

## BOOK CLUB & READER GUIDE

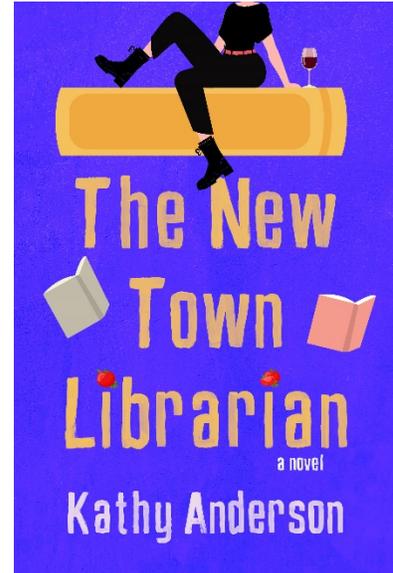
### The New Town Librarian by Kathy Anderson

*She's here, she's queer, she's the new Town Librarian—but is it too late to make a fresh start?*

Queer middle-aged librarian Nan Nethercott, a wisecracking hypochondriac with a lackluster career and a nonexistent love life, needs to make a drastic life change before it's too late. When she lands a job as librarian in a seemingly idyllic small town in southern New Jersey, Nan quickly discovers unforeseen challenges.

Nan's landlady, Immaculata, launches daily intrusions from below. The library, housed in the former town jail, is overrun by marauding middle-schoolers. A mysterious reader leaves distressing messages in book stacks all over the library. Thomasina, the irresistible butch deli owner, is clearly a delicious affair and not the relationship Nan craves.

There's no turning back though. Nan must come up with her own wildly unorthodox solutions to what the town and its people throw at her and fight for what she wants until she makes a shiny new life—one with her first true home, surprising friends, a meaningful career, and a promising new love.



### About the Author



Once upon a time, Kathy Anderson was a new town librarian in real life. In graduate school, she read a lot of fairy tales, discovered bibliographies of bibliographies, and pored over the Dewey decimal system before receiving the coveted Master of Library Science degree. But from her first days at work in a small-town public library, Kathy knew there was no academic knowledge that truly prepared her for the wonderful world of libraries and the infinite shenanigans there. She vowed to her coworkers that she was going to put it all in a novel one day. *The New Town Librarian* is her first novel. (But it's pure fiction, of course!)

Kathy won the Autumn House Press Fiction Prize for her short story collection, *Bull and Other Stories* (Autumn House Press, 2016), which was a finalist for Publishing Triangle's Edmund White Award for Debut Fiction and the Lambda Literary Awards and was longlisted for The Story Prize. She is most proud that *Bull and Other Stories* is now in libraries all over the world, including Australia, Ecuador, Scotland, Switzerland, and Turkey.

Kathy lives with her wife in Philadelphia, PA, where she writes fiction, reads voraciously, and meets every month with her beloved book club, in which she appointed herself President for Life (whether they like it or not! She will not be deposed). Kathy loves to talk to book clubs and is open to Zoom and in-person visits.

To connect: [website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#)

## Questions for Discussion

1. Nan Nethercott is portrayed as a loser at her career and in her love life at the beginning of the book. Do you think being a loser has any unexpected bonuses?
2. Nan gets involved with the irresistible T, even though T's red flags are flying high. What does this delicious, ridiculous affair do for Nan? (Besides the obvious physical relief!)
3. Who was the best librarian you ever encountered? What qualities make a GOAT\* Librarian? (\*Greatest of All Time)
4. In this novel, the town library building is a repurposed jail, with bars remaining on windows in the Children's Room. What does your ideal library building look like? Dream big! Anything goes in fantasyland.
5. In fictional Pinetree, deep in southern New Jersey, many of the residents are descended from Italian immigrants; the book celebrates Italian food and culture. Nan is an outsider, a stranger coming into a small town where many are related and everyone knows everyone else. What are the best things about being an outsider or new to a culture?
6. Nan discovers that she is lustier at fifty than she was as a teenager and feels as if all the satisfied-looking older women around her have conspired to keep that knowledge from her. If older women spoke openly about their sex lives, what do you think they would say?
7. Older lesbians are among the most underrepresented characters in contemporary fiction and entertainment. Do you want to see more? What does it feel like to see older lesbians as main characters, taking up space in the world?
8. One of Nan's challenges is luring adults to the library for programs and events. What would get you off the couch to venture to the public library on a cold winter's night? ("Nothing" is an acceptable answer; let's be real.)
9. Many children (and a few fanciful adults) think that librarians actually live in the library, pulling cots out from behind the desk and reading all night long. Would you like to live in a library? Which book aisle in the library is your favorite?
10. Nan's secret book club pulls a group of very different people together, united only by their love of reading. Does reading unite us more than divide us?

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