

## Westover School

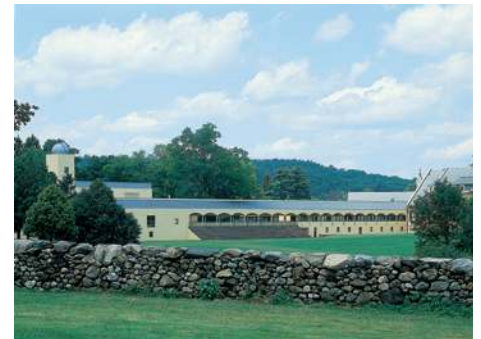
Library and Science Building  
Middlebury, Connecticut



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Westover School is a private boarding school for women on a 150-acre rural campus. The campus is dominated by the Main Building, designed in 1907 by Theodate Pope Riddle. Beyond the Main Building, and to the south, lies the Field, a large lawn and playing field used for athletics and graduation ceremonies.

The Library and Science Building includes a 40,000-volume academic library with a rare book collection. It provides a series of quality environments for serious study, informal browsing and music listening, as well as three instructional laboratories, a greenhouse to augment biological studies, an astronomical observatory tower, faculty offices, preparation rooms and a computer science center.

The building is organized along an elevated arcade that extends and is connected to those of the Main Building and overlooks the Field. The new facilities are reached through entrances off the arcade. Primary spaces—the science laboratories and the library reading room—are sited a half level below the arcade, at the grade of and overlooking a smaller landscaped area to the west. Ancillary spaces—stacks, study carrels, faculty offices, preparation rooms and computer center—are arranged beneath the arcade. These two levels are separated by a

two-story sky lit gallery, bridged by entrances from the arcade. The composition of building elements with a new façade that incorporates a renovated activity center is punctuated by the observatory housing the school's 8" telescope.

The library's main desk and reference area offer views over the main reading room, one level below, to the west, and out to a garden edged by a stone wall. This upper level of the library is illuminated by three circular skylights. At the north end of the two story reading room is a one story periodicals area defined by a sinuous wall.

The cabinets and curtain walls in the science labs are finished in mahogany, giving them the feel of an old college lab: glass, metal, dark wood.

Westover's pedagogical philosophy is to allow its students access to the materials of education: lab spaces, the library, and the activities center are kept open for students to use. There are no locked doors. Architecturally, the library and science building reiterates this notion of openness with views between spaces and no barriers between the building's library and science wing.

1 View of campus before construction

2 Aerial view of new campus

3 East elevation



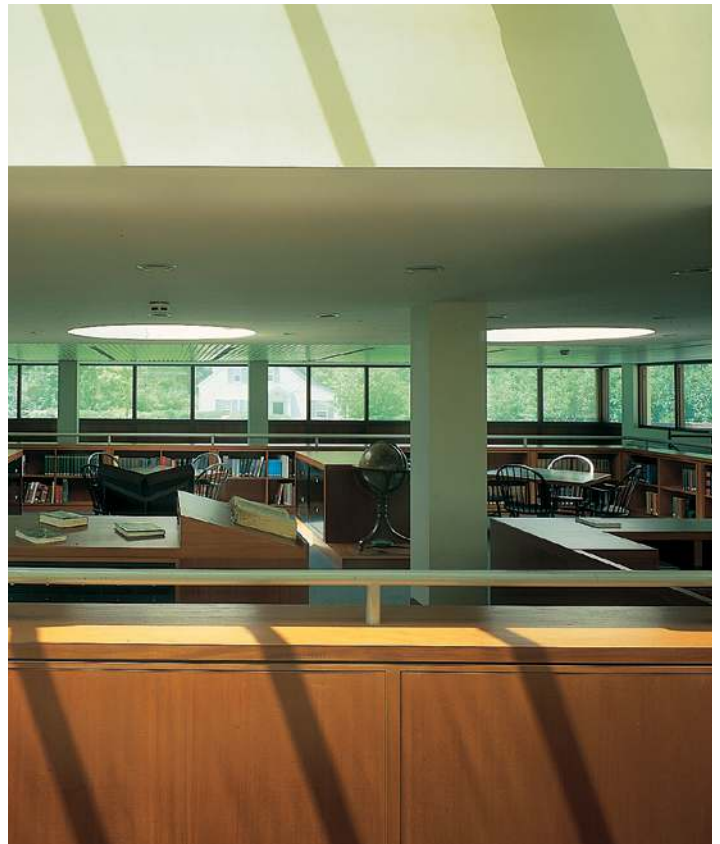
Arcade



Arcade



Lower level gallery

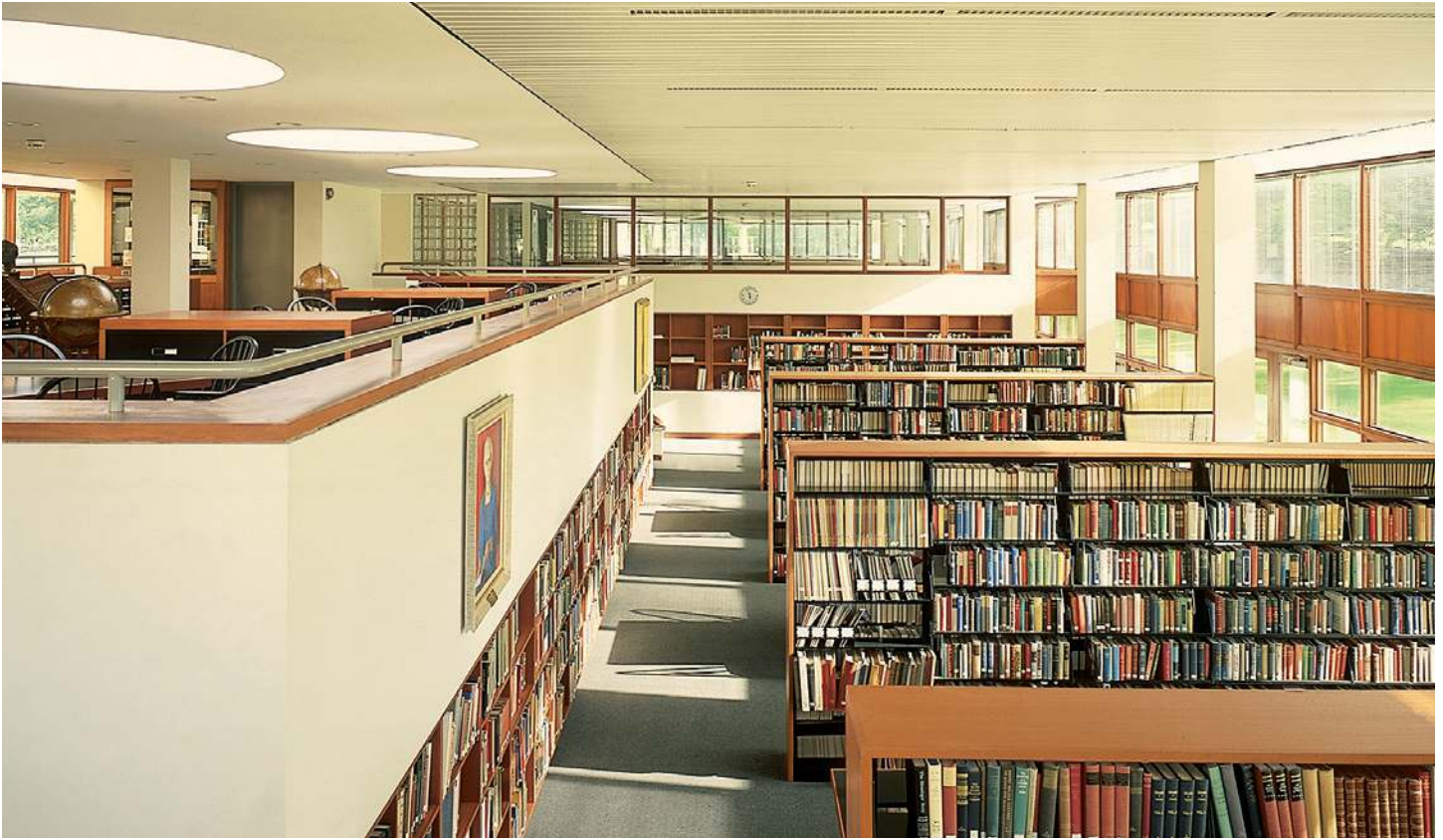


Library reference area



**Westover School**

Library and Science Building



*Library main reading room*



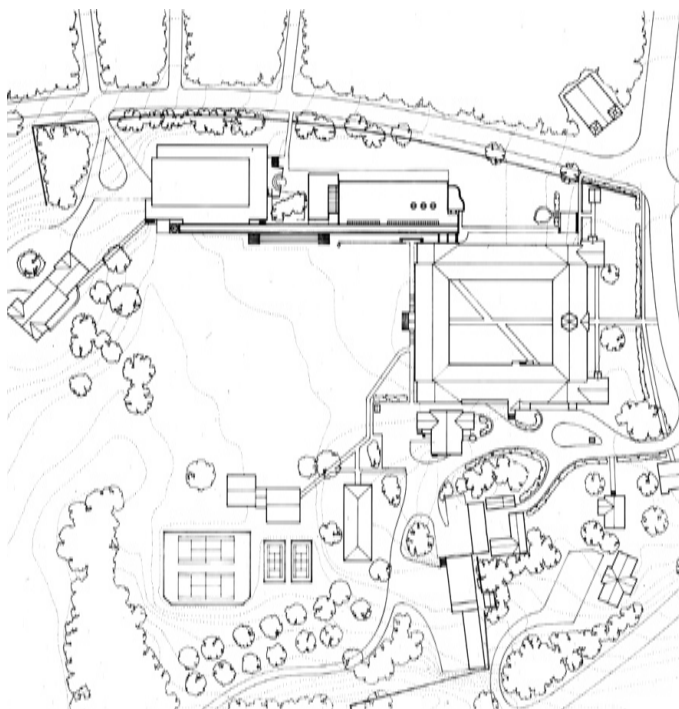
*Periodical reading room*

## Westover School

### Library and Science Building

#### Key Project Information

- 40,000-volume library
  - periodical room
  - new observatory tower
  - new physics, chemistry and biology laboratories
  - greenhouse
  - computer science center
  - two-story sky-lit gallery
  - faculty and administrative offices
  - seminar room
  - science prep rooms
  - contemporary extension of an historic campus
- 
- completed 1984
  - gsf 20,000



Site plan

*With a master stroke, Gwathmey Siegel solved all the functional problems in a single building and provided Westover with a new chapter in its already rich architectural legacy."*

*Architecture Magazine, May 1988*

*1988 AIA National Honor Award*

*1987 ALA Award of Excellence*

*1987 Distinguished Architecture Award,  
AIA-New York Chapter*

*1986 Distinguished Architecture Award,  
AIA-Connecticut Chapter*

*1984 Design Award, New York State  
Association of Architects*



North façade



West façade