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# SOCIETY FOR ADVANCEMENT OF POYNTER LIBRARY THE LIBRARY CONNECTION



Kathy Arsenault,  
Library Dean

## From the Dean

After almost 10 years as the administrator of the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library, I write my farewell "From the Dean" column for *Library Connection* with mixed emotions. I became Poynter's interim director in August 1999, shortly after the "Virtual Library" and ubiquitous home computers began to transform library services and collections. Poynter Library's talented librarians and staff quickly adapted to new ways of doing business, learning new library management systems, producing web pages, providing email or web-based services, implementing the technology for distance education, and, less popularly, becoming adept at troubleshooting quirky printers and copiers. As libraries

changed, perhaps as much as they have since the famous library at Alexandria converted from scrolls to codices, Poynter Library continued to respect the past, adding special collections, including the David Hubbell Mark Twain collection and the Miller family's presidential signatures, and establishing university archives. The University of South Florida St. Petersburg changed dramatically, too, accommodating freshmen and sophomores, teaching a far wider curriculum, providing residential housing, greatly expanding its faculty and student body, and receiving separate regional accreditation. I have been honored to participate in these changes and look forward to observing Poynter Library's and USF St. Petersburg's continuing successes as an *emerita* librarian and faculty wife.

I am truly grateful for support and friendship the Society for

Advancement of Poynter Library's leadership has given to me over the years. Their farewell party for me will remain a treasured memory. I look forward to the announcement of a new library dean, and know that he or she will come to appreciate SAPL as I have.



*The mission of the Society for Advancement of Poynter Library (SAPL) is to increase communication between the library and the students, faculty, and citizens it serves, and to work for the improvement of the Library's resources, collections, and services.*

## New Library Dean

Carol G. Hixson, currently University Librarian at the University of Regina in Saskatchewan, Canada, was named the new dean of the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library at USF St. Petersburg. She begins her deanship in August.

Hixson has worked in all areas of librarianship at major academic institutions in the United States, including the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the University of Florida, Indiana University, UCLA, and the University of Oregon. In her leadership role at the University of Regina, she has worked closely with campus partners to expand and redefine library services. In 2008, she established the university's Campus Digital Archive. Prior to joining the University of Regina, she was the Head of Metadata and Digital Library Services at the University of Oregon where she led the development of the library's digital collections.

Hixson earned a Master of Science degree in Information Studies from Drexel University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish language and literature from Grinnell College. Her current research interests are the library's role in scholarly communication, collaboration as a force for change, distance education, and improving access to and preservation of digital assets.

Norine Noonan, PhD, Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, said, "We are very fortunate to have recruited a dean of Carol's experience and expertise. She will be an outstanding leader for the Poynter Library."

Hixson will be the second dean for the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library. The founding dean, Kathy Arsenault, retired April 30 after a 27-year career with the library. Gerald Notaro, Media Librarian, will serve as Interim Dean until August.

*The following story is the first prize winner in SAPL's 23rd Annual Bayboro Fiction Contest. St. Petersburg Times Books Editor Colette Bancroft judged the 2009 contest.*



## **SAND** By Jennifer Shear

An endless sea of sand stretched before them, all but white under the endless sun. It was too hot. It was always too hot. Sweat ran into a hundred cuts, small stinging little lines. Each one serving only to slow her down. She slicked black hair out of brown eyes and frowned. It was too long for this, blocking her vision and attributing to at least half of the wounds she had. Of course, with it shorter, there would be more. He'd always loved her hair.

"Aizo." His voice called across the sand, heard by far too many. She smiled and ignored him. Her clothes were in tatters, cut away almost artfully and leaving little left to the imagination. Black, though, was never a good choice for the sands. She was almost grateful. Aizo flung her hair back over her shoulders again, with a plaintive prayer that it would stay, and turned her eyes back to the man before her.

He was laughing at her. Again. His brown eyes shown with it. The lines were too tight around his lips. He, of course, was not marked, not even a scratch. Too dignified to even break a sweat. The black jacket hung to his waist, wide open to catch the nonexistent breeze. Sand speckled his red shirt. He was probably having too much fun to care. Aizo

snorted and ran a hand over her right arm, smearing the blood into almost a paint. She raised her fingers to her eyes, smearing them over her lids. Such a garish choice of eye shadow. Her eyes shown.

He laughed. "You should stick to gold. Red makes you look barbaric."

She bared her teeth at him. Her weapon shown silver in the endless sun. It rose with her arm, the short blade honed to a razor's edge. Well, that was because she could never hit him with it. Something blunt might be better. The sand between them was tousled, marking their most recent battle. It could be smoothed over again, but where was the fun in sure footing?

He sunk the end of his blade, nearly twice the length of her own, into the sand. The rapier wobbled a bit as he let it stand. He was still laughing at her. The length of his dark hair had fallen into his eyes, hiding them. "You should just stop."

Aizo smiled. Always.

"You can't beat me. You don't have what it takes to beat me. Don't make me hurt you again." Always the gentleman. Always wanting to let her run without killing her. Again.

She pointed her sword at his heart. The image wavered to her left, a heat mirage barely a foot away. Close. So close. His eyes jerked to it too, for a moment. He frowned, eyes trailing along behind her. Seeing what was not really there. Or maybe

what was. She smiled, a flash of teeth going well with her red-lidded eyes.

"You can't beat me. No matter what you may try." He pulled up his sword, tracing the tip on the edge of his pants before raising it again. "And definitely not with that."

Aizo glanced down at her blade. It was two feet, maybe. She smiled and jerked her head back. Come on.

He was air, barely moving the sand as he ran. The distance closed. He wasn't playing any more. Aizo laughed softly and raised her blade to parry his. Enough, just enough. The tip of his rapier hit hers like a bell, a pure ringing, and slid by. He was close now, putting his body into the thrust meant for her heart. His face was drawn, eyes focused on the center of her. Aizo smiled softly at him for a moment. He did always hate to kill her, after all. Still. She caught his eyes for a moment, enough time to wonder. Then she screamed. The blade tore into her side, through her lungs. Just enough. It had missed her heart.

He was cursing, barely audibly under her noise. Then the blade slipped through her ribs and out her back. She wheezed a breath, smiling as he took a final step forward. They slammed together, slammed backwards into something hard and not there. The sands behind them shimmered as the blade was forced through. One way, then another. The metal bent around on itself, returning the way it came with the same force it went through. Aizo felt herself screaming again. It was amazing how she had the breath to do it as the now curving blade twisted through her other side, her other lung.

“Always the same. How can you always find such painful ways to die?” He murmured against her ear, laughter lurking in that voice. He had managed to avoid the second blow, though the tip caught in his jacket.

“Not dead yet.” She had dropped her sword during the struggle, if it could be called that. She grabbed on to his hand, around his sword. He stopped to look at her hand, around his own and inside his hand guard.

“What—?”

A knife flashed into her free hand, small and hidden at her back, where her hair had kept him from slicing. She dug it into his throat, scraping it along his spine before ripping it out to the side. Those brown eyes flared so wide, she had to laugh as his blood spilled and splattered over her, into her. It was coppery, tasting of iron and of him.

They fell, still attached, to the sands, his life spilling out on the ground. And she laughed.

Like that, she watched him as he died. Her eyes glowed, lips parted with breathless laughter, and she watched him die. It didn't matter she was dying, just so long as he went first.

The last breath passed his lips, the final light faded from his eyes. Aizo smiled softly and ran fingers through her hair.

“Shatter.” The words passed her lips as his image shattered on the floor, thousands of pieces drifting back to the sand. She was the only one, now. Alone and watched by thousands. More of her blood seeped onto

the ground, staining an ever-growing ring. Just a little longer. The dunes began to fade from her sight, finally, as her breath rattled in her ruined lungs. It was peaceful, these final moments. “Shatter.”

The sands shattered, or was it her? Her vision fragmented into a thousand pieces, then again.

She gasped a painful breath and arched slightly off the blue tiles. Sound hammered into her, a thousand voices screaming, half for her, half for him. The grand stadium rose around her, towering up stories upon stories, all filled with people. They looked so small as she gazed up at them, eyes slightly glazed. She could almost see the sky from here, the floor, the center of the monstrous building. The half dome rose around her as well, letting her see the world through an oily yellow haze.

“I can't believe you did that.”

Aizo dropped her eyes back to the floor, eyes flashing past the power cords, the techs in white coats, the machine that powered it all, to her opponent. He still lay on the floor, one hand wrapped around his throat, rubbing. He propped himself up on his elbows. “It wasn't fair.”

She grinned and stood, barely wincing as phantom pains tore through her chest. Oh, they would fade. In a week or two. Maybe a month. Maybe. The noise swelled to an all but deafening roar.

“As long as you die at the end, I don't care.” She turned her back on him. His laughter swelled through the room, the stadium, still magnified by the dome itself.

The door opened as she approached, spilling true sunlight into her eyes. At least that sun would set, in a few hours. She paused on the threshold as the yellow surface of the dome wavered, endless dunes flickering over a small portion. Smiling softly, she stepped through the hole into the light, the noise, and her fingers traced the edge, taking the last bit of peace with her.

**Traveling Great Distances to  
Use Great Materials  
By  
Jim Schnur,  
Special Collections Librarian**

Special Collections and Archives at the Poynter Library serves as a repository for unique research materials. Between July 2007 and June 2008, 261 patrons visited the reading room to examine books and manuscript collections. Staff assisted another 101 patrons who received information through telephone, letter, or email requests. Although nearly 60% of researchers came from one of the USF campuses, some visitors accumulated frequent flyer miles in their pursuit of scholarly resources available in our beautiful library.

During the summer and fall 2007 semesters, we worked closely with a PhD student from Northwestern University in Chicago, Illinois. Although this student won USF's Patrick Riordan Memorial Research Fellowship from USF Tampa, he spent most of his time researching materials found at the Poynter Library that will help him document changes in St. Petersburg as it refined and redefined its image as a retirement community.

Other graduate students came from distant universities. A PhD student from the University of Heidelberg's Center for American Studies (in Germany) consulted with staff while developing a dissertation proposal on the amazing transformations that have occurred in Florida since World War II. A graduate student from the University of North Carolina examined materials related to Florida's cigar industry that we received from Dr. L. Glenn Westfall.

Faculty also took advantage of our research collections. Most notably, a member of the Humanities Faculty from Aarhus University in Denmark visited frequently in June 2008 to examine a variety of research items about life on Florida's West Coast. A retired professor from Wheaton College in Illinois enjoyed looking through some of the valuable Mark Twain books donated by Dr. David Hubbell.

Every year, we have had the honor of meeting former cadets from the United States Maritime Service Training Station that operated along Bayboro Harbor from 1939 through 1950. Seeing the uniforms, photographs, and other items preserved by the library brings them a sense of pride as they remember their service to our nation.

The longstanding tradition of providing support to long-distance researchers continues. Last summer and fall, a professor of education from a Colorado university examined collections to help her retrace educational practices in Pinellas County's African-American communities during the early 20th century. Her research was shared at a national conference. Many others will follow her as they visit us at the Poynter Library in their scholarly quests.

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Please call Jerry Notaro at (727) 873-4400 for additional information.



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