

November 2013

Adventures in Librarianship: Here's the Pitch

Ned Kraft

Ralph J. Bunche Library, kraftno@state.gov

Follow this and additional works at: <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Kraft, Ned (2000) "Adventures in Librarianship: Here's the Pitch," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 12: Iss. 3, Article 43.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.3398>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.



Adventures in Librarianship — Here's the Pitch

by Ned Kraft (Order Librarian, Ralph J. Bunche Library, U.S. Department of State)
<KraftNO@state.gov>

2
From: "Marty" (theman@flybynight.com)
To: "Sid" (sid_herman@shproductions.com)
Subject: Re: New show

Okay, so Doogie's dead. You'll never hear me bespeak the name again. Much better idea: daytime soap set in a small, local-history research library. Huh? Got ya thinkin', right? Picture it. Regular cast of eight (we'll save some production costs there). Ya got your elderly, prudish, ivy-league director—snooty, but no MLS, which the rest of the professional staff resents like crazy. Secretly he's in cahoots with the local library-temp contractor to drive service into the ground and force privatization. Then ya got your perky, young reference librarian, just outta school, drop-dead gorgeous but doesn't know her PDR from her PDF. Sub-plot potentiality: visiting antiquarian tries to lure her into satanic cult with promises of rare books and ephemera. She's saved from this monographical humiliation by the clear thinking of Mrs. Lambert, who has no first name but is otherwise sage and wise with wisdom. She's been with the historical society since nineteen-oh-whatever and she's seen a few things, let me tell you. The library pays for her portable life-support 'cause they're afraid that if the on-line catalog crashes she'll be the only hope of data restoration. Then there's the acquisitions librarian who's in love with the serials cataloger who leads him on only so she can pilferate from the library's ever-shrinking serials budget. And don't forget Billy, the custodian, who is actually the love child of Mrs. Lambert and Hollingsworth, the geography expert, which explains why Lambert brings Billy peanut butter sandwiches on Thursdays.

Anyway, you get the idea. Terrific, huh? Maybe call it "All my Periodicals," or "General Reference," "The Young and Restful." Let me know when we start. And don't forget that I cut you in on this goldmine. You owe me.

4
From: "Marty" (theman@flybynight.com)
To: "Sid" (sid_herman@shproductions.com)
Subject: Re: Re: Re: New show

Okay, so I went a little off the deep end. That's because I'm a passionate person. I get impetuous. We've known each other how long? And you don't accept that about me? I'm a little disenchanted in you, Sid. And just because the ALCTS idea was ga-ga doesn't mean we should toss the library angle altogether. How about this: "New York Public," a weekly drama set in the most dramatic library in the most dramatic city in the world. Huh? I'm thinking Steven Bochco. I'm thinking viewer discretion advisations for language and sexual content. I'm thinking car chases, book mold outbreaks, damaged spines, plagiarism, teenage web-surfing, the works. I've got your awareness now, don't I Sid? Huh?

1
From: "Marty" (theman@flybynight.com)
To: "Sid" (sid_herman@shproductions.com)
Subject: New show

Okay, so "Doogie Goldberg: Juvenile Librarian" lacked a little something in the arena of versatility. Kinda slim for a weekly. But I'm not ready to dump the idea altogether. How about HBO Movie of the Week? Maybe Hall-tries for comedic interactivity. The Doogster boss. Doog-man goes crazy baby-sitting bratty rich kids whose parents leave them at the library on weekends. DG has to break up a group of young rowdies who hang out in the Human Sexuality section. Hey! This stuff is too good to disignore! We shoot for a mini-series but we'll accept movie of the week with options. Is Michael J. Fox still young enough to play DG? That kid would be great. But does he know anything about OCLC? Ha! Just kidding. So respond ASAP, 'cause who takes care of you? I do, baby. Remember that.

3
From: "Marty" (theman@flybynight.com)
To: "Sid" (sid_herman@shproductions.com)
Subject: Re: Re: New show

Sid, baby. You're startin' to give me the impersonation that you don't like the library angle. Hey, it's new, it's fresh, it's what the people want, Sid. I know these things.

We'll forget about the daytime soap. Too low-brow. Now I'm thinking art. I'm thinking low budget, black-and-white, hand-held-camera, clipped-dialogue, no ending, the whole boho film-school scene. Cinema veritay, Sid. How about this... we haul three cameras out to Chicago and sit in on a meeting of the ALCTS Board of Directors. Huh? We'll get some long shots and wide angulations—picture the War Room in "Strangelove"—oversized conference table, tense, anxious members gathered around, the big soulless room echoing every shout. Then switch to extreme close-ups: furrowed brows, sweaty upper lips, a nervous pencil tapping on the now abandoned agenda. Someone makes a motion. No one seconds the motion—just eerie siletude. It's killer, Sid, I'm telling you. It'll play every college campus, the midnight show. It'll be the "Rocky Horror" of the new century. And with production costs under ten grand, we'll make a mint.

We'll call it "Strawberries and Sub-Committees," or "How I Learned to Relax and Love Parliamentary Procedure." It's so weird it's great! And when those checks come rollin' in, Sid, who are you going to thank? Me.