
Volume 14
Number 1

*Lively Librarians Loose in the Limelight:
Libraries in Popular Media (Spring 2008)*

July 2014

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Recommended Citation

Lucas, S. E., & Behrman, S. T. (2014). The TV Shows We Want to See: Lost Scripts from Libraryland. *OLA Quarterly*, 14(1), 2-6. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7710/1093-7374.1184>

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OLA Quarterly is an official publication of the Oregon Library Association | ISSN 1093-7374

The TV Shows We Want to See:

Lost Scripts from Libraryland

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At the time this article was written, the Writers Guild of America, representing more than 12,000 movie and television writers in their contract with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers, were still on strike. Begun in early November, the strike continues to have an impact on the production of movies and prime-time TV programs, even though most studios had stockpiled dozens of movie scripts and TV shows had enough scripts or completed shows in hand to last until early 2008. As television producers begin to pull those scripts from their bottom drawers, will they finally show us the TV shows we want to see? Read from this sampling of what to expect when those lost scripts from libraryland are finally aired:

Here's the lost script from *Heroes*, NBC's Emmy and Golden Globe epic drama that chronicles the lives of ordinary people who discover they possess extraordinary abilities. As the show starts, a total eclipse casts its shadow across the globe, seemingly calling forth a multitude of everyday men and women with special powers. (For more background on the story, go to <http://www.nbc.com/Heroes/>.)

[Hiro has just returned to present-day Tokyo from 17th Century Japan. He is anxious to discover if his encounters with legendary swordsman Takezo Kensei have changed recorded history. He and Ando decide to look it up at the Tokyo Metropolitan Library. As the two men approach the library's entrance, they speak in Japanese (to be subtitled in English as follows).]

Ando: Please explain it to me one more time. You time traveled to the 17th Century, met the great samurai swordsman Takezo Kensei, and assumed his identity?

Hiro: Not quite, but never mind! I want to find out if my beloved Princess Yaeko has spread stories about me ... I mean, about Kensei.

[Hiro and Ando enter the library.]

Hiro: Come on; let's ask the reference librarian where to find information about Takezo Kensei.

[They approach the reference desk. Yuki, the reference librarian, is turned away from them talking softly on the phone. Ando is distracted, puzzling over the information Hiro has just shared with him. Finally, Yuki puts the phone down.]

Hiro: Excuse me, Ms. Librarian?

[Yuki turns in her swivel chair to face Hiro and Ando. She is in her mid-twenties and stunningly beautiful. Both men's jaws drop to the floor.]

Yuki: Sorry to have kept you waiting. How can I help you?

Ando: Uh ...

Hiro: We are trying to find out about the great samurai swordsman Takezo Kensei.

Yuki: Let me check our database. I'm sorry, but it appears all of the books containing information about Takezo Kensei have been lost or stolen.

Hiro: Stolen? That's odd, isn't it? What about another branch? Please check again.

Yuki: Sorry, gentlemen. Looks like you're out of luck. But if you give me your name and address, I can alert you



if and when the library purchases or downloads any new material pertaining to Takezo Kensei. With your e-mail address, I can sign you up for an RSS feed.

Ando: (smitten) Thank you so much, Ms ... What's your name?

Yuki: (smiles sweetly) Please write your information here.

[Hiro writes his name down and he and Ando leave, somewhat befuddled. Ando's gaze lingers on Yuki for as long as possible. Yuki glances down at the piece of paper with Hiro's name on it and her expression registers a peculiar look of recognition. Once the pair is out of sight, she takes out her cell phone and discreetly dials a number. She says in perfect English:]

Yuki: It's Yuki. We have a situation. The time traveler you warned me about? He was just in here asking questions about Takezo Kensei. What do you want me to do about him?

[Cut to: Adam Monroe is sitting in his Montreal apartment.]

Adam: Just what we planned, love. Take care of him.

[Cut back to: Tokyo Metropolitan Library. Yuki covertly touches her index finger to the USB port and instantaneously, hundreds of documents whiz by on her computer screen. Her eyes work like a barcode scanner, processing all of the information within seconds. It is all personal information about Hiro: his birth record, health record, college entrance exam scores, bank account information, etc. She hits the delete key, and all of the open windows containing Hiro's information go haywire, eliminating all of the data. Then the screen goes blank in a flash.]

Maybe you'd prefer true crime, or at least a TV show that reveals how real crimes are solved? Here's the lost script from *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* (commonly referred to as *CSI*), a popular, Emmy Award-winning CBS television series that trails the investigations of a team of Las Vegas forensic scientists as they unveil the circumstances behind mysterious and unusual deaths and crimes committed (more at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CSI:_Crime_Scene_Investigation).

[Captain Brass is reviewing a case file in his office. Grissom sits across from him, picking at a scab on his wrist.]

Brass: Excellent work, Grissom. Your team solved this case in record time. We barely had time to put Jane Doe on ice before you produced enough

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forensic evidence to convict that scum bug who whacked her.

Grissom: I'd love to take the credit, but it should really go to that new intern.

Brass: Intern?

Grissom: Haven't you met her? Gina? She worked tirelessly on this case. She's got amazing street smarts. It's really something the way she was able to get inside the killer's mind and crack this case.

Brass: You don't say ... ? Hmm, that reminds me, how is the search going for Sara Sidle's replacement?

Grissom: (Groans) Let's just say Sara is going to be a tough act to follow. Why do you ask?

[Cut to: Break room. The aforementioned intern, Gina, is mulling over the paltry selection in the vending machine. Grissom enters.]

Grissom: Gina, in case I forgot to mention it, great job on the Jane Doe case.

Gina: Oh, it was nothing, boss. Just doing the job you're ... er, not paying me for. Heh heh.

Grissom: Speaking of that ... I don't know if you've heard, but we're in the middle of a search for Sara Sidle's replacement. How would you like to take over the job ... at Sara's tenured salary?

Gina: Gosh, what an honor ... I'm flattered. But I have to say no. I'll be starting Library School at U Dub in January.

Grissom: Library School? Gina, I'm offering you a high-paying job with one of the most prestigious crime labs in the country. Not to mention we're still the #1 rated show in the Nielsen's after eight grueling seasons.

Gina: I realize that, sir, but the University of Washington offers the most extensive ALA accredited Masters of Library and Information Science program in the northwestern United States. It's my dream. I can't pass it up. Besides, I can make four times an investigator's salary as an academic librarian! Don't worry.

Grissom: (Sighs) You've got spunk, kid. Good luck to you.

So, what if the writers' strike never ends? What if the only viewing options in the year 2108 are programs like *Antiques Roadshow*? (You can check out past seasons at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/roadshow/series/index.html>.) What if, in its future 110th season, *Antiques Roadshow* is still continuing to prove that it will go to any lengths—more than 500,000 miles, in fact—to discover America's hidden treasures? Here's the future "lost script from libraryland" from the year 2108:

Voiceover: Don't go away ... It's *Antiques Roadshow*—Newport!

Mark L. Walberg, III: Welcome to *Antiques Roadshow*, live from beautiful Newport, Oregon! Home to the newest and largest aquarium in the United States! We're about to start; people are lining up with their items, hoping to snag the attention with their family treasure of one of our expert appraisers.



[Cut to scene. A man in his twenties with a ponytail has a piece of furniture with tiny drawers awaiting the attention of Gloria Lieberman from Sotheby's in London.]

Gloria Lieberman: When I saw what you were bringing in, I texted my colleagues in London and sent them a digital image. We are all tremendously excited. So, what can you tell us about this piece of furniture?

Young Man: Well, the family story is that my great-great-aunt was the library director in an Eastern Oregon town about 150 years ago. Apparently, this item was declared 'surplus furniture' after the library building was renovated, so the town let my aunt have this for free as a token of appreciation for her many years of service. My grandmother, who was the first to inherit it, told me that her great aunt was also an avid gardener. She used to keep seed packets in the little drawers. See, she kept flower seeds here, and vegetable seeds in this row.

Gloria: Seeds, eh? Do you have any idea about its original purpose?

Young Man: Well, not really. My grandmother let me keep my miniature racing cars in these lower drawers when I was a kid. She passed away a few years ago and left the unit to me.

Gloria: Well, I've only seen a few pieces like this before, but I've conferred with my colleagues and we all agree. It's a library card catalog, and apart from a few pieces of dirt, some scattered seeds, and what looks like a scratch from a rake here on the front (Gloria points at the scratch with her laser pointer), it's in

perfect condition. This is a fine example of furniture from the Art Deco period. Notice the metal of choice from that period used on the decorative drawers. The other interesting thing is that it carries a manufacturer's label: Brodart. That U.S.-based company specialized in the finest library furniture ever made. Now, do you have any idea of its value?

Young Man: Well, no. I mean, my grandmother kept it in the shed and let me play with it.

Gloria: Well, in our research we found that there was an auction in New York City a few years ago, so I can give you an estimate of auction value based on that. I estimate auction value to be within the range of \$20K–\$25K. Are you surprised?

Young Man: Really? You're kidding me? I had no idea. Not that I am planning to sell it, but ... really?

[The scene shifts to a middle-aged woman talking to David Lackey, from the Portland Innovation in Science Gallery. Between them is a piece of equipment, with its many wires and cables neatly tied.]

David: I could not believe my eyes when you wheeled this item in. I've only seen pictures of these things. This is truly remarkable. Can you tell me how you came to have this piece in your collection?

Woman: Well, all I know is that my great-great-great grandfather was a professor of library science. Over the years, he collected library memorabilia and equipment. Over time, things were passed



down to the grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Some things were broken, but my grandmother kept this piece in her attic under a tarp. I have no idea what it was used for, although my father said that my ancestor's diary indicated that it may have been part of something called a "reference interview." Perhaps they plugged this end into the patron's dataport and recorded the answers?

David: Well, I can tell you everything you want to know and more. I specialize in mid-20th century library artifacts, which as I'm sure you know are among the hottest collectibles today. You really have a gem of a piece. This is called a teletype machine, and in the 1970s, this was a precursor to the fax machine and computer—you've heard of those machines, haven't you?

Woman: Well, I know what a computer is, of course, but I had no idea that they were ever this large!

David: A teletype machine was used as a communications device. My research in antique library equipment has turned up proof that this very same teletype machine may have been used in Iowa as part of what was called "a statewide library reference backup service." Library students in those days took Advanced Reference classes and communicated with reference staff in remote regions of the state by teletype; they created an early database of frequently asked questions, and helped answer stumper questions long before the invention of the Internet by Al Gore. This may even have been a pilot project for the award-winning early 21st century library information service in Oregon called "L-net." Of course, this was well before the days of imbedded data ports and virtual links to information databases that today we receive as children during our routine vaccinations for cancer and Alzheimer's. Do you have any idea what it's worth?

Woman: No. Of course, I'd only be interested in its insurance value.

David: You'll be surprised to learn that this qualifies as a museum piece. I can tell you that there are a number of science museums throughout the world that would like to acquire this for their collections. I'd place insurance value at \$150K–\$250K.

Woman: Oh my god. You're kidding me. I had no idea.

Still want more? Then stay tuned for *Dancing with the Stars*. Celebrity dancer Jim Schepke will go toe to toe with author J.K. Rowling in the upcoming final competition! 

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