Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this spring, Fondren Library, along with the rest of the university, gradually changed the availability of its physical resources while staying as true as possible to its overarching mission.

As news of the pandemic became more urgent in the U.S., the university crisis management team was activated. Rice and other area schools were fortunate to have a week for contingency planning before the university’s scheduled Spring Break actually started March 13. Fondren effectively operated on a Spring Break schedule March 9–15. Beginning March 16, the library moved to more abbreviated summer hours and started restricting entrance to those with Rice IDs, and only through the west entrance. Even after the library closed March 18, library staff filled requests for physical materials by retrieving and mailing them to users.

After the city of Houston implemented a stay-home, work-safe order March 24, all library staff began working from home except for those needed to receive and store the library’s significant volume of mail and expedited shipments through UPS, DHL, FedEx, etc. Where possible, large vendor shipments were already being held.

Throughout this strange time, Fondren has maintained its commitment to the university’s teaching and research missions. Fondren IT staff have ensured that staff have what they need to work from home, including training and troubleshooting. Instructions have been posted for extended due dates and ILL materials. Book drops have been emptied and DMC equipment loans have been extended. Fondren’s vast array of electronic resources is being actively maintained and special vendor deals during the pandemic are being made available as trials. Materials are being ordered, bills are being paid, and physical journals and newspapers are being checked in.

Reference questions and in-depth research questions are being handled electronically through research services as well as Fondren’s GIS/ Data Center, Digital Media Center, Woodson Research Center, and the Kelley Center for Government Information, Data and Geospatial Services. Short courses are being taught online, and user experience research is being conducted. A services updates page and an off-campus (remote) library services page are constantly updated, and individual staff working at home may be reached by email or phone per their Rice directory listings.

The pandemic has also offered some new opportunities for Fondren to support the university. When faculty were first being trained to use Zoom, library staff who were familiar volunteered to help with technical issues. Some staff are beginning to transcribe digitized manuscripts in the Rice Digital Scholarship Archives, so that the resulting texts can be searched by all, including those with visual impairments.

Melinda Flannery
Assistant University Librarian for Technical Services
Fondren Fellows Digital Humanities Showcase

A campus-wide audience came to the Kyle Morrow Room Feb. 27 to hear about four fascinating digital humanities projects. Each semester, professors, librarians and other Rice staff typically pitch Fondren Fellows project ideas, which incorporate resources and/or services from the library. Funded by the Maltsberger Trust endowment, graduate and/or undergraduate students work with their project mentors to make the projects become realities.

The audience listened first to Miles Olson ’21 with his mentor Daniel Dominguez de Silva discuss an interactive database documenting nearly 14,000 enslaved Africans registered in Mozambique during the second half of the nineteenth century. The project, named “Between Oceans and Continents,” provides a compelling way to sort through the data and see visualizations including a map, point graph, donut graph and histogram.

Olson was followed by graduate student Branden Montgomery and his mentor Brian Riedel, who are creating a visual public history portal exploring the history of “the Reservation,” an area of historic Freedmen’s Town that the city of Houston designated as a red-light district in 1908. Montgomery used the city directory and land transfer records in newspapers as well as title records to gather more information about this area and the owners behind it.

Another mapping project was presented by graduate student Rachael Pasierowska with assistance by Woodson fellow Ryan Chow. Their work maps “The Red Book of Houston,” which served as an early 20th century social, educational, religious and business directory of middle-class black life in Houston. While they are still at the stage of refining their data, they shared what resources they are using and what they have learned.

In a more Rice-focused vein, Anna Ta ’20 went through her online exhibit documenting the controversy surrounding Abbie Hoffman’s planned visit to Rice in 1970. She told a riveting story of the on-again/off-again invitation that resulted in the burning of a dean’s office in the Rice Memorial Center cloisters, the occupation of Allen Center and a skirmish between non-Rice protesters and Rice students.

Norie Guthrie  
Archivist and Special Collections Librarian
Captions (clockwise from top L):
Rachael Pasierowska, Miles Olson, Anna Ta, Branden Montgomery and Ryan Chow (L to R) answer questions from the audience.
Ryan Chow and Norie Guthrie talk after the presentation.
Miles Olson shows off the “Between Oceans and Continents” project.
Anna Ta listens to questions from Brian Riedel.
Fondren is excited to participate in a campuswide effort led by the Center for Civic Leadership to get everyone registered to vote. The goals are to register eligible students to vote; educate all students about election and voting processes, races, candidates and issues; and to get registered student voters to the polls in November and beyond.

During September, the Kelley Center for Government Information, Data and Geospatial Services plans to host informative exhibits and provide information to educate students, including distributing copies of the Houston Voters Guide, a nonpartisan source of election information published by the League of Women Voters of Houston. Updated information will be available during the fall semester for campus and library events related to the November 2020 election. Also, look for events and information about Constitution Day, Thursday, Sept. 17.

Fondren currently has eight staff members who are certified Harris County deputy voter registrars. Anna Xiong, government information coordinator, plans to make voter registration available at Fondren from early September through Oct. 5, the deadline to register to vote in the Nov. 3 election. During this time, registrars will be scheduled in rotating shifts to ensure that registering to vote is convenient for students. Knowing your Texas driver’s license, state identification number or your Social Security number is helpful when registering to vote. More information can be found at https://www.votetexas.gov/register-to-vote/index.html.

Amanda Thomas, user experience/public services librarian, admits to staying until midnight to register voters the night before the last deadline. Fondren staff hope their dedication to registering voters will inspire students and other Rice community members to register before the October deadline this fall.

Julia Kress
Senior Electronic Resources Assistant
This year, we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution affirming universal women's suffrage. The first organized convention on women's rights took place in 1848 in Seneca Falls, N.Y. For the next 50 years, the National Woman's Party, the National American Woman Suffrage Association and women's clubs across the nation campaigned for the vote. In 1919, the legislature passed the amendment, sending it to the states to ratify; Texas was the first southern state to do so. As of August 1920, the 19th Amendment became law.

The Woodson Research Center contains a number of collections built by women who used their right to vote as leaders in Houston and the broader national community. They actively supported women's rights, civil rights for people of color, rights for the LGBTQ community, and improved education and health care for Americans. Several of these collections have provided items that are being shared in an exhibit in the large display cases at the east entrance of Fondren Library, honoring the service of these women.

Elizabeth Kalb, a 1916 Rice Institute graduate, became an active worker for the National Woman's Party and was arrested and jailed in watchfire demonstrations in 1919. Oveta Culp Hobby became the first director of the Women's Army Corps during WW II and the first secretary of health, education and welfare. Billie Carr, the godmother of the progressive wing of the Democratic Party, advocated for civil rights, women's rights and rights for the LGBTQ community. Glenda Joe, a Chinese-Irish-Texas business owner, has been a prominent activist for the Asian community in Houston, serving as a liaison to the police and investigating hate crimes against Asian Americans. Judge Clarease Yates became the first African American appointed to the U.S. immigration court and a professor in the Thurgood Marshall School of Law. Sara Hickman, a singer-songwriter and activist, has devoted her time to fighting the death penalty, supporting women's reproductive rights and combating homelessness. More information and pictures of the exhibit are available online at woodsononline.wordpress.com/.

Dara Flinn
Archivist and Special Collections Librarian

Captions (top to bottom):

Oveta Culp Hobby, Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare

Judge Clarease Yates, U.S. Immigration Court

L to R: Glenda Joe, Asian American activist; Ann Richards and unnamed woman
Fondren Library and the Center for Research Computing (CRC) co-sponsored the second Software Carpentry workshop at Rice University Feb. 13 and 14, 2020. Programming skills are becoming very important in many fields, and Software Carpentry is a great way to get started at a comfortable pace in a low-stakes environment.

Software Carpentry is a volunteer nonprofit project dedicated to teaching basic computing skills to researchers. Rice joined the program as a member in 2019 and is committed to sponsoring three workshops in 2020.

The hands-on workshop covered basic concepts and tools, including program design, version control, data management, and task automation with the Unix Shell and Python. Participants were encouraged to help one another and to apply what they learned to their own research problems.

Hamid Mokhtarzadeh and Cian Wilson served as expert guest instructors. Mokhtarzadeh has a background in estimating and integrating navigation systems. He received his Ph.D. in aerospace engineering in 2014 from the University of Minnesota for research on estimators and sensor fusion systems for cooperative navigation applications. Wilson is a computational scientist in the Department of Terrestrial Magnetism, Carnegie Institution for Science. He received his doctorate in computational physics from the Department of Earth Science and Engineering, Imperial College, London. Staff members from Fondren Library and the CRC served as assistants for the workshop.

Workshop participants came from a variety of disciplines such as chemical engineering, mechanical engineering, physics and astronomy, statistics and business. Through the workshop, they learned how to do version control, collaborate and manage their coding projects through Git, and build reproducible data analysis pipelines with Shell and Python. Participants took pre/postworkshop surveys and left their comments with sticky notes. Comments were positive, such as “Very helpful. Good explanation of new material” and “Easy to understand and follow.”

Offering software carpentry workshops is an important way for Fondren to expand support for open science and research data services at Rice. A team of data experts in the library and CRC is now offering research support through training and consultations, and Software Carpentry is key to that mission. Ultimately Rice hopes to have up to six certified Software Carpentry instructors who can conduct workshops for the campus community.

In May, an online offering on R programming Language took its inspiration from Software Carpentry and adapted its curriculum. For more information, please go to https://www.eventbrite.com/e/online-workshop-on-programming-with-r-rice-university-tickets-102722034370.

Miaomiao Rimmer
Data Librarian
In 2019, we implemented a new library discovery system, OneSearch — a one-stop shop for most books, articles, theses, dissertations, images, videos and more — which includes many new and improved features to make research life easier.

A - Saving Items in OneSearch

When users are logged in, OneSearch includes the ability to save individual items and organize these saved items with labels.

B - Saving a Query in OneSearch

Users can save searches/queries and sign up for notifications when new items that are added to the collection match the saved query. This last feature is especially helpful for those conducting ongoing research on a specific topic.

C - Check Pending Requests in OneSearch

Users are also able to see the status of pending requests (such as holds or recalls) and items they have borrowed from the library and due dates. Just click on your name in the upper right-hand corner after you have logged in to get a full update on account status and which library items are on their way.

D - New Feature: LibKey Discovery

Fondren Library recently added a new feature to OneSearch that will make it easier for users to get to full-text journal articles. We are utilizing the LibKey Discovery API from Third Iron, which is the same company that makes BrowZine. Now when users search for articles in OneSearch, they may see a Download PDF link in the search results and when clicked, users will be taken directly to the PDF article. If users are off campus, they will be prompted to sign in with their Rice NetID and password first. Users may also see a View Issue Contents link, which will take them to the table of contents for the journal issue in BrowZine. LibKey Discovery covers over 20,000 journals and millions of articles, so give it a try the next time you use OneSearch.

Since OneSearch debuted, in addition to marketing, outreach, and instruction on these key features, we have been hard at work testing and releasing new features to improve usability. Fondren Library’s Primo Strategy Team is dedicated to tracking these changes and making key decisions on whether or when to implement changes.

Amanda Thomas
User Experience/Public Services Librarian

Karen McElfresh
Electronic Resources Librarian
The addition to the Library Service Center is scheduled to open in August 2020. Storage capacity for this module will be approximately 1.8 million volume equivalents, doubling the capacity of the building. This expanded facility will allow the library to continue to build its research collections.
Remote Research Help on Library Website: COVID-19 Expansion

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the move to online classes, librarians have created new research guides that are prominently displayed at library.rice.edu. While the library is physically closed, study room and class event information will not be able to be viewed. As the librarians create Zoom assistance, Zoom classes and more, updates will be posted on the library's homepage.

Service changes/updates (https://library.rice.edu/service-updates) includes ongoing changes to library services with information on due dates and interlibrary loan services. Remote library services (https://libguides.rice.edu/off-campus) offers useful tips on how to best optimize your library experience at home, finding open educational resources and connecting with library departments remotely. It also includes a list of provisional resources (i.e., electronic resources that have been made temporarily available from our publishers and vendors during the pandemic). Karen McElfresh, senior electronic resources librarian, shared, “The Fondren e-resources team is working hard to set up access to these resources and maintain the continuity of service to existing Fondren online journals and e-books.” Contact us/report a problem (http://library.rice.edu/contact) remains a prominent part of the library website and is being actively maintained by a team of librarians working remotely.

Fondren’s Kelley Center for Government Information, Data and Geospatial Services, its GIS/Data Center and its UX office have collaborated to create a COVID-19 resources page. A CDC COVID-19 RSS feed was created by UX office assistant Phillip Jaffe '20. The page includes a section on GIS maps and data organized at the global, state and county levels (http://libguides.rice.edu/covid-19/gisdata).

A new research guide for first generation and low income students has been developed in collaboration with the Student Success Initiatives Office at http://libguides.rice.edu/FLI/books. The guide includes links to e-books to support the first generation student experience. In addition, it features expert information on how to search and find Fondren e-books as well as tips on buying books and how to use services at the library, such as course reserves, interlibrary loan and more. The page includes links to e-books by first generation leaders such as Michelle Obama, Sonia Sotomayor and Colin Powell.

Debra Kolah
Head of User Experience

Scott Vieira
Collection Development Coordinator
Coming Soon: Research Hub

Fondren Library is pleased to announce the Research Hub, a new curated collection that supports academic excellence through a variety of print and digital resources. Rachel Shoop, an intern with the User Experience office in fall 2019, conducted interviews with students, faculty and administrators across campus to understand how Fondren could better assist with research tasks. Feedback revealed a clear need for new materials focusing on academic writing, grant funding, citation analysis, presentation skills and other efforts related to research.

While there are other offices and organizations across campus dedicated to supporting research, the Research Hub aims to provide a central location within Fondren where users can easily find useful materials. The physical collection is located on the first floor of Fondren near the south reading room. An online research guide for the collection (https://libguides.rice.edu/researchhub) also includes links to e-books, websites and open educational resources. We look forward to making this collection available to the Fondren community this summer.

Jeanette Sewell
Database and Metadata Management Coordinator
Carroll Blue, a visionary artist and native Houstonian, passed away in December 2019. Known for her unrelenting passion for community art and heritage, Blue was born in 1943 in Houston’s Third Ward. She dedicated her career as an award-winning filmmaker, author, interactive multimedia producer and scholar to the exploration of the African and African American community. Blue’s personal experience growing up in a segregated society influenced her work, “The Dawn at My Back: Memoir of a Black Texas Upbringing,” a print volume and interactive multimedia project, which won the 2004 Sundance Online Film Festival Jury Award. In 2007, this work spawned the Dawn Project, a nonprofit organization which supports the use of digital media training, production and distribution for community development.

Blue held various research positions at San Diego State University, the University of Houston, Harvard Graduate School of Design and Rice University. At the time of her death, Blue was exploring the career of Ghanaian artist El Anatsui, as a key example of the shift toward global art alongside Western art. Blue served as an adviser and point person for the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston on the inclusion of Anatsui’s large scale sculpture in the new Nancy and Rice Kinder building. Blue donated a portion of her archives to the Woodson Research Center, known as the “Carroll Parrott Blue Art and Storytelling Collection,” (call number MS 847). This collection features her photography, filmmaking, community art and art research. It is currently being preserved and described, so that it may be open to researchers in fall 2020.

Amanda Focke
Head of Special Collections
Dave Erlandson, Fondren Library’s new metadata analyst, came to Houston via his fiancée, a native Houstonian. Originally from Wahpeton, North Dakota, Erlandson previously worked for United Way in Minnesota by telecommuting from his Houston area home, creating metadata for community organizations. Positions at several libraries preceded his work at United Way.

Erlandson thinks of his role at the library as metadata detective. He pictures a “librarian noir” wearing a trench coat and fedora, solving mysteries. Dave primarily uses Excel, OpenRefine and Python to improve the quality of Fondren’s metadata, the data that describes the library’s resources.

Intrigued by the range of events offered on the Rice campus, Erlandson recently went to a recital on Rice’s Grand Organ by Kenneth Cowan, professor of organ at the Shepherd School of Music. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Erlandson was selected to be a judge at Beer Bike. With its postponement, he hopes to serve in 2021.

In his free time, he enjoys cycling and the beach, which is only 10 minutes from his home. He also likes to cook, with specialties including Tex-Mex dishes and pizza.

Julia Kress
Senior Electronic Resources Assistant
A national search resulted in Amanda Focke’s new role as Fondren’s head of special collections, beginning December 2019. As Sara Lowman, vice provost and university librarian, stated, “Amanda has provided great leadership in her interim role — she represents both our high aspirations as a library and a commitment to our values.” Starting in July 2019 after the retirement of Lee Pecht, who had served as director 2005–2019, Focke served as acting head of the Woodson Research Center (WRC).

Focke received a Master of Library and Information Science degree with a certificate in archives/archival administration in 1994 from the University of Maryland College Park. Her undergraduate degree in art history is from Georgetown University. She was raised in Houston and graduated from Episcopal High School. Her senior quote was from a Simon and Garfunkel song, “Preserve your memories, they’re all that’s left you,” a fitting theme for a future archivist.

Active professionally, Focke has served in leadership roles for archival organizations, including Texas Archival Resources Online and Society of Southwest Archivists. At the WRC, she has most recently been working on the acquisition of the Gilbert Morris Cuthbertson Rare Books and Manuscripts Collection, in partnership with Cuthbertson’s estate, to provide a secure archival home for this large collection of political science and Texana materials. She also serves on the Fondren Fellows program committee, funded by the John “Terry” McAllister III estate, which links Rice students with research projects that spotlight Fondren resources.

Focke’s awards include Fondren’s 2006 Shapiro Staff Innovation Award in 2006 and the 2018 Society of Southwest Archivists Distinguished Service Award. Most recently, Focke was recognized at the Rice Board of Trustees meeting in March. One of her nomination letters stated, “Her kindness, accessibility and encouragement have made the Woodson a wonderful place to experiment and innovate.”

Focke’s plans for the WRC’s future include building more diverse and inclusive archival and book collections, further developing the digital preservation program and building stronger relationships in the community. According to Focke, “We have an amazing, collaborative team and are ready to do some great work.”

Debra Kolah
Head of User Experience
“But at my back I always hear
Time’s wingèd chariot hurrying near;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.”
- Andrew Marvell

“Life is a top which whipping sorrow driveth.”
- Greville

Items from the Murray Dickson collection.
Murray Dickson Donation

Fondren Library has received a donation of books on Bolivian studies from the library of missionary and educator Murray S. Dickson (1915–1961). A native of Hillsboro, Texas, Dickson spent 18 years as a missionary in Bolivia. Together with his wife, Nova, he worked as a teacher and dorm parent at the Methodist school, the Instituto Americano, in Cochabamba. Highly respected and still fondly remembered in Bolivia, Dickson greatly expanded the network of the country’s missions which provided access to education and health care to many.

Dickson’s life was tragically cut short by a car accident on a treacherous mountain road while delivering supplies for Methodist projects. The Bolivian government honored Dickson with a posthumous Condor de los Andes award for his educational work, and both the U.S. Congress and the Texas Legislature observed a moment of silence in his memory. A Boy Scout troop, Grupo Scout Murray Dickson, has been active in Bolivia for the last 52 years.

The Dickson book collection of approximately 250 volumes was given to the library by his daughters, Frances Dickson Loveless and Margaret Dickson. While it contains a few titles in English, most of the books are Bolivian/Spanish-language publications about the country’s history, literature, anthropology, and art. Of note are two publications relating to Murray Dickson: “Red Poncho and Big Boots,” Dickson’s biography by Jim Palmer, and “El Sacrificio Vivo” (The Living Sacrifice), a book of poetry dedicated to his memory by Bishop Sante Uberto Barbieri. The books are located in Fondren Library’s general stacks, the Brown Fine Arts Library and, for fragile or rare items, in the Library Service Center.

This important gift is the latest of a growing number of collections about Latin America given to Fondren in recent years. Other donations include the Richard and Sandra Lauderdale Graham Brazilian Studies Collection, the Martinez-Lopez Hispanic books donation, the Delia Jennings collection on the anthropology and history of Latin America and the Joe Janssens gift of research materials on Mexican military history.

Anna Shparberg
Humanities Librarian
The Woodson Research Center is pleased to announce that Igor Stravinsky's archives of works acquired from Soulima Stravinsky, the composer's son, is now available for researchers. The materials include autograph and copyist manuscripts, meticulously annotated proofs and associated materials related to over 48 works by the composer. Highlights of the collection include engraved proof sheets of the full score of “The Rite of Spring,” with extensive corrections, alterations and annotations in the composer's hand; two sets of proof sheets of Petrouchka, also with significant corrections, alterations and annotations in the composer's hand; and a set of printed orchestral parts of “The Firebird,” with corrections and alterations in at least two hands with additional markings, including references to performers, conductors and places of performance.

Igor Fyodorovich Stravinsky (1882–1971) is one of the most influential and widely performed composers of the 20th century. Born and raised in St. Petersburg, the Russian imperial capital, he was guided by his parents toward a career in law and enrolled in the University of St. Petersburg. After visiting with composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov in 1902, Stravinsky began to spend more time in his private music studies. The death of his father and the disruption of the Revolution of 1905 moved Stravinsky to follow music rather than law. Over his career, he moved from Russia/Ukraine to Switzerland, France and ultimately the United States.

Stravinsky’s compositional career was notable for its stylistic diversity. He first achieved international fame with three ballets commissioned by the impresario Serge Diaghilev and first performed in Paris by Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes: “The Firebird” (1910), “Petrouchka” (1911), and “The Rite of Spring” (1913). The latter transformed the way in which subsequent composers thought about rhythmic structure and was largely responsible for Stravinsky’s enduring reputation as a musical revolutionary who pushed the boundaries of musical design.

To see more information about Stravinsky, please consult our research guide at https://libguides.rice.edu/c.php?g=976131&p=7057639.

Dana Flinn
Archivist and Special Collections Librarian
Gilbert Cuthbertson, beloved political science professor and resident associate for Will Rice College, died last year, leaving much of his estate to Rice, where he had lived and worked for over 50 years. Known by many as “Doc C,” Cuthbertson was an expert on Texas politics and political history, and taught Texas politics, constitutional law and political philosophy for decades. He loved teaching and inspired generations of students he mentored and befriended.

In his name, his estate has donated materials which will become the Gilbert Morris Cuthbertson Collection of Rare Books and Manuscripts (call number UA 426). His wide-ranging interests and long career have resulted in a collection as extraordinary as Doc C himself — thousands of books and photographs and 30 cartons of manuscript materials have been identified for the collection. The books and bound volumes will be cataloged separately; the remaining archival materials are being processed and described for researchers in a finding aid.

The collection holds many treasures, only a few of which are noted here. One item is a pamphlet describing the Department of Architecture at the Rice Institute in 1928, including plates of student projects. The booklet “Texas, Imperial State of America, With Her Diadem of Cities, Illustrated,” describes Texas for the St. Louis Exposition (World Fair) in 1904. A photograph album includes government pictures of China and the war effort during World War II.

Stay tuned for future news as this historic collection is processed over the coming year.

*Dara Flinn
Archivist and Special Collections Librarian*
Filipino American Oral Histories and Archives Reveal Tales of Identity and Community

The rich and varied experiences of Houston's Filipino American community are coming to light through oral histories and archival collections at the Woodson Research Center. Many Filipino American contributions to the military, nursing, art, education, political activism and other areas have been under-recognized. These resources are a strong beginning to filling in the historical record of this highly active and organized group.

To view the archival collections, visit http://archives.library.rice.edu/ and search by the word Filipino. Highlights include the Christy Poisot Filipino American materials, documenting political and historical achievements such as the Filipino American WWII Soldier Recognition project and Filipino Veterans of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act celebrations, as well as a Filipino American history book and a community cookbook.

Oral histories online at https://scholarship.rice.edu/handle/1911/79693 are fully transcribed and also can be searched by the word Filipino.

Ramon Burdeos, interviewed in 2012, came to the U.S. Oct. 10, 1955, under a policy to recruit Filipino nationals into the U.S. Coast Guard. https://scholarship.rice.edu/handle/1911/64854

Matt Manalo, interviewed in 2019, immigrated in 2004 during his college years and has pursued a career as an artist exploring the Filipino American identity. https://scholarship.rice.edu/handle/1911/106113

Violeta Panis immigrated to the U.S. at age 24 and served as a nurse at Houston’s Methodist Hospital for over 40 years. https://scholarship.rice.edu/handle/1911/92507 (2016) and https://scholarship.rice.edu/handle/1911/76245 (2014)

Judge Antonia Ingversen immigrated at the age of 8, was elected as the associate justice for the 14th Court of Appeals in Texas in the 1980s and served as a municipal court judge for 46 years. https://scholarship.rice.edu/handle/1911/105311

Amanda Focke  
Head of Special Collections
Items from WRC Collections Spotlighting Local Filipino Americans.
Friends of Fondren Library hosts an annual panel discussion and reception to honor Rice’s authors, editors, composers and artists. Matthias Henze, FoFL board member and the Isla Carroll and Percy E. Turner Professor of Hebrew Bible and Early Judaism, and Peter (Carl) Caldwell, the Samuel G. McCann Professor of History, hosted this year’s event Jan. 30 for honorees with works published in 2019.

Caldwell thanked the more than 50 honorees, then Henze moderated the engaging discussion titled “Religion in Our Secular World: Science, Music, Welfare State.” The three panelists described their works and commented on themes, including how religion enters into their research, the use of religious symbols in secular society and religious themes in secular music. Panelists were:


Gottschalk’s presentation included playing a recording of his composition “Shalom.”

To nominate honorees for the 2020 event, please email their contact information and publication names to fofl@rice.edu.

Mary Lowery
Executive Director, Friends of Fondren Library
Above and below (L to R): Matthias Henze, Peter (Carl) Caldwell, Zahra Jamal ’00, Arthur W. Gottschalk

Above: Audience; Below: Carl Caldwell addressing audience
Ruth J. Simmons Evokes the Power of Reading

On March 3, the Friends of Fondren Library hosted the latest in the popular series “Books That Shaped My World” featuring Ruth J. Simmons, president of Prairie View A&M University and Rice University trustee emerita, in McMurtry Auditorium, Duncan Hall.

Former president of Smith College and Brown University and a distinguished French professor and administrator at the University of Southern California, Princeton University and Spelman College, Simmons is also the recipient of many honors ranging from being awarded a Fulbright Fellowship through being named a chevalier of the French Legion of Honor.

Simmons took her audience back to the beginning of her journey with books, which allowed her to ask illicit questions and provided nurture, hope and a sense of power without impediment or sanction. Raised in rural east Texas, the youngest in a large sharecropper family, her schooling sometimes had to take second place to work. Her first library experience was like being in a toy store or an oasis in a desert. Her appetite for reading led to her family’s viewing her as a little “touched.”

Simmons completed high school in Houston after a family move and was encouraged by teachers to continue her education. An early college course on existentialism introduced Simmons to Jean-Paul Sartre, a French philosopher, playwright, novelist and political activist, and convinced her that she was responsible for her own life. Simmons learned to say no to the limitations of what she could say and do, and where she could safely go in Houston. Sartre’s critique of colonialism led her to new practitioners of French literature and to black authors like Senghor, Cézaire and Damas, who used the foreign language of colonialists to describe their experience of negritude.

As she continued to graduate school, language was Simmons’ greatest strength. Cézaire’s “Cahier d’un Retour au Pays Natal” conveyed the message that the author’s experience was not to be silenced and rejected negative French stereotypes. With encouragement from key professors, Simmons, like Cézaire, found a way to belong and find employment in her field.

At Princeton, she overcame her reluctance to chair the African American studies program, a field in which she lacked expertise. She realized the role would allow her to hire the right people, the first being Toni Morrison, whose mastery of language was the equal of Cézaire’s. Neither Princeton nor Morrison made the hire easy. Taking on this unwanted assignment brought her the broader role of dean of faculty. Simmons still tells her students not to turn away opportunities to learn. Ultimately, Simmons’ love of reading and language gave her the confidence to stand anywhere in the world.

The event closed with a Q&A period and brief remarks from Jeff Ross, event co-chair with Nancy Shelby. He noted the power of Simmons’ reflection to prompt audience members to build their own lists of books. A brief reception followed.

Melinda Reagor Flannery
Assistant University Librarian for Technical Services
Gala Rescheduled for March 26, 2021

Ways to Support Fondren Library

Are you interested in supporting Fondren Library in ways that might leverage your gift or reduce your tax bill? Here are three ideas to discuss with your tax adviser.

1) Does your employer offer matching gifts? If so, you can easily double or triple your gift and the impact it will have on Fondren Library, depending on your employer's program. Contact your human resources team for the most up-to-date information.

2) Make a donation of appreciated securities and save on taxes twice. You can receive a charitable tax deduction for the full value of the stock while avoiding paying capital gains taxes on the appreciated value. Please contact data services analyst Melanie Boyd at 713-348-5800 if you wish to donate stock shares directly to Rice to benefit Fondren Library.

3) If you are 70.5 years or older, consider rolling over up to $100,000 of your individual retirement account (IRA) to Rice University for the benefit of Fondren Library. With an IRA charitable rollover gift, you can exclude the amount you give from your gross income, satisfy your minimum required distribution and fulfill your annual gift or an outstanding pledge for Fondren. Jill Hughes ’79, director of gift planning services, can answer questions about the process of making this sort of gift, and she can be reached at 713-348-6206 or jillhughes@rice.edu.

Erratum

In the Fall 2019 issue of News From Fondren, the caption under the right-hand picture should read: Friends of Fondren Library Presidents Brian ’78 and Catherine James. The editor regrets the error.
Live Mascots at Rice

This model of the owl house was created in 1995 when the university was considering bringing back live mascots. This rendering, along with publications, sketches and additional models, is featured in the “Architects @ Rice” exhibit located on the sixth floor of Fondren Library.