise* was released in July.

A joint effort of T. Allan Smith, producer of *Rare Book Café's Coffee Break*, Mike Slicker, a founder of FBS and owner of

Lighthouse Books in Dade City, Florida, and Sarah Smith, manager of the Florida Antiquarian Book Fair, *Book Lovers' Paradise* is "a labor of love for all of us, and I think the result is something we can be proud of, knowing that we're offering useful tools for people with an abiding interest in the subjects we cover."

Allan, Mike, and Sarah view *Book Lovers' Paradise* as a way to extend the sharing of book knowledge and love of fine books that is enjoyed in encounters with booksellers at the book fair.

Articles in the Issue 2 include:

- In pursuit of your passion: In the bibliosphere, there are many roles
- Collecting fine bindings: what you should know
- Collecting appliance ephemera
- How old are the maps in your collection?

Book Lovers' Paradise is published quarterly and electronically, free of charge. To receive a link to each new edition, send an email to bookloversparadisemagazine@gmail.com with SUBSCRIBE in the subject field. Also available on Issuu.



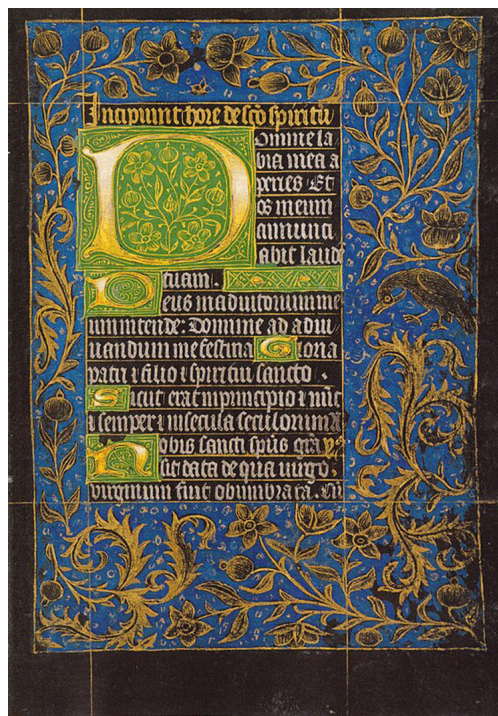
... and More

How to Tell Your Recto from Your Verso . . . and Vice Versa

Short for *recto folio* and *verso folio*, these are Latin terms that mean “on the right side of the page” and “on the left side of the page.” Well, not exactly. The word *rectus* in Latin refers to the “correct” or front side of a sheet, and the word *versus* refers to the turned or flipped side of the same sheet. In a modern book, the front side always ends up on the right, and when the page is turned – you’ve guessed it – the flip side always ends up on the left. Another way to look at it is that the recto side is the first side you read.

Correct vs. right (or flipped vs. left) doesn’t really make a difference in modern books, because the front side of a piece of paper and the back side are not different. But when manuscripts were written on papyrus or parchment, the front and back were quite different. Papyrus was made by making flat strips out of the stalks of the papyrus plant and laying them edge to edge in a vertical direction, then making a second layer on top of the first, but with the strips running in the horizontal direction. This gave the sheets of papyrus their strength. Perhaps its obvious that it was easier to write on the horizontal strips on the front of the sheet than it was to write across the vertical strips on the back.

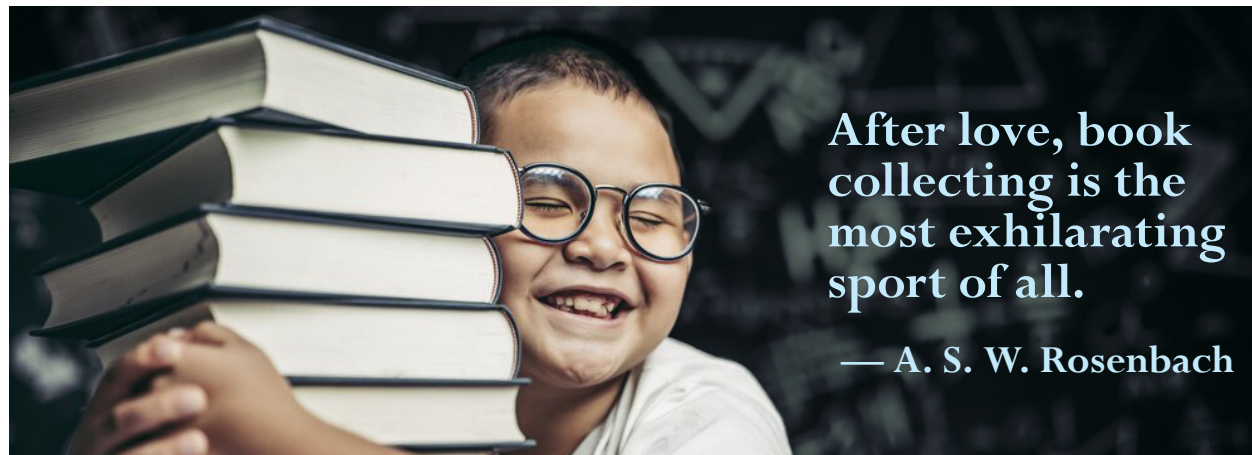
Similarly, parchment was made from the hide of a goat or sheep. After preparation, the outside of the hide where the hair grew was very smooth, but the flip side, which was on the inside of the animal, tended to be rougher.



Folio 19r from a Black Book of Hours, manuscript MS 493 in the Morgan Library. It is one of seven black books of hours produced in the 1400s in Bruges, Belgium. The pages were first dyed with ink before the writing and painting were applied. A book of hours contains Christian prayers to be said throughout the day. This type of book was very popular and thousands were made for personal devotion between 1250 and 1700, and many have survived.

And there’s one more wrinkle. *Recto* and *verso* only correspond to right and left for languages that are written left to right. In languages like Arabic or Japanese, which are written right to left, the front side of a sheet (the first side you read) is on the left, but it is still the recto.

You will often see beautifully illuminated pages from medieval manuscripts with labels like “98v”, which means the verso (or back) of the 98th folio (or sheet) in the book. If we turn that leaf over, we’ll find 98r on the other side, facing 99v and so on.



After love, book collecting is the most exhilarating sport of all.

— A. S. W. Rosenbach

Florida Bibliophile Society 2024–2025 Season



Ben Wiley

FBS meetings will be held both in-person and via Zoom, unless otherwise noted. Check the Upcoming Events page for details.

September 15 • FBS Members – September Show and Tell: This is the time to show your stuff! We invite members and guests to share one or two recent treasures.

October 20 • Sean Donnelly*: Tales of a Bookseller – Sean has been in the book business one way or another for almost 30 years. He will share stories about books and dealers – you’re likely to know a few. Let’s stroll down Memory Lane together.

October 26–30 • Gainesville Getaway: Alachua County Friends of the Library Book Sale is held twice a year, in October and April. The sale features over 500,000 books, CDs, and other media. Join us for a fun day of book shopping and sampling Gainesville’s culinary fare. Stay tuned for details!

November 17 • Russell Spera*: Dante for Collectors – Russell speaks from the authority of years of collecting and researching Dante. His personal collection contains over 300 English versions of the *Divine Comedy*. Engaging speaker, fascinating topic!

December 15 • FBS Holiday Party: Always a great time for members to celebrate the holidays! Details to be announced.

January 19 • Field Trip to Olde Mill House Print Museum in Homasassa, Florida – Owner Jim Anderson will guide us through his extensive collection of letterpress equipment. A must if you have any interest in letterpress printing. Featured on Atlas Obscura. Lunch to follow at a nearby cafe.

* FBS member

February 16 • Field Trip to Ersula’s History Shop – Owner and writer Ersula Odom* will introduce us to her museum/shop featuring books, memorabilia, primary source documents, black history, and more. Located at 1421 Tampa Park Plaza, Tampa.

March 1–2 (Sat.–Sun.) • Florida Antiquarian Book Fair, one of the largest antiquarian book fairs in the U.S., held at the historic St. Pete Coliseum. FBS will be represented at our hospitality table in the foyer and at our table in the fair. Meet dealers from across the U.S., see amazing books, make new friends! The ultimate book party.

March 16 • Field trip to the Jack Kerouac House, St. Pete – Kerouac helped define the mid-20th century Beat movement. His wanderings ended up in St. Pete, and his final home is becoming a museum. Join us for a tour and an afternoon of reflection on this American original, led by owner Ken Burchenal.

April 27 • Irene Sullivan: Studies in Juveline Justice – A retired juvenile judge, Irene is author of two books, *Born and Raised to Murder* and *Raised by the Courts*, which explore Florida’s courts and their impact on the state’s youth.

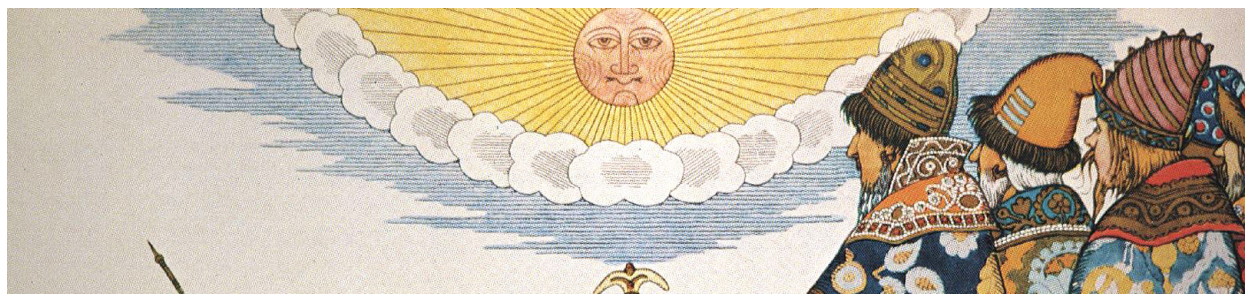
April 26–30 • Gainesville Getaway: Spring edition of the Florida’s biggest library book sale. Stay tuned for details.

May 18 • Annual Banquet: Our annual May banquet is always a highlight! This year’s event is still being planned. Watch this space!

All meetings are held at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday afternoons unless otherwise announced.



Endpaper • Another Great Year Ahead!



It's so exciting to be back! The summer was great, but that first meeting of the new season when we get to see each other again and do some catching up is a great occasion. Of course, our September meeting has that same catching up and getting to know you flavor as we bring a couple of new finds or favorite books to share with the group. The world of books is so vast, and our show and tell is like a guided tour of an endless museum. It's like the ultimate book club!

Last season – FBS's 40th – was spectacular! Booksellers, book artists, and writers. Field trips to libraries, theaters, and book sales. Capped off with a great 40th anniversary banquet and a terrific guest speaker, Roslyn Franken.

And it looks like Vice President and Scheduler Extraordinaire Ben Wiley has lined up another great season of activities and experiences. Ben is a traveler – his three weeks in Turkey are coming up soon. And

he infuses FBS's meeting schedule with that same wanderlust with field trips to some fascinating book-related destinations in the Tampa Bay area – and sometimes beyond!

It's exciting that so many of our speakers and hosts this year are FBS members. Though we meet regularly, there isn't always time to get to know each other, and let me assure you that we have an amazing membership!

It's great to hear from members because we get to know their interests in greater depth, which never fails to introduce the rest of us to new subjects wrapped up in plenty of personality!

It's going to be a lot of fun, and I hope all of you can join us!

See you at the bookstore! — Charles

The Florida Bibliophile Society

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