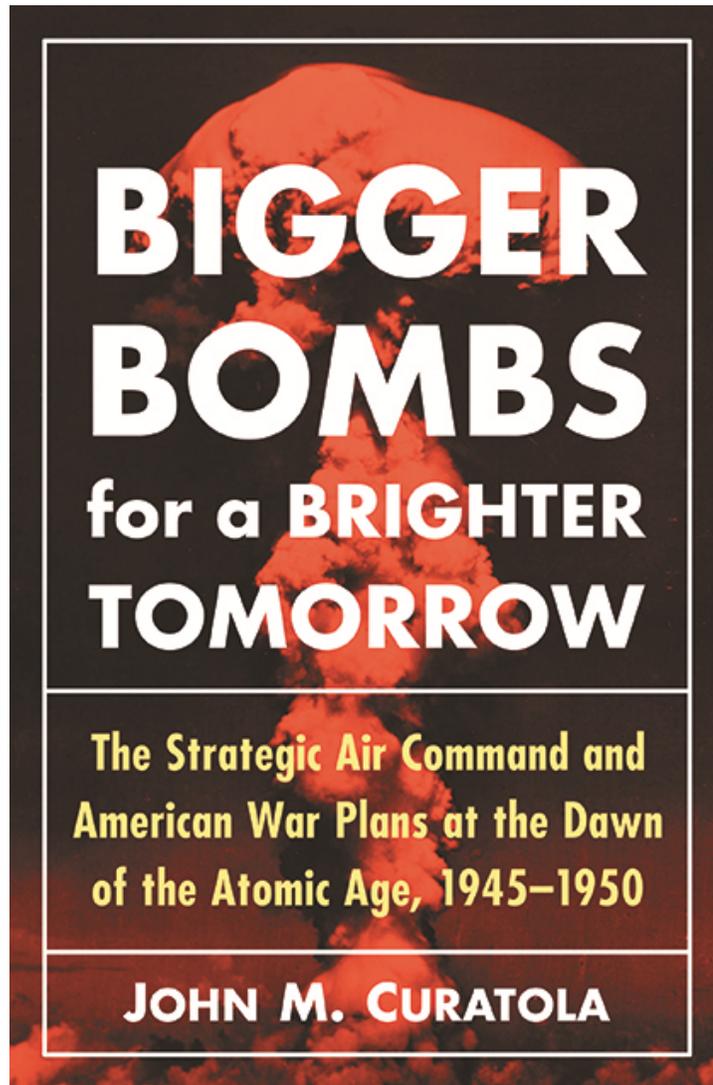


May 2016

## Dr. John Curatola to Discuss *Bigger Bombs for a Better Tomorrow: The Strategic Air Command and the America War Plans for the Dawn of the Atomic Age, 1945-1950*

On **Tuesday, May 3 at 6:30 p.m.**, the National Archives will host **Dr. John Curatola** for a discussion about his book *Bigger Bombs for a Brighter Tomorrow: The Strategic Air Command and the America War Plans at the Dawn of the Atomic Age, 1945-1950*. A free light reception will precede the event at 6:00 p.m.

After World War II, the United States felt secure in its atomic monopoly and with the American "Pax Atomica" in place, the free world held an apparent strategic advantage over the Soviet bloc and saw itself as a bulwark against communist expansion. Yet, America's atomic superiority in the early postwar years was more fiction than fact. From 1945 until 1950, the U.S. atomic arsenal was poorly coordinated, equipped, and funded. The newly formed Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) inherited from the Manhattan Engineer District was a program suffering from poor organization, failing infrastructure, and internal conflict. The military establishment and the Air Force's Strategic Air Command knew little about what to do with this new weapon. The Air Force and the AEC failed to coordinate their efforts for a possible atomic air offensive and war plans were ill-conceived, reflecting unrealistic expectations of Air Force capabilities, and possible political outcomes. Curatola will discuss how this lack of preparedness serves as a case study in the tenuous nature of American civilian-military relationships. *This program is presented in partnership with the Department of Military History at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas*



Copies of Curatola's book will be available for purchase and signing. To make a reservation for this **free event**, email [kansascity.educate@nara.gov](mailto:kansascity.educate@nara.gov) or call 816-268-8010.

### Inside This Issue

HIDDEN TREASURES FROM THE STACKS 2-3

CIVIL RIGHTS FILM SERIES 4

### Upcoming Events

Unless noted, all events are held at the National Archives  
400 West Pershing Road  
Kansas City, MO 64108

- MAY 3 - 6:30 P.M.  
AUTHOR LECTURE:  
*BIGGER BOMBS FOR A BRIGHTER TOMORROW*  
BY JOHN CURATOLA
- JUNE 9 - 6:30 P.M. FILM  
SCREENING: *THE POWER BROKER: WHITNEY YOUNG'S FIGHT FOR CIVIL RIGHTS* WITH GWEN GRANT

# Hidden Treasures from the Stacks

## Annie Oakley's Six Year Quest to Clear Her Name

In 1901, Annie Oakley left Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Show. She intended to do some acting, but for the most part, wanted to live a quiet life. The forty-two year old Oakley was spending the month on a seashore in New Jersey, when in August 1903, two Chicago newspapers owned by William Randolph Hearst ran stories with this headline, "Annie Oakley Is In Prison Cell. Famous Rifle Shot of Buffalo Bill's Show Steals a Negro's Trousers to Get Money to Buy Cocaine." The articles also claimed that Oakley had been sentenced to 45 days in prison and that she was twenty-eight years old, but looked like she was forty because all her beauty was gone. Other newspapers from across the country soon picked up the story.

Annie Oakley had spent her entire career very carefully crafting and maintaining her public image. She purposefully espoused the feminine ideals of the day, always aware that her profession contradicted those qualities society valued in women. Having a wholesome reputation was of utmost importance to her, and these articles ruined that reputation.

Eventually when it came out that a different woman had actually committed the crime, many newspapers retracted the story. Retractions and apologies were not good enough for Annie Oakley, so she sued 55 different newspapers that had published the story for libel. The first trial began in 1904 and the final concluded in 1910.

During those six years Oakley traveled around the country testifying in court after court. By the end of the last trial, Oakley had won or settled 54 of the 55 cases. The exact amount of money she won from these cases is unknown- estimates range from \$250,000.00 - \$800,000.00. Whatever the final amount, the expenses and lost wages from those six years exceeded her winnings. Money was never the issue, though, for Oakley. She needed to restore the reputation that was so important to her.

The National Archives at Kansas City maintains the case file for one of these lawsuits.

(Continued on next page.)

That there is a drug known by the name "cocaine" the continuous use of which by human beings results in the exhaustion of the vital forces, the deterioration of mentality and morals, and which once acquired as a habit generally produces the mental and physical wreck of the person so addicted to its use; that it is well known to the public that many persons of low and depraved character; accustomed to debauchery of all kinds, resort to the use of the drug known as cocaine, for the purpose of obtaining temporary alleviation from their mental and physical sufferings, and that persons who have in such manner become habitual users of cocaine are generally despised and pitied.

And plaintiff states that on the eleventh day of August, 1903, the defendant published a daily newspaper in the City of St. Louis, in the State of Missouri, well known to the public, and of wide circulation, which newspaper was and is known as The St. Louis Daily Globe-Democrat"; that the defendant on the said eleventh day of August, 1903, by and through its publication and newspaper aforesaid, printed and distributed upon that day, falsely, wantonly and maliciously published of and concerning the plaintiff, Annie Butler, known to the public as "Annie Oakley" the following libel, that is to say:

"ANNIE OAKLEY STOLE TROUSERS TO GET COCAINE."

Special Dispatch to the Globe-Democrat.

Chicago, Ill., August 10. - Annie Oakley, daughter-in-law of "Buffalo Bill" and the most famous woman rifle shot in the world, lies today in a cell at the Harrison Street Station under a Bride-well sentence for stealing the trousers of a negro in order to get money with which to buy cocaine.

-3-

Above: A page from the Petition describing the article that appeared in the *St. Louis Daily Globe-Democrat*. National Archives at Kansas City, Record Group 21, Records of the District Courts of the United States, U.S. Circuit Court for the Eastern (St. Louis) Division of the Eastern District of Missouri, 1887-1912; Law, Equity, and Criminal Case Files, 1828-1912, *Annie Butler v. Globe Publishing Company*. National Archives Identifier 7430889.

(Continued from page 2.)

For her spectacular marksmanship King Edward himself once led the applause in the courtyard of Buckingham palace. When arrested Saturday on the complaint of Charles Curtis, a negro, she was living at 140 Sherman Street. She gave the name of Elizabeth Cody, but it occurred to no one to connect her with Col. Cody's famous daughter-in-law. Today, however, when brought before Justice Caverly, she admitted her guilt and begged the court to have pity on her. The striking beauty of the woman whom the crowds at the world's fair admired is now entirely gone. Although she is but 28 years old, she looks almost 40. Hers, in fact, is one of the most extreme cases which have come up in the Harrison street police court. Today she will be taken to the Bridewell to serve out a sentence of \$45.00 and costs.

"A good, long stay in the Bridewell will do you good," said the Court.

Plaintiff states that she suffered by reason of the said false and libelous publication great humiliation and anguish of mind, loss of health and injury to her reputation professionally and personally; that she has been damaged by reason of the aforesaid false and libelous publication in the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars as actual, and Ten Thousand Dollars as exemplary damages, for which she prays judgment and for her costs herein expended.

*Butler Notman Johnnie Myrdere*

*Stewart Cunningham Elliot*  
Attorneys for Plaintiff.

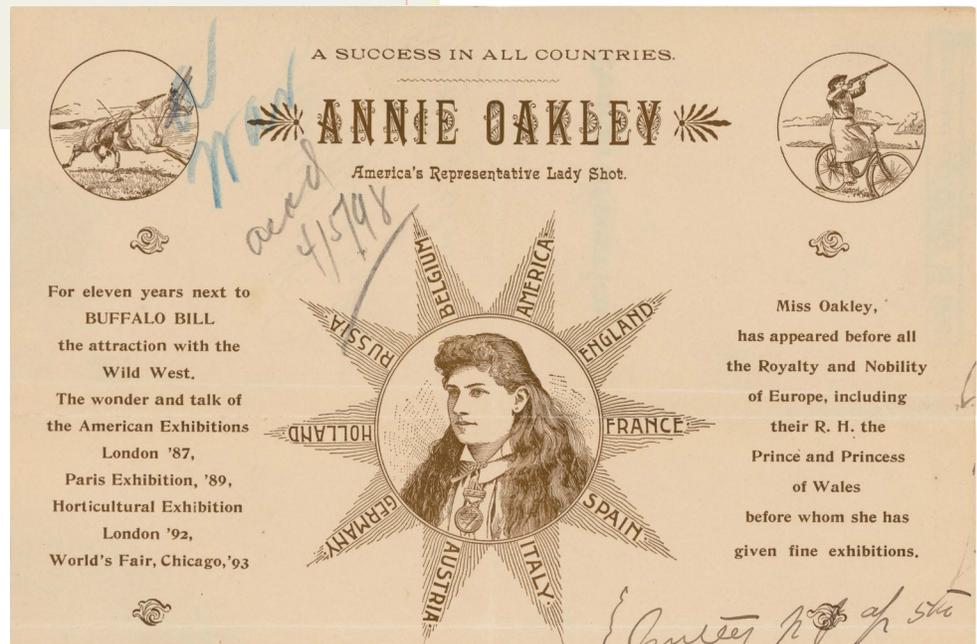
Using her married name of Annie Butler, Oakley sued Globe Printing Company in St. Louis, Missouri over the article published in the *St. Louis Daily Globe-Democrat*. The lawsuit was filed in U.S. Circuit Court for the Eastern District of Missouri in June 1904. This case file has been digitized and can be seen in full in the [National Archives Catalog](#).

Other National Archives offices including the National Archives at Philadelphia, the National Archives at Atlanta, and the National Archives at Chicago also have case files for some of Annie Oakley's lawsuits.

The National Archives at Kansas City holds many records from the United States Circuit and District Courts. For more information visit [www.archives.gov/research](http://www.archives.gov/research).

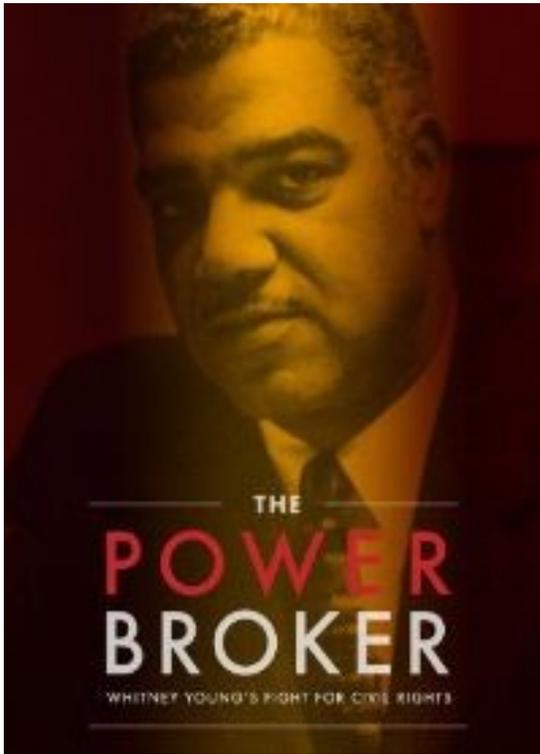
Left: A page from the Petition describing the article that appeared in the *St. Louis Daily Globe-Democrat*. National Archives at Kansas City, Record Group 21, Records of the District Courts of the United States, U.S. Circuit Court for the Eastern (St. Louis) Division of the Eastern District of Missouri, 1887-1912; Law, Equity, and Criminal Case Files, 1828-1912, Annie Butler v. Globe Publishing Company. National Archives Identifier 7430889.

Right: Annie Oakley used this letterhead to send a letter to President William McKinley. The full letter is available for viewing in the National Archives Catalog. National Archives at Washington, D.C., Record Group 94, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1762-1984; Letters Received, 1805-1889. National Archives Identifier 300369.



## National Archives to Screen *The Power Broker: Whitney Young's Fight for Civil Rights*

On **Thursday, June 9 at 6:30 p.m.**, the National Archives at Kansas City will screen the documentary ***The Power Broker: Whitney Young's Fight for Civil Rights***. Post-film discussion will be led by **Gwen Grant**, President and CEO of the Urban League. A free light reception will precede the film at 6:00 p.m.



Civil rights leader Whitney Young, Jr. has no national holiday bearing his name. You will not find him in most history books. In fact, few today know his name, much less his accomplishments. Yet, he was at the heart of the civil rights movement – an inside man who broke down the barriers that held back African Americans.

Young shook the right hands, made the right deals, and opened the doors of opportunity that had been locked tightly through the centuries. Unique among black leaders, the one-time executive director of the National Urban League took the fight directly to the powerful white elite, gaining allies in business and government. In the Oval Office, Young advised Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon, and guided each along a path toward historic change.

*The Powerbroker: Whitney Young's Fight for Civil Rights* follows Young as he shuttles between the streets of Harlem and the boardrooms of Fortune 500 companies, tying the needs of Main Street to the interests of Wall Street. The film shows the pivotal events of the civil rights era - *Brown v. Board of Education*, the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, and the Vietnam War - through the eyes of a man striving to change the established powers in a way no one else could, from within.

His close ties with powerful whites sometimes came at a cost, including an attempted assassination described as part of a “black revolutionary plot.” Some called him “Whitey” Young, and mocked him as “the Wall Street of the Civil Rights movement.” This did not stop his fight, or his legacy. As President Richard Nixon stated at Young’s eulogy, “He knew how to accomplish what other people were merely for.”

*This program is part of a film series presented in partnership with the Greater Kansas City Black History Study Group.*

To make a reservation for this **free film program** email [kansascity.educate@nara.gov](mailto:kansascity.educate@nara.gov) or call 816-268-8000. Requests for ADA accommodations must be submitted five business days prior to events.

**HOURS OF OPERATION:** Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Closed on weekends and Federal holidays. Hours are subject to change due to special programs and weather. The National Archives is located at 400 West Pershing Road, Kansas City, Missouri, 64108.

The National Archives at Kansas City is home to historical records dating from the 1820s to the 1990s created or received by Federal agencies in Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

For more information, call 816-268-8000, email [kansascity.educate@nara.gov](mailto:kansascity.educate@nara.gov) or visit [www.archives.gov/kansas-city](http://www.archives.gov/kansas-city). Find us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/nationalarchiveskansascity](https://www.facebook.com/nationalarchiveskansascity). Tweet us @KCArchives or #KCArchives.

