

Memorial: Sara Ellen Robbins (1952–2006)*

¶1 Sara Ellen Robbins, director of the Law Library at Brooklyn Law School since 1986, died on December 13, 2006, in Brooklyn Height, New York, in a pedestrian traffic accident. She was fifty-four.

¶2 Sara Robbins was born and raised in Columbus, Ohio, and earned her art history degree at the University of Cincinnati, but she spent most of her adult life in Brooklyn. After graduating from Pratt Institute with her MSLS degree in 1977, Sara became the cataloger and technical services librarian at the Brooklyn Law School Library. After two years, Sara left Brooklyn to become the head of technical services at Cardozo Law School. Since Cardozo Law School closed early on Fridays, Sara would stop by Brooklyn on her way home to visit old friends. I shared an office with one of these old friends, so I, too, would chat with Sara during her visits. That is when our friendship began. My most vivid recollection of these conversations was when Sara was debating whether or not to go to law school. Ultimately, her LSAT score made the decision a no brainer. She scored more than seven hundred and her destiny was set into motion.

¶3 Sara left Cardozo in 1981, but before enrolling in law school, she worked for Morris L. Cohen, Yale Law School Librarian and the man whom I know Sara regarded as her mentor. She assisted with researching and editing Professor's Cohen's compilation, *Bibliography of Early American Law*.¹ In fall 1982, Sara enrolled at Ohio State University College of Law. She returned to Yale to finish her work for Prof. Cohen in summer 1983. But soon, Sara would find herself returning to Brooklyn Law School once again.

¶4 In 1984, Charlotte Levy, the director of the Brooklyn Law School Library, invited Sara to fill the newly created position of associate librarian for administration and planning. Sara accepted and finished her final year of law school at Brooklyn Law School. When Professor Levy decided to leave New York in 1985, Sara assumed the position of acting director and eventually director of the Brooklyn Law School Library.

¶5 Sara led Brooklyn Law School Library through major transformations over the next twenty years. By the early 1990s, her plans came to fruition: the library's size doubled in the construction of a new Brooklyn Law School building, computer labs were added, and the collection vastly increased. She brought the library into the digital age with the installation of Brooklaw, our online catalog. As a faculty member, Sara had the advanced legal research courses taught by librarians added to the law school curriculum. They now are on the list of regularly oversubscribed courses each semester.

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1. MORRIS L. COHEN, *BIBLIOGRAPHY OF EARLY AMERICAN LAW* (1998).

¶6 Sara Robbins was well known for her extensive professional activities. She served on many committees, too numerous to list. As a member of American Bar Association site inspection teams for close to ten years, Sara visited many law schools throughout the country. For the American Association of Law Libraries, Sara coordinated and moderated various programs for its Annual Meetings. For Pratt Institute's Library Science program, Sara taught various courses in law librarianship for many years. She also spoke before several associations on topics such as copyright and fair use, law and art, teaching legal research, presentation skills, family law research, and Internet and the law. Perhaps her best-known work was *Law: A Treasury of Art and Literature*,² a coffee table book uniting her two loves: art and the law.

¶7 Sara will always be remembered for the professional, successful, librarian/teacher/author that she was. She was a patient, kind, and gentle soul with a beautiful smile. For the past several years, Sara developed an intense interest in the art of needlepoint and, as in everything else she attempted, became quite talented at it. She belonged to a needlepoint group and even found time on weekends to work at a needlepoint store. While I don't own any of her needlepoint creations, I do have a lovely item that Sara made. When I was pregnant, she knitted a beautiful baby blanket for me that I intend to pass on to my own daughter when she has children.

¶8 All of us who were privileged to know Sara and to benefit from her knowledge, experience, and dedication to service will greatly miss her. A scholarship has been established in Professor Robbins' name by Brooklyn Law School.—*Rosemary H. Campagna*³ with *James Murphy*⁴

2. *LAW : A TREASURY OF ART AND LITERATURE* (Sara Robbins ed., 1990).

3. Government Documents Librarian, Brooklyn Law School Library, Brooklyn, New York.

4. Reference Librarian, Brooklyn Law School Library, Brooklyn, New York.