Since the archives of the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (CAMH) were donated to Fondren Library’s Woodson Research Center in September 2017, archives staff have been busy processing the collection to ready it for research. The nearly 300 boxes of records relating to exhibitions included hundreds of audio and visual recordings on their original media. Formats included VHS and Beta videotapes, U-matic videotape, 8mm film, audio cassettes, reel to reel audio and more. Some of these recordings and related print materials were featured at the museum’s recent exhibition, “Stage Environment: You Didn’t Have to Be There” (Sept. 7, 2018–Oct. 21, 2018) celebrating performance art at CAMH.

Performance art at CAMH took many shapes, from CAMH’s sponsoring a Merce Cunningham dance performance at Houston’s Music Hall in 1965 to Bert L. Long Jr.’s ice sculpture, “Roma Contemporanea,” installed and destroyed at CAMH in 1992. Another example is artist Douglas Davis’s historic 1976 broadcast of the first live global satellite performance in Houston, reading seven thoughts in an empty Astrodome to a live international satellite audience.

CAMH “continuously has celebrated works beyond the traditional scope of visual arts—showcasing design, theater, music, dance and literary traditions alongside the plastic arts. Notably, a demonstrable focus on live arts, performance art and artwork with performative elements is embedded in CAMH’s institutional DNA. ‘Stage Environment: You Didn’t Have to Be There’ revisits and reinvigorates CAMH’s longstanding performance focus by showcasing documentation and related ephemera from some of the museum’s most poignant and palpable performative pieces.” (CAMH press release).

Woodson Research Center staff supported this exhibition by preparing the over 900 audio and visual assets for digitization by a trusted lab, describing them at a basic level and providing the digital files to CAMH staff via shared online folders. Video was projected on the museum walls, including Bert Long’s ice sculpture work and the Art Guys’ daylong recorded performance at a convenience store. Original photographs and print materials were lent to the museum and exhibited alongside items from private collections, such as those of Betty Moody, creating a fantastic multimedia glimpse into these experiences.

Amanda Focke
Assistant Head, Woodson Research Center
During the spring 2018 groundbreaking for construction for the Fort Bend Independent School District, 95 bodies were discovered in an area near the Old Imperial Farm Cemetery, in Sugar Land, Texas. Forensics have since revealed that these bodies are those of African-American men (and one woman) of an age consistent with victims of the Texas prison system’s convict leasing system in Sugar Land, circa 1878–1910. Chains and other artifacts associated with this prison labor system were also discovered in the area. This discovery has led to increased research interest in the Reginald Moore Convict Leasing Research Collection, at Fondren Library’s Woodson Research Center.

Journalists, academics, students, local descendants of slaves and other community stakeholders have used the collection to better understand the background of convict leasing in Texas, and especially the efforts by Reginald Moore and others to advocate for public recognition and memorialization of this cruel system. In the early to mid-2010s, Moore corresponded with city officials, archaeologists and historians regarding the need for archaeological research on lands prior to residential development, with concern that the digs were not deep enough to discover any possible prisoner graves. In April, construction for the Fort Bend ISD James Reese Career and Technical Center uncovered the unmarked graves near Chatham Avenue and University Boulevard, close to the existing Old Imperial Farm Cemetery.

A cemetery task force has been formed, including Moore and representatives of the city of Sugar Land, Fort Bend ISD, Sugar Land Heritage Foundation, Texas State Historical Commission, Texas Criminal Justice Coalition, Douglas Blackmon (author of “Slavery by Another Name”), Rice University’s Caleb McDaniel and others. This task force is tackling issues regarding possible DNA analysis of the remains, as well as advising on appropriate interment, memorializing and the possible creation of a museum. In addition, on Labor Day, Sept. 3, 2018, Moore partnered with the city of Sugar Land to co-host a symposium formally bringing together many of the community stakeholders, with a variety of plenary speakers and break-out discussion sessions.

Moore’s research collection grows as it documents his ongoing advocacy. His work shows the impact a community activist can have, in raising awareness of difficult issues, being ready to effectively partner with stakeholders and participating in interviews with journalists. The media coverage of the developments regarding these prisoners’ graves has inspired others to study these circumstances and apply the lessons to their own local issues, such as the Slocum Massacre in East Texas.

A list of media coverage of these 2018 events is available online at https://bit.ly/2AdRs1H.

Amanda Focke
Assistant Head, Woodson Research Center
Creating library tutorials that reach the current pedagogical needs of undergraduates has been a focus of Fondren Library intern Kelsey Dunckel in her work with information literacy librarian Joe Goetz in Fall 2018.

Dunckel will complete her master’s degree in library science from Kent State University in December 2018. She currently also works as a paraprofessional aid for Conroe Independent School District, where she assists in developing information literacy guides for K–12 students, and works every day to find appropriate accommodations for each child. She works with children with learning disabilities, including autism, hearing, and other special needs. She has a passion for helping people grow and understand information. Since 2015, she also has volunteered as a docent at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, where she loves the atmosphere of learning, outreach and the many collaborations with local schools.

Fondren’s collections have inspired Dunckel, who marveled at seeing a first edition of Charles Dicken’s “Bleak House.” Dara Flinn, archivist/special collections librarian, shared, “There is something magical about touching a piece of our shared history — a form of time travel which I find really moving. It’s a delight to share the treasures of the archives and special collections with students like Kelsey, who have the same reaction.” Dunckel elaborated, “There is a sense of humility in handling something so profoundly influential, something that has been around longer than yourself and touched the lives of thousands before you.”

Her hobbies include travel, creative writing and photography. She maintains a photography collection on Instagram as krd.pixels with images of travel to Italy and Canada, as well as freelance work.

The Fondren Library internship/practicum program is coordinated by Melinda Reagor Flannery, assistant university librarian for technical services. Details are available at http://library.rice.edu/~fondren/content/internships.

Debra Kolab
Head of User Experience
Shepherd School Recording Digitization Expands

As part of an ongoing effort to preserve historic Rice audio recordings, Fondren Library is working with renowned audio and video preservation vendor George Blood LP to digitize hundreds of vintage Shepherd School of Music performances.

Approximately 400 newly identified open audio reels, dating between the late 1970s and the late 1980s, will be shipped to George Blood’s Philadelphia facility, where their engineers will transfer them as high-quality digital copies. Once returned, these digital copies will be added to the Rice Digital Scholarship Archive’s ever-growing, publicly accessible collection of Shepherd School performances.

Founded by its namesake as Safe Sound Archive in 1992, George Blood LP reformats thousands of audiovisual materials a month, and has worked with clients such as the Library of Congress American Folklife Center, the New York Public Library and Columbia University. Most recently, Blood partnered with the Internet Archive and the Archive of Contemporary Music to digitize and make publicly available a collection of approximately 200,000 early 20th-century shellac records, known as The Great 78 Project (http://great78.archive.org/).

Funding for this massive digitization effort was provided by the Rice Historical Society, along with the Friends of Fondren Library, which held a “paddles-up” auction event at their 2018 Gala honoring Molly and Jim Crownover ’65 and recognizing the Woodson Research Center’s 50th anniversary. Together, the organizations donated $37,000 to cover the costs associated with the digitization of Shepherd School audio content.

While there is some agreement in the audio community that the age of an open reel tape is not directly related to its stability as an audio medium, reel audio is highly susceptible to damage from fluctuating temperatures and humidity, as well as mold and fungi. Moreover, a change in manufacturing techniques during the late 1970s resulted in some brands of tape that would eventually stick to the machine or fall apart when played, known as sticky shed syndrome. Vendors like Blood are equipped to assess tapes for such audio emergencies and remedy them long enough for a digital copy to be produced.

This digitization project is actually one of several projects to reformat and preserve audio of Shepherd performances. In 2005, hundreds of audio reels — comprising approximately 340 Shepherd concerts and recitals, originally delivered to Fondren for in-library student use — were digitized by audio vendor BMS/Chase (now known as VeVa Sound). These digitized recordings were later added to the Rice Digital Scholarship Archive at https://scholarship.rice.edu/handle/1911/71868.

Eventually, the Shepherd School discontinued sending reel copies of performances, instead delivering cassette tapes, and, later, burned compact discs. Both of these formats were convenient for access, but have proven to be unreliable in the long-term; the Museum of Obsolete Media rates recordable CDs and tapes as moderate and high risk media formats, respectively, noting that many of them may be reaching the end of their expected life spans.

To preserve this content, Fondren’s digital scholarship services, access services and technical services departments and Woodson Research Center collaborated in 2016 to a plan to digitize Shepherd cassette tapes and, later, CDs. As of October 2018, more than 400 Shepherd performances extracted from tapes and CDs have been made available through the Rice Digital Scholarship Archive at https://scholarship.rice.edu/handle/1911/77130.

Scott Carlson
Metadata Coordinator
Code Accompanying Research Articles Now Freely Available in IEEE Xplore

Earlier this year, IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) partnered with Code Ocean, a cloud-based computational reproducibility platform, to start linking research articles with their associated executable code in IEEE Xplore and enabling readers to browse, run and experiment with it.

Any article published in an IEEE Xplore journal or conference proceeding between 2013 and 2018 can now be linked with its accompanying code. After authors submit code for their published papers, IEEE displays it within a Code Ocean widget embedded on the article page, without the need for installing any supplemental software.

A number of well-known programming languages are supported by Code Ocean out of the box, including C/C++, Python, R, Fortran, Julia, MATLAB and Stata. Other, nonproprietary software packages can also be installed via Code Ocean.

The service is provided to IEEE authors free of charge. While users will need to be IEEE members or have subscriptions through their local libraries, such as Fondren, to read the text of an article, Code Ocean's embedded widgets are accessible by anyone, regardless of IEEE membership or subscription status.

To try out this new feature, log into Fondren’s website at library.rice.edu, click the Databases tab on the front page and search for IEEE Xplore. Once in Xplore, users can filter their article searches for accompanying code under the “Supplemental Items” facet.

Scott Carlson
Metadata Coordinator

New Library Catalog and Discovery System Arrives August 2019

Fondren Library is in the early stages of implementing a new library system, including a library discovery platform, Primo, which will replace our 23-year-old library catalog. Using enhanced indexing terms, Primo will allow for greater discoverability of resources through a single interface available on the library’s website. With Primo, users will be able to discover resources that have been purchased by the library, relevant free resources identified by library staff and resources that may be requested through interlibrary loan. Users will retain the ability to search for known items in the library by using Primo’s “Browse” feature and will also be able to limit searches with field filters, including material type, language or new books. Additionally, researchers will still be able to individually search and access their favorite databases and journals.

Web-scale discovery systems like Primo have become increasingly common in academic libraries. Fondren Library staff have been investigating and evaluating these products for several years and recommended Primo in spring 2018. In addition to the discovery platform, the library will also implement a new back-end system, Alma, which will permit increased interoperability among universitywide systems and more efficient management of print and digital collections. Library staff are currently engaged in user testing for Primo, gathering feedback to best tailor the new system to the needs of our users.

Look for more information about Primo — debuting Aug. 1, 2019 — in the coming months.

David M. Bynog
Assistant Head of Acquisitions
Co-Chair, Alma/Primo Implementation Team
Faculty Direct Expands Delivery of Materials to Faculty and Senior Administrators

In spring 2018, Fondren’s access services department and its user experience office partnered to consider rebranding and revamping the Fondren Express service, which was an in-house delivery system of Fondren materials to campus departments. Over the summer, a cross-section of Rice faculty was surveyed on current satisfaction with interlibrary loan and the ILLiad system which supports it. The result of these studies, with input from humanities librarian Anna Shparberg, culminated in a pilot project in which the religion department will test a new service.

In October, Debra Kolah, head of user experience and I met with religion department faculty to explain and promote the new service, Faculty Direct. Kolah explained that the service is being designed to make the lives of faculty and senior administrators easier. April DeConick, chair of the department, shared, “The department of religion is very enthusiastic about participating in the Faculty Direct pilot. Many of us already have book orders in the queue.”

The new service will deliver Fondren and interlibrary loan materials to the religion department in collaboration with campus delivery services. Fondren or interlibrary loan materials will continue to be requested through the Rice ILLiad system. Requests will continue to be processed as in the past, but now materials will be packed and barcoded for tracking and delivery purposes. Items will then be delivered to the religion department via campus delivery services.

Items from Fondren’s collection will in most cases be delivered on the same day as they are processed, while interlibrary loan items will be delivered postdelivery and processing. LSC items are excluded due to their often fragile nature. Items may be returned in person or via campus mail (MS–240). The service will be free.

Fondren plans to include additional departments in Faculty Direct in spring 2019.

Sue Garrison
Manager of Access Services and
Debra Kolah
Head of User Experience

October Publishing Workshop at Fondren Library

On Oct. 8, 2019, Michael Sharp, editor for Cambridge University Press, visited Fondren Library to hold a workshop in the Kyle Morrow Room on how to get published. Sharp focused on the process of getting a first book or journal article published. The event was well-attended by Rice faculty and students, as well as non-Rice academics. Sharp then met with almost 20 people individually on Oct. 8 and 9 to discuss specific publication projects.

Would you like to see more of these publishing workshops? If so, please let us know by emailing jekress@rice.edu.

Julia Kress
Senior Electronic Resources Assistant
Fondren Fellows Program Secures $2 Million Gift from Maltsberger Trust

Through the Fondren Fellows program, the library serves not only as the source of research materials, but as the subject of student research. Inspired by the Rice's Quality Enhancement Program on “Experiential Inquiry and Research in the Curriculum,” the Fondren Fellows program enables Rice undergraduate and graduate students to develop projects focused on enhancing library collections, services or spaces. Fellows are selected through a competitive process and are paid $15 an hour for their work with a staff mentor. The fellows steering committee is composed of Melinda Reagor Flannery, Amanda Focke and Lisa Spiro. A gift from Trish Brice, as well as funding from Fondren Library, has supported the Fondren Fellows program during its first three years.

Since its founding in 2016, the Fellows program has benefited the library, the university and students. For example, Fellows' projects have helped Fondren develop its data services and provided rich online access to archival collections. Through an online exhibit, "The Life and Legacy of Jesse H. Jones," the Woodson Research Center highlights its collections about the important Houston business leader. "Mapping Civil War Narratives" uses an interactive map to track correspondence and the places mentioned in it. In 2017, conducting a faculty-centered information needs and resources assessment helped save the library $50,758, based on faculty input on journal cancellations gathered by a fellow. In 2016 a graduate student in anthropology Marcel LaFlamme co-published an article on his fellows project with his mentor. Several fellows credit the program with expanding their career possibilities.

Now, thanks to a $2 million gift from the John T. Maltsberger III 2013 Trust, the library will expand the Fondren Fellows program. Faculty, staff and community partners will be able to propose projects. For instance, a fellow could work on a digital history project in collaboration with a Rice historian or assist a small community archive in describing and making accessible its collections. In addition, the Fellows Program will offer modest project-related funding. The expanded program will allow for teams of fellows, mentored by a graduate student, to undertake more ambitious projects. Being a Fondren Fellow can now offer workshop teaching experience on topics such as data analysis.

According to University Librarian Sara Lowman, "The library is very grateful to Dr. Maltsberger for making it possible for us to expand this important program. We are very much looking forward to expanding its scope and the benefits that the research projects will provide in the future."

Rice University is honored and grateful that John T. "Terry" Maltsberger, M.D., chose to establish a legacy here. Dr. Maltsberger was born and raised in Cotulla, Texas. Following two years at Rice University, he completed his undergraduate education in 1955 at Princeton University and then earned his medical degree from Harvard Medical School. After internships and residencies in Pennsylvania and at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) in Boston, he became a specialist in the field of psychiatry. In addition to his medical practice at MGH and at McLean Hospital in Belmont, Dr. Maltsberger was a clinical professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and was a visiting professor in the same field at Mayo Medical School in Rochester, Minnesota. He also consulted for a number of years with the mental health department at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge. In addition to this generous gift to Fondren Library, Dr. Maltsberger had previously funded an endowed professorship, the Alan Dugald McKillop Professorship in English.

If you would like to explore making a legacy gift to benefit Fondren Library, please contact Mary Lowery, executive director, Friends of Fondren Library, at mary.lowery@rice.edu or (713) 348-5157.

Lisa Spiro  
Executive Director, Digital Scholarship Services
Keck Retires From Helming Fondren’s Research Services

In July 2018, Kerry Keck retired from her position as assistant university librarian for research services. She had a long, distinguished career at Rice, starting in 1985 as a government information and special resources librarian. Over the years, Keck worked in collection development and reference, taught patent and trademark classes, and used her budgetary skills and expertise to manage the library's materials budget.

Among Keck’s innovative contributions was the more equitable distribution of funds for books and serials based on curriculum development and collection assessments, rather than on the basis of historical precedent. She led the library’s collection development council, working across the Rice community to identify gaps in the collection and then to collect materials of interest to fill the gaps. During her tenure, the library’s collections moved from a primarily print-based focus to one more digitally based. She was a leader in working to make the collection more accessible and responsive to changes in research and curricular interests.

Keck was also responsible for overseeing the planning and construction of the Library Service Center. In this role, she worked closely with the faculty to identify materials that could be stored offsite with low impact on their research and teaching. The Library Service Center serves as a model for other universities’ storage facilities, primarily due to Keck’s leadership.

Keck was active professionally, serving on several national boards and committees. Her contributions on the Western Regional Storage Trust Collections Council led to important improvements in the management of shared print repositories. Keck was also active on the CLOCKSS Board, working to preserve scholarly publications in a dark archive. For many years, she was also an active participant in the American Library Association, particularly in efforts by government publications round tables to preserve and provide access to digital versions of government published materials. In 2003, in recognition of her many contributions, Keck was the second recipient of the library’s Shapiro Staff Innovation Award.

To her colleagues and co-workers, Keck was a thoughtful leader who always had time to give sage advice, organize fun ways to support students — such as the library’s pet therapy sessions, bring an interesting dish to library potlucks, share stories about gardening or give advice about how to train a new cat. We will miss her and wish her the best in her retirement.

Sara Lowman
Vice-Provost and University Librarian

Kelley Center Head Departs

For Kathy Hart (formerly Weimer), maps have long been a passion, one that energized her work as the head of the Kelley Center for Government Information, Data and Geospatial Services. Her successful application for the position of supervisor of the reference team and reading room in the geography and map division of the Library of Congress was a natural next step for her. Hart left Rice in September of 2018 after working at Fondren since January 2015. She was sent off with a farewell party thrown in late August by Kelley Center staff.

Hart brought a distinguished résumé to Fondren. She co-founded and co-chaired the GeoHumanities Special Interest Group of the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations (ADHO). She also served as co-editor of the Journal of Map & Geography Libraries and past chair of the American Library Association’s Map and Geospatial Information Round Table (MAGIRT). In recognition of her “outstanding achievement and major contributions to map and geospatial librarianship and to the Round Table,” she received the MAGIRT Honors Award 2016. At Fondren, she played an important role in committees such as the survey data implementation group and the communications task force, as well as managing the Kelley Center.

Lisa Spiro
Executive Director, Digital Scholarship Services
PEOPLE

Numbers Are Her Thing: Fondren Welcomes New Data and Government Information Librarian

Turning numbers into pictures is Miaomiao Rimmer’s specialty. Rimmer started at Fondren Library at the beginning of the summer as its data and government information librarian. She comes to Rice from the University of Oklahoma, where she worked in The Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange. Some may think that statistical analysis is boring, but Rimmer can make good statistics exciting when she presents them visually in a chart or graph.

Rimmer grew up in Dalian, China, which is the second-largest city in the Liaoning Province, lying at the southern end of Liaodong Peninsula across the Yellow Sea from Korea. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in English from the Dalian University of Foreign Languages. She moved to the United States 10 years ago to attend the University of Oklahoma to pursue two degrees, a Master of Arts in sociology and a master's degree in regional and city planning.

This fall, as part of Fondren Library’s Data and Donuts Workshop Series, Rimmer has been teaching the basics of writing Python scripts in Python for Beginners and how to analyze highly complex data with simple instructions in Introduction to IBM SPSS Statistics. Rimmer wants to provide students with hands-on training, organizing, documenting, analyzing and visualizing data. She says, “I am so excited to be at Rice and to share my knowledge about software that makes people’s lives easier.”

She misses her mother and father, but is expecting her father to visit Houston in December. Rimmer’s 5-year-old son just started kindergarten in HISD. He loves running around the Houston Zoo, visiting the Children’s Museum and going to Chinatown. Perhaps Rimmer can count the number of times they visit her son’s favorite places, then turn the results into a visual chart to show what a new Houston resident loves best about our city.

Julia Kress
Senior Electronic Resources Assistant

New Electronic Resources Assistant

Julia Kress joined the Fondren Library staff in June 2018. Her role as senior electronic resources assistant involves a broad range of support activities that add and maintain the electronic resources needed by Fondren library users, among them trials, payment and troubleshooting.

Kress says, “I love how I can fix things and make them work. I really like helping people and my work in electronic resources satisfies that urge for me. I also like to learn as much as I can about technology. I find it fascinating.”

Before coming to Fondren, Kress worked at the University of Houston in the Architecture and Art Library. She also worked for many years as a lawyer, practicing environmental law, business litigation and corporate work.

She holds a master’s in fine arts in creative writing from Antioch University, Los Angeles, and enjoys writing, travel and photography. Italy, especially ancient Rome, is a particular passion. About Fondren, Kress says, “I love the congeniality and how welcome I feel. I also happen to love owls.”

Melinda Reagor Flannery
Assistant University Librarian for Technical Services

Staff Award

Amanda Focke was the 2018 recipient of the Southwest Archivists Association (SSA) Distinguished Service Award. Focke has served SSA as co-chair of the local arrangements committee, as a member of the executive board and as president in 2012–2013, as well as serving with distinction in other professional groups and projects. She is a certified archivist and has earned digital archives specialist status.
Wheatfield Plays to Rice Crowd Again

After last year’s stellar homecoming concert hosted by the Woodson Research Center’s Houston Folk Music Archive and the Friends of Fondren Library, this year the party came into the library. On Nov. 2, the Americana band Wheatfield entertained a crowd filled with Friends of Fondren Library patrons, alumni, faculty, staff and students.

When it came to planning this year’s homecoming concert, Wheatfield was the obvious choice. They were the first donors to the archive and were a staple of the Texas university music scene in the 1970s. Forming in 1973, Connie Mims, Craig Calvert and Ezra Idlet started out as a folk country rock trio. Later adding Bob Russell on stand-up bass and Damian Hevia, they began touring extensively in Texas and beyond. In 1976, they appeared on the first season of “Austin City Limits” and scored the first rock ballet, titled “Caliban,” for the Houston Ballet. With the new bassist, Keith Grimwood, the band continued to do well in the region. By 1979, the band decided to break up, but would occasionally reunite for special shows. In 2005, the band reformed with Mims, Calvert, Idlet and Grimwood.

As guests came in, they saw an exhibit created from the Houston Folk Music Archive, featuring the band’s history and the ways in which the band interacted with the Rice community. When the show got started, Sara Lowman, vice-provost and university librarian welcomed everyone to the event. Andrew Klein of Rice’s Program for Writing and Communication spoke about the impact of Wheatfield on Rice and the broader Houston community and its place within the 1970s music scene. The band played and the library, usually a quiet place of study, became a hub of entertainment.

All the while, audience members enjoyed red beans and rice, macaroni and cheese and cornbread served by This Is It Soul Food. The food highlighted the link between Wheatfield and the historic music venue Liberty Hall, famous for its red beans and rice. Friends of Fondren Library event co-chairs Shelley Gottschalk and Gretchen Stephens distributed branded pint glasses to all guests to commemorate the event, a night demonstrating how music can bring a community together through its shared history.

Norie Guthrie
Archivist/Special Collections Librarian
Fondren Fostering “Roots” at Rice with Storybox events

On Sept. 26, Fondren Library hosted its first Storybox event. The event brought graduate students from various departments together to share stories as well as enjoy refreshments.

Storybox is a part of Historypin’s “One Story Closer” campaign, designed to foster community understanding, connectivity and empathy. These goals are achieved by participants’ sharing personal life stories with each other. The Storybox experience is a series of events guided by diverse materials in Historypin’s toolkit such as topic prompts and hourglasses. The events have found success in the United Kingdom, Colombia and the United States.

When Lisa Spiro, executive director of digital scholarship services, learned about Storybox, she believed Fondren Library would be a suitable sponsor for such an event. “There is a desire for the library to be seen as a point of connection for the entire campus,” Spiro said. “It’s a place that isn’t assigned to any specific discipline, and it’s where everyone comes together.”

Spiro, along with Debra Kolah, head of user experience; Sandra Parsons, assistant teaching professor, Department of Psychological Sciences; Amanda Thomas, user experience/public services librarian; and myself, Fondren’s practicum intern, collaborated to organize and conduct these events.

The current theme is Roots: a pride of place or feeling of connectedness to a person, place or thing. Participants can discuss family, origins, migration and community. The goal is to engage people within a community to grow “one story closer” through their discussion.

“The theme of roots really resonates with me because I grew up living in six different countries so I never felt like I had any roots,” Sana Mateen, a graduate student in the environmental engineering program, said. “But I also wanted to come out and make some friends. I am shocked that in such a short amount of time we all managed to open up, and I got to learn so much about strangers.”

Fondren has continued to host these events throughout the 2018 fall semester, focusing on first-year and first-generation students and helping them forge new connections and roots at Rice.

“I love the Storybox concept because I think it’s crucial for our students to take time to forge meaningful connections with one another,” said Parsons. “When students have time to sit with one another and reflect on their lives and share their experiences, we increase the chances that they will find similarities across cultures and disciplines, and that is powerful and potentially world-changing.”

Kelsey Dunckel
Student, Kent State School of Information
Fondren Library intern Fall 2018
A New Home for Leisure Reading

The leisure reading collection at Fondren Library has a new location, a new look and new content and users are responding.

Expanded, newly installed shelving now gives both the leisure reading and the Friends of Fondren fiction collections a chance to showcase the library’s light, entertaining and newly-published books and audiobooks. With a prominent first-floor location facing the windows of the South Reading Room and eye-catching faced-out book covers, these genre novels, graphic novels, fiction and nonfiction books and audiobooks are getting lots of attention from our hard-working users.

Not only the location but also the collection itself has gotten an upgrade. Now, most books reviewed by the New York Times Book Review, automatically ordered by the library and formerly grouped with general new books, make their Fondren debut in the leisure reading collection. Thanks to this shift, many new books of interest and significance are getting more exposure and adding both quality and variety to the collection. In addition, we have switched from a convenient but limited-selection rental program for leisure books and audiobooks, to a more labor-intensive but flexible process using our regular purchasing sources. This last change in particular has allowed us to add books representing diverse interests and tastes and to be more responsive to our broad user population.

Numerous library staff in multiple departments have collaborated to develop and maintain this new approach to the collection, following an initiative led by Sandi Edwards, interim assistant university librarian for research services, and myself, in my capacity as selector for English literature. In addition to librarians, students and other Rice users are contributing their ideas using the leisure book suggestion form at https://libguides.rice.edu/leisure/suggestions.

Checkouts for leisure reading have jumped more than tenfold since we started making these changes, and we expect those numbers to keep climbing in the collections’ new home. Please come browse the leisure reading and Friends of Fondren fiction collections the next time you visit the library, and remember that you can preview current holdings or link to the suggestion form at our leisure reading research guide: https://libguides.rice.edu/leisure.

Joe Goetz
Information Literacy Librarian
Beginning in 1987 and continuing through 2017, Dick ’52 and Mary Ellen Wilson ’54 have donated a portion of their extensive collection of rare and valuable maps to the Woodson Research Center. This collection now forms the Wilson Collection of Historical Cartography and Geography.

The art of mapmaking has developed from etchings on stone to multicolored maps showing precise details. Italy dominated the cartography industry during the 15th and 16th centuries when nautical charts were drawn by sailors exploring new trade routes. Italian cartographers were supplanted by the Dutch and Belgians who produced maps in several languages and editions. During this time, binding of various maps together into one volume became popular. The French became the premier cartographers in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, while the British dominated the map making industry in the late 1700s.

The collection of atlases donated by the Wilsons highlights the French and British dominance during the period of the early 1700s through the early- to mid-1800s. The earliest atlas is one produced in England by Herman Moll in 1701. An early complete first edition, it joins maps of each country with detailed histories to enrich understanding of the countries and their maps. “Atlas Universel” produced in 1757 in Paris has minute detailing of the countryside and hand-colored lines delineating provinces and countries. “Atlas de Toutes les Partes Connues du Globe Terrestre” from the late 1700s provides information on commerce for all French interests. An 1814 work of several cartographers, “A New and Elegant Imperial Sheet Atlas” offers hand-colored sites of war.

The complexity of mapmaking in the 19th century is shown in “A New General Atlas of Modern Geography.” Astronomical facts and relative heights of mountains and rivers are followed by hemisphere maps, soil types in Britain and steam packet routes in the Mediterranean Sea.

Previously added to the collection were issues of Map Collectors Circle, the Map Collector and Mercator’s World, with publication dates ranging from 1977 to the early 2000s. Articles on various aspects of historical cartography, issues dedicated to certain parts of the world, early mapping of European-occupied countries, city plans, marine surveys, and a bibliography of printed charts and sailing directions are some of the subjects that make these serial publications valuable for research.

Lee Pecht
Director, Woodson Research Center

Note: This article appeared in slightly different form in the spring/summer 2018 issue of The Cornerstone: Newsletter of the Rice Historical Society.
The Friends of Fondren Library annual meeting and dinner offers members and friends an opportunity to reflect on the organization's history and discuss upcoming events and activities. The 2018 annual meeting, chaired by Liz Crowell '76 and Bobby Muraro '00, was held Sept. 17 at Cohen House, Rice University’s faculty club.

Chief Judge Lee H. Rosenthal, the evening’s featured speaker, has deep connections to Fondren Library. Her mother, Ferne Hyman, was assistant university librarian at Fondren Library until her retirement in 1999. Her father, Harold M. Hyman, is the William P. Hobby Professor Emeritus of History at Rice. Her husband, Gary Rosenthal, served on Rice's President's Advisory Board.

Rosenthal was appointed a U.S. District Court Judge for the Southern District of Texas, Houston Division, in 1992 and became chief judge in 2016. She joined the Rice University Board of Trustees in 2008 and now is a Rice University Trustee Emeritus.

After dinner, Rosenthal entertained the audience with stories of her parents’ love affair with each other and with Rice where, for 35 years, their personal and professional lives intertwined. Ferne and Harold Hyman came to and from campus together each day, her to the library, him to his office, and they met for lunch at Cohen House. Ferne loved working in the library, and she was truly interested in people who came to Fondren and the research that brought them there. Harold’s research often brought him to Fondren Library, too, and made it a place where their university roles overlapped. Rosenthal’s parents taught her that one of the signatures of a fulfilling professional life is that the personal and professional become seamless as topics of interest overlap and connect the two. Her parents found that overlap at Rice.

Rosenthal noted that Rice has been the incubator of love and work for many more couples. She made the case that Rice is a wonderful place for couples to work because universities nourish the mind and the intellect of those who spend their days there. Rice offers more flexibility and autonomy than other workplaces, enhancing this overlap between the personal and the professional.

Fondren Library symbolizes this best. Serving as the heartbeat of the campus, it provides a space for people to take ideas apart and put them back together in ways that satisfy their lives and their careers, carrying those ideas across the professional and personal divide. The importance of libraries goes beyond the physical bricks and mortar; the people who make up Fondren Library help connect people to the information and ideas that transform scholarship, lives and love at Rice.

We invite you to visit soon to see what sparks your curiosity and reignites your love of libraries.

Mary Lowery
Executive Director, Friends of Fondren Library

Books That Shaped My World

When Rice University established the Baker Institute for Public Policy in 1993, Ambassador Edward Djerejian was selected as its founding director. Djerejian’s foreign service career spanned eight U.S. administrations, from John F. Kennedy to William J. Clinton. Prior to his nomination as U.S. ambassador to Israel, he was assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs in both the George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton administrations, and he was previously U.S. ambassador to the Syrian Arab Republic. He is the author of “Danger and Opportunity: An American Ambassador’s Journey Through the Middle East.”

As the 25th anniversary of the Baker Institute approached, co-chairs Jeff Ross and Stephen Wallace, invited Djerejian to offer the Friends of Fondren Library’s fall Books That Shaped My World lecture. At the Oct. 24 lecture, Djerejian identified two books and one author that shaped his life and career: “The Federalist Papers” by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay; “A Peace to End All Peace: The Emergence of the Contemporary Middle East” by David Fromkin; and philosopher Albert Camus.

Djerejian first read “The Federalist Papers” in political theory classes at Georgetown University. He found this core document for the U.S. Constitution
When Rice alumni hear the phrase “Honor Bound,” many flash back to a pledge, carefully inked or hastily scrawled across the cover of a blue examination book indicating they performed honorably on the task using only their own work. However, the phrase can carry many other meanings.

At the fall Meet the Author lecture co-sponsored by the Rice Alumni Association and Friends of Fondren Library, Ryan P. Brown ’93 discussed his book, “Honor Bound: How a Cultural Ideal Has Shaped the American Psyche.” Brown is managing director for measurement at Rice University’s Doerr Institute for New Leaders. The Oct. 9 lecture was co-chaired by Nancy Shelby and Deborah Williams and was held in Fondren Library’s Kyle Morrow Room.

In his research, Brown studies the social psychology concepts of honor and dignity cultures and how societies bestow worth on individuals. He notes that everyone has culture, and that cultures shape us in very specific ways. In honor cultures, one’s value is earned by living up to gender-specific standards for conduct, and is strongly related to one’s reputation. In such cultures, the defense of reputation is a social imperative taking precedence over most other priorities. In dignity cultures, each person is considered to have an unassailable store of fundamental worth that does not need to be earned and cannot be lost. Honor cultures are prevalent in the Middle East, Latin America and many Mediterranean countries. He also traced the path of southern honor culture in America. In several experiments, when men raised in honor cultures perceived a threat to their reputation following an insult, biological and cognitive changes demonstrated that these men reacted more strongly than did men from dignity cultures in the same situation. Outside the lab, this honor-culture response can be seen in attitudes about justified aggression, risk-taking and child rearing, in rates of argument-based homicides and school shootings, and even in laws related to guns and the death penalty. Rates of rape, domestic homicides and dating violence were all higher in honor cultures than in dignity cultures, and the effect was greater in small towns (where reputational concerns are magnified).

He concluded his lecture by reminding the audience that human beings are products of their environments who learn what it takes to be seen as a person of value. Only by taking a careful and honest look at those lessons do individuals have the option to select which parts of their cultural programming to pass along to their children.

Mary Lowery Executive Director, Friends of Fondren Library

to be one of the most successful efforts of humans to get political governance right. This book motivated him throughout his career representing the United States overseas, and he felt so strongly about its worth that as chairman of a public diplomacy task force in 2003 he recommended copies of “The Federalist Papers” be placed in every American embassy and consulate as a reference book.

Fromkin’s book, “A Peace to End All Peace” is required reading in Djerejian’s course about the Middle East. The book was written in 1989, and its treatment of the emergence of the Middle East has not been surpassed. Fromkin describes how the Ottoman empire broke apart after World War I and that, from 1916 to 1922, colonial powers divided up the Middle East according to their interests, creating countries that exist today in ways that broke up cultural ethnicity and societal roots, including Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. The significant, lasting impact of these changes continues today in disputes over boundaries, territories, religion and resources.

Djerejian was also greatly influenced by French philosopher Albert Camus, author of “The Stranger” and “The Myth of Sisyphus.” Camus is sometimes called the philosopher of the absurd from his perspective that while life is absurd, one must make the most of it. Djerejian joked that the myth of a man endlessly rolling a rock up a mountain could describe his roles in negotiating Arab-Israeli peace settlements. He suggested that Camus described today’s political situation in his book “The Century of Fear.” When sharing his plan to write a novel after retirement about the life of a diplomat in the Middle East, he quoted Camus, “Fiction is the lie through which we tell the truth.”

Djerejian’s remarks helped audience members gain a greater understanding of his roles in the U.S. Foreign Service and of the important policy work done at the Baker Institute. The Friends of Fondren Library congratulates the Baker Institute on its silver anniversary.

Mary Lowery Executive Director, Friends of Fondren Library
World War II silk banner featuring veterans’ names from Houston’s Beth Jacob Congregation, with detail of damage. The banner is currently undergoing restoration and will return to Fondren Library, ready for research, in 2019.