



# The Bridwell Quarterly

Bridwell Library, Perkins School of Theology

Issue 3

Spring 2019

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## The Bridwell Quarterly: Welcome

*Anthony J. Elia, Director of Bridwell Library and J.S. Bridwell Foundation Endowed Librarian*

Dear Friends,

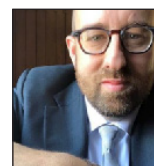
Like the spring rains on the cover of this third issue depict, the gathering of water into reflective puddles from the light above is a metaphor of the changing seasons, the contemplation on all that has been given to us, the anticipation of the next steps in the cycles of life, and the hopefulness that accompanies our daily endeavors. We reflect on what is past, such as what was part of our lives and communities over the years, but also upon those who have enriched our lives and have gone on before us from this world. Especially, this year, we reflect upon the lives of Clyde Putnam and Page Thomas, both mainstays of the Bridwell and Perkins community for many years. From those who knew them well, we have meditations on their service and commitment to our institution and library, as well as remembrances of the good nature of their spirits, which played forth from their daily lives and made the family and fellowship of this place all the better, more graceful, and more inspiring for all of us.

We also have reflections from former staff, administrators, and faculty about the varieties of communal experiences that enlivened our halls, entertained our colleagues, and brought us all together in a way that has demonstrated the true sense of the beloved community. It has been my goal to foster a sense of the collaborative spirit that both enjoins us and enriches us, as we learn from one another. Greg Ivy, Associate Dean for Library and Technology at the SMU Law School's Underwood Library, has been one of several generous colleagues, who has long been an advocate and supporter of Bridwell. He has kindly contributed some of his thoughts to the collaborative efforts of this issue and reflects upon the role that Bridwell has played in his time at the university. I look forward to inviting other SMU Library colleagues to contribute to our newsletter and highlight the importance of shared services, collaborative exercises, and partnerships in the far-ranging resources and staff expertise that make the SMU Libraries the rich resource they are.

You will find in this issue a range of activities and events, not least of which is an old (though now discontinued) tradition, which former Bridwell staff member Charles Baker writes about: Savonarolafest. The glory of the late 15th century, in the form of the Dominican friar and prophet of anti-secularity and corruption in government and the church named Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498), came alive for several years at Bridwell and Perkins, under Dr. Valerie Hotchkiss's leadership. Revisiting and reflecting on the past events, initiatives, and promotions, are helpful reminders of what kinds of activities and vision we are able to achieve at an institution. This plays into the idea of integrating former successes with new ideas and considering how best to construct the ever-evolving identity of an institution, library, or theological school, while remembering its founding principles. Dr. Steuernagel and Dr. Campbell have added insightful words to this consideration: what is vocation in relation to music, theology, and higher ed; and what constitutes the best practices for envisioning data preservation in libraries for the future. Travels, visits, lectures, renovations, and virtual reality are among the other items highlighted.

We always appreciate your support and hope that you continue to visit.

*Anthony*





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## A Case of Library Envy

*Greg Ivy, Associate Dean for Library and Technology, SMU Underwood Law Library*



I first visited the Bridwell Library thirty years ago, soon after accepting a reference librarian position at SMU's Underwood Law Library. A law professor, long since retired, had asked me to perform some theology-related research, an agreeable assignment since it prompted my discovery of Bridwell Library.

of the Perkins School of Theology and Bridwell Library; extensive collections of historical Bibles and devotional literature, many with beautiful illuminations; Torah scrolls; and so much more. Bridwell owns more than eleven hundred incunabula, which are works printed before the year 1501. Truly amazing. Then there is the vault, wherein is kept Bridwell's greatest treasures. I would recommend a visit, but access to the vault is understandably restricted.

I had expected Bridwell to be a library filled with the typical rows of book stacks interspersed with study tables. Instead, most stacks were compact (movable) shelving and located in the basement, which was rather innovative then. This arrangement allowed Bridwell's main floor to house three elegant reading rooms and the impressive Elizabeth Perkins Prothro exhibit galleries. If I make it to retirement, I hope to spend many happy days in Bridwell's reading rooms, whose atmosphere is so conducive to reading and learning.

I was enthralled—and a bit envious, to be honest—as I quickly recognized Bridwell to be a world-class institution. Robert Maloy, Bridwell's director from 1987 until 1992, reputedly encouraged use of the name “The Bridwell” instead of “the Bridwell Library.” Maloy's preferred appellation is surely more accurate, since Bridwell is very much a museum, as well as a library.

Bridwell's collections of modern theological publications are nearly comprehensive. But even more impressive to me are its special collections: archives pertaining to Methodism, as well as those

Such outstanding collections of rare and historical materials deserve a highly trained staff to care for and promote them. And so Bridwell has a Head of Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts Librarian, Archivist, Exhibition Designer, and Conservator. The high caliber of their work is evident each time Bridwell produces one of its world-class exhibitions and associated catalogs. Bridwell's reference librarians, technical services staff, and circulation staff are equally wonderful, having rescued my feeble attempts at theological research on many occasions.

Anthony Elia, Bridwell's new director, is a librarian extraordinaire, polyglot, passionate reader, lover of music, with a wonderful sense of humor. I am confident Anthony's arrival marks a new and distinguished phase in Bridwell's history.

I cherished Bridwell thirty years ago and do so even more today. Envy may be one of the seven deadly sins, but it is also a form of praise, which I extend to all who have contributed to the eminence of the Bridwell Library—or should I say The Bridwell?

“... I hope to spend many happy days in Bridwell's reading rooms, whose atmosphere is so conducive to reading and learning.”



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## Remembrances of Bridwell's Past: The Savonarolafest

*Charles Baker, Cataloger (Retired), Bridwell Library*

*“Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote  
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote . . .”*

So begins Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*; the poet goes on to tell us that at that time of year, “Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages”. Well, at that time of year in 1994, thanne longen Bridwell folk to goon on a picnic, and so the Savonarolafest was born. Its parents could be said to have been Isaac Gewirtz and Valerie Hotchkiss. Isaac, who was curator of special collections, had the original idea of showcasing Bridwell's collection of works by and about the fifteenth-century Dominican preacher, Girolamo Savonarola, and Valerie, who joined Bridwell as director in July 1993, agreed it would be a worthwhile effort. The exhibition, “Girolamo Savonarola: Piety, Prophecy, and Politics in Renaissance Florence” opened in the Elizabeth Perkins Prothro Galleries on March 20, 1994.

It was a tremendous success; attracting large numbers of not only SMU faculty, students, and staff, but members of the press, clergy, and arts communities. Valerie was justifiably proud of her first Bridwell exhibition and announced that a picnic would be held to celebrate. It was decided that late May would be a good time, close to the date, May 23, 1498, on which Savonarola and two of his followers, whom the church had condemned as heretics and schismatics, were hanged and set afire. Valerie was, and still is, a devout medievalist and that may help explain why such a gruesome event would call for a picnic. And she was never one to do things by halves: a tee shirt design contest was held, comic songs were written, and

even a Catholic priest piñata was created to hang from a branch. World-famous book designer, Jan Sobota, who had been Bridwell's first conservator, won the design contest; David Lawrence, then

assistant to the director, wrote several satirical ditties and we gave full voice to them; Eric White, who succeeded Isaac in special collections, designed and arranged to have Party City produce a three or four foot priest piñata, committees were formed, invitations were sent, we were all set.







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Early on the day of the picnic, the set-up crew got to work commandeering tables and chairs from Selecman Auditorium (after one unfortunate accident involving Selecman's equipment, tables and chairs were thereafter supplied by Ducky Bob's). One staff member at the time requested an area be set aside that was as insect-free as possible; so, insecticide was sprayed, sulphur was spread, and a large plastic tarp was put down. A chair was placed in the middle of the tarp and there she sat quite happily. Floral centerpieces graced each table and the person whose chair had a red dot underneath the seat won it. An enormous banner that read "SAVONAROLAFEST" was hung across the east side of the library. Then the food was brought out. Oh, the food! The Ghost of Christmas Present did not show Scrooge such abundance! Each tee shirt-clad one of us brought forth our specialty: barbeque, potato salad, green salad, deviled eggs, tabouli, watermelon, beans, chips, dips, cheeses, more and more. One table groaned under the weight of pies, cakes, brownies, cookies, and ice cream. Water, iced tea, and soft drinks were iced down in coolers. We feasted and sang and feasted some more! Then came the games: croquet, bocce, horseshoes, Frisbees, Eric always brought some baseball mitts and balls and we played catch, there was even archery, but only one year because it was thought that misaimed arrows flying across Bishop Boulevard could cause some unhappiness to motorists and pedestrians.

A few times our Savonarolafest happened to be on the same date as the university president's picnic. No matter, we would eat our fill at one and move on to the other where we would eat our fill again. Afterward, the clean-up crew removed all traces of the extraordinary event that had just taken place. The rest of the afternoon was spent

desperately trying to stay awake at our desks and giving the appearance of doing some work.

The Savonarolafest was held every May for several years; each year had its unique tee shirt (one year, however, and I can't remember why, baseball caps took their place), the songs were sung, the priest was hanged, the food was eaten, the games were played, and what some of us that first year considered to be enforced camaraderie turned out to be great fun and we looked forward to the next one. All good things must come to an end and with the departure of Valerie in 2005, the Savonarolafest, unlike its namesake, died a quiet, painless, and peaceful death.



## The Library's Vocation in Relation to Music, Theology, and Higher Education

Marcel Steuernagel, Assistant Professor of Church Music and Director of the Sacred Music Program,  
Perkins School of Theology



Recently, I was teaching a congregational song class for our Master of Sacred Music cohort here at SMU. After a lengthy conversation that connected historical musicology, liturgical studies, socio-political analysis, and current church music practices, one student remarked: "I wish my pastor attended this class." Her

remark echoes a recurring theme in church music and theological scholarship that points to a "gap" between church musicians and clergy; a gap that appears in staff conflicts, power struggles, and diverging expectations. In *Church Musicians: Reflections on Their Call, Craft, History, and Challenges* (2015), Paul Westermeyer argues that while clergy do not need the focused study of music that church musicians require, they "do need an encounter with the issues music raises and the way the church has dealt with these". Randall Bradley, assessing the current relationship between the academy and the church in *From Memory to Imagination* (2012), says that "on many fronts, the academy offers only minimal input regarding the church's music today, and at times the input is not pastorally offered by the academy or readily welcomed by the church." Jeremy Begbie's overall assessment of the situation in *Resounding Truth: Christian Wisdom in the World of Music* (2007) is even more dire: "In the last hundred years, serious dialogue between theologians and musicians has been hard to find".

More often than not, my conversations with Anthony Elia, director of Perkins|SMU's Bridwell Library, and Christopher Anderson, my colleague in the MSM program, revolve around music and the church. We all love music, and our jobs revolve around the connection between the academy and the church. One of the things

I've noticed in our conversations is how it might flow from politics to theology, from theology to historical musicology, from musicology to Chinese poetry of the T'ang dynasty, and then from there to contemporary Christian music (or any other combination of things we happen to be thinking about). These conversations are rewarding precisely because we have not established boundaries for our curiosity or for the potential interactions between these themes in our work and interests. This seems, to me, to be the "missing link" that Bradley, Westermeyer, Begbie, and other scholars are pointing to. It is a gap that plays out in curriculum design, professional development, rhetoric for/against specific styles of church music, and traces of worship traumas from the worship wars in America, to name but a few.

As I think about the Master of Sacred Music Program here at Perkins|SMU, three thoughts come to mind regarding this triumvirate of music, theology, and higher education. The first has to do with the role of thinking and writing. I tell my students that one of the vocations of a degree such as ours is to give students space and time to think about church music and write about it in connection with making music. This is a unique opportunity for these graduate students precisely because for the remainder of their professional lives in church music, they will struggle, week after week, to keep up with the various demands of church life: designing liturgy, staff meetings, organizing musicians, learning and rehearsing new music, dealing with media issues. The list goes on. So, in a sense, the role of a graduate program in church music is to think the thoughts and come up with the words that will feed into these conversations between church musicians and clergy, and between parishioners and scholars. This exercise will give us a vocabulary to gather around the table as we meet to talk shop.





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The second thought has to do with the idea of convergence. In worship literature, the term is sometimes used to describe an intention to move beyond “blended” worship (in which “traditional” and “contemporary” styles are intermingled in order to keep everyone [kind of] happy). Constance Cherry proposes convergence worship as a model in *The Worship Architect* (2010), arguing that it is not a style of church music but a way of thinking about the relationship between theology and music, “a total package involving structure, content, and style”. One of the conclusions that we repeatedly come to with the MSM cohort is that church music is, in fact, a convergence of disciplines instead of an isolated field of study. On any given week, our students are designing liturgy (theology and liturgical studies), rehearsing music (interpersonal skills, management skills, performance skills), and performing in front of a congregation as they lead them in worship. Just as our students gravitate between Meadows (the school of the arts), Bridwell (the repository of literature and space for “silent thinking”) and Perkins (where the MSM program is housed and where they take their core and theology courses), they are constantly dealing with all of these parts in their professional lives. In light of this convergent DNA, the gap between music and theology makes little sense precisely because the music of the church lives at the intersection of these worlds.

This realization leads me to my final point: that church music is an inherently restless discipline even as it is a convergence of applied skills and fields of knowledge. It exists at the creases between the academy (including its library), the church, and the world at large. Theology as a discipline is intimately connected to the development of the idea of a university as a space in which intellectual flourishing can happen. But at least a portion of this flourishing can only happen if

the life of the university is connected to the life of the church and to life in the world at large. In order to answer complex and multi-layered questions about music and religion in human life, all three of these cultural landscapes must be in active connection. Several current questions in church music scholarship can help exemplify this need for convergence in order to bridge the gap: how does the development of K-Pop, both in terms of its sounds and its particular fan culture, influence Asian and Asian-American worship practices on a transnational level? How does one understand the work of a new wave of artists that conflate CWM (Contemporary Worship Music), frequently considered “white” worship music, and gospel, traditionally considered “black” worship music, in relation to established expressions of church music, within American social life? These are some of the things we think about.

Questions such as these require more than deep knowledge in one discipline; they require a type of mastery that resonates within different echo chambers at the same time. I suggest here that the library is an important laboratory, a hub, that can help facilitate this type of scholarly activity. The library is a repository of knowledge, a curator and facilitator that mediates access to bodies of knowledge, and a place for reading and reflection. In this sense, it can be a treffpunkt for the disciplines that must be brought together in order to bridge the gap(s) between theology, music, and higher education. I find that, here at SMU, the physical layout of our buildings represents this potential in a very felicitous way: Bridwell stands between Meadows School of the Arts, Perkins Chapel, and Perkins School of Theology. It is a place that can be hospitable to restless scholarship that seeks to bring these worlds together. Such a layout represents, I think, the library’s vocation to bring these worlds together.



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## Professors Bonnie Wheeler and Valerie Hotchkiss Lead Medieval Studies Workshop and Lecture at Bridwell Library

The Spring 2019 course at SMU in Medieval Studies (MDVL 3351), which focused on the interdisciplinary approach to medieval pilgrimage, held one of its sessions at Bridwell Library, on Thursday January 31 at 11AM. The special session was led by guest lecturer and former Bridwell Library Director, Dr. Valerie Hotchkiss, currently University Librarian and Professor of English at Vanderbilt University, who presented on “The Making of the First Printed Travel Guide, 1486,” and focused on the course’s central theme of pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Dr. Bonnie Wheeler, Director of Medieval Studies and Associate Professor at SMU, coordinated this extraordinary interdisciplinary class, which was co-taught by Drs. Stephanie Amsel, Denise duPont, Catherine Keene, Shira Lander, and Abbey Stockstill. We are very happy and grateful for their support and engagement with Bridwell, and excited to have Dr. Hotchkiss back at Bridwell teaching from the collections she worked on significantly to enhance.

Displayed to the right, and below:  
*Breydenbach Peregrinatio*.







# A Short Address to Visitors at the Opening of *The Word Embodied*

Anthony J. Elia, March 8, 2019

In 1988, eight years after the first Bridwell Librarian and Director, Dechard Turner, retired from his position at this library, the renowned bibliophile, collector, curator, and librarian delivered a convocation address titled *An Affair with Art Books and Art Libraries*. The work was published privately under the direction of W. Thomas Tyler, with a limited run of two hundred copies.

Thirty-one years later, the similarities of that event and ours today are just beginning—we are, in many ways revisiting the visionary establishment and expansive collecting of J.S. Bridwell and Dechard Turner, both of whom emerged mid-century with the deftness and aplomb to found, fund, and formulate the trenchant beauty and profound expansiveness of religion and theology, as contextualized within all other liberal arts. At the same time, the focus on affording the musical and visual arts as both congruent and fundamental to theology and religion are key to what was envisioned then, and what we hope to express and promote now.

Our event this evening brings the theological and the artistic together. The production of this large-scale specialized printing of a Bridwell catalog is a reflection of the artistic vision of our founders. Our hope is to express the curatorial intersections that collaborative disciplinary studies can yield, while stimulating and inspiring new writers, scholars, artists, performers, musicians, and others to create—to create as an act of reflection and participatory encounter with our exhibit, collections, building, and library on a whole. While this is an event around an exhibit, it is also an event of the imaginative enterprise and creativity of our staff, and the fruits of these labors is now published in the form of a finely crafted catalog, that is both original scholarship and an art book itself—unbound, beautifully

designed and crafted, and full of refulgence—a meta-art object reflecting the architecture of our curated materials in the exhibit itself. Like Dechard Turner’s oration of 1988, our present volume was published in limited edition with a run of two hundred copies; and like his title, we too are here to express the beauteous nature and “affair with art books.”

In the last year, our highly talented, fiercely motivated, and exceptionally well-rounded staff has come together and worked in productive, efficient, and creative ways that have had a profound impact on our operations and the overall aspect of our enterprise as resource to the university and community. This is especially so with those who have worked tirelessly to put this exhibit and event together: Arvid Nelsen, our curator and author of Bridwell’s newest published volume *The Word Embodied: Scripture as Creative Inspiration in Twentieth-Century Book Arts* (2019), has done a phenomenal job, and I want to thank him most sincerely for his contributions. Jane Elder, Jon Speck, Rebecca Howdeshell have been masterfully skilled at supporting and guiding this process and the inner workings of digital imaging, editing, and logistical magic, without which, we would have not been able to succeed. Bradley Hutchinson’s design and printing on letterpress brought the finished product to life, and Jayce Graff’s handiwork gave final structure to the volume. Our colleague Michelle Ried for her tireless work at bringing this event together today, Robert Edwards and Mehret Negash for their unwavering and constant labors of keeping our building running, and our entire Bridwell staff that has come together as a community to make this and other projects a reality. I thank you. And I thank all of you who have responded to our invitation and come out on this balmy Dallas evening to partake in an event of great importance to our library, university, and greater community. Thank you and enjoy the evening.







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## *The Word Embodied*

*Scripture as Creative Inspiration in  
Twentieth-Century Book Arts*



An Exhibition in  
The Elizabeth Perkins Prothro Galleries  
at Bridwell Library



March 1 through June 15, 2019



Curated by  
R. ARVID NELSEN



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Southern Methodist University

This fine press catalog, limited to two hundred copies, was designed and printed by Bradley Hutchinson at his letterpress printing office in Austin Texas. Reflecting the style of many of the items featured in the exhibition, the catalog comprises loose folios and sheets housed in a four-flap paper portfolio. The type is Espinosa Nova, designed by Cristóbal Henestrosa and based on the types of Antonio de Espinosa, the first typesetter in the New World, who was active in Mexico City between 1551 and 1576. The paper is Mohawk Superfine and the illustrations were printed by Capital Printing of Austin, Texas. The portfolio was constructed by Santiago Elrod. Images were prepared by Rebecca Howdeshell, Bridwell Library, using an i2S SupraScan Quartz A1 book scanner. 100 pages, folios housed in paper wrappers; color illustrations; 28 x 21 cm. Please visit [www.smu.edu/bridwell](http://www.smu.edu/bridwell) to [purchase](#) your copy.

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## Data Triage: Libraries and Missing Memories

*Ted A. Campbell, Professor of Church History, Perkins School of Theology*



Libraries today face a terrifying task: deciding what memories from the past should be preserved into the future. Resources are limited. We can't preserve everything. The motto of the Campbell family of Scotland, is NE OBLIVISCARIS and that means "Do not forget," or as it's expressed in Scots dialect, "Dinna' forget." But we do forget. Information is perishing all the time. Historians lament the atrophy of memories and still grieve over the destruction of the great ancient library of Alexandria. But this is not just a historian's problem: families grieve the loss of memories. When a family member dies, it is like a library burning down. A host of memories dissipates with their passing. Memories dissipate, like all other forms of data. The problem we face, as Isaac Asimov once explained it, is that "you can only go back so far, and the farther you go back, the less reliable the information becomes—no matter what you do." He thought of this as "an uncertainty principle in information". Memories are perishing every moment. How do we preserve them across multiple generations? As a historian and a genealogist it's a vexing question. For many of my ancestors, the only information I have is the inscriptions on their tombstones, and perhaps a U.S. federal census record. Prior to 1850, the census only recorded the names of heads of households. Would that someone in their time, or shortly after their deaths, have written down some things about them—just a few things—and found a way to preserve those memories! And found a way to place these memories in a system where they would be copied consistently into the future. It would have to be copied and re-copied. Even if you were to write something down today about a

family member, the media on which you write it will eventually atrophy, whether it's paper or magnetic storage, or CD-ROM, or solid-state memory. Microsoft famously branded CD-ROMs as "The New Papyrus" in the 1980s, but CD-ROMs, especially the ones cheaply produced on home or office computers, have proven to be more fragile than papyrus. The only thing that will save memories or data in the long run is consistently copying the data to new media. Memories disappear when we fail to record them in the first place, and even when we record them, they disappear when we fail to copy them. But that requires resources. You would think that we'd be very good at keeping memories in a place like a university. And we do indeed have fabulous collections of materials, most notably the astonishing resources of Bridwell Library. We have specialists in the preservation of materials like vellum and papyrus and paper and bound books and paintings and even photographic and film media. The Bush Library has added immensely to the rich archival material available on the SMU campus. But preserving digital media or digital data presents new challenges. We have, for example, a digital repository at SMU now branded as SMU Scholar (<https://scholar.smu.edu/>). A few of my works are available there. But our commitment is simply to make these items currently available via the internet; it does not involve a commitment to copying them consistently for future generations. So if a future generation decides that SMU Scholar is no longer a priority for SMU, the material will come down, and when staff members over-write the storage media with zeroes, the data will "sleep with their ancestors." I asked an SMU theoretical physicist if the universe contains a complete memory of itself. You would think so; every event however subatomic leaves the mark of causality on subsequent events, just as previous events left the mark of causality on it. (cont.)





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So does the law of the conservation of mass and energy imply the conservation of data? Of memory? No, he said, or at least, not completely, because of the uncertainty principle. And even if it did, I would add, we would not be able to access the universe's massive memory of itself. Those of us who believe in God—and I admit that on some Monday mornings I have my doubts, so, those of us who believe in God, with the grace of a little coffee—might take comfort in the thought that God holds a perfect memory of every single thing that has ever happened in the past.

Though, come to think of it, that's not entirely comforting; that's really embarrassing; kind of creepy. And even so, we still have the same problem of access to the divine memory. The problem remains for us.

How do we transmit memories across generations? What's really happening now is a kind of triage: deciding with limited resources and with limited knowledge what items from the past should be recopied into the future. Nineteenth-century books printed on acidic paper, for example, are turning brown and flaking away. Pretty soon they'll be dust. Librarians know they can't preserve them all. Like a triage center in a military hospital, they have to make difficult decisions about which ones get the priority to be copied and thus to be preserved for future generations.

Librarians are being asked to play the role of God. But without God's resources.

## Bridwell Head of Special Collections Attends Book Week, New York

Daniel J. Slive, Head of Special Collections at Bridwell Library, attended "Book Week" in New York in early March. The focus was the annual Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America (ABAA) Book Fair at the Park Avenue Armory, a major event comprising more than two hundred American and international dealers. The largest fair held in the United States, it is considered by many librarians, collectors, and booksellers to be the most significant fair of the year. Materials offered include manuscripts, printed books, art, and documentary materials in numerous fields from the medieval period to the present. It is a remarkable opportunity to meet in a single venue dealers specializing in the entire range of collecting interests represented in Special Collections.

Related bibliographic events are scheduled to coincide with the fair. A one-day conference concerning provenance, *WHO OWNED THIS? Libraries and the Rare Book Trade Consider Issues Surrounding Provenance, Theft, and Forgery* was held. In addition to librarians and antiquarian booksellers, speakers included experts in art recovery, insurance, and law. Additional events included book exhibitions at the Grolier Club and a lecture by antiquarian dealer Richard Linenthal on the collecting of early manuscript codices and fragments. The week proved successful for meeting with colleagues in special collections and the trade to discuss acquisitions, issues of mutual concern, and future rare book and special collections events.

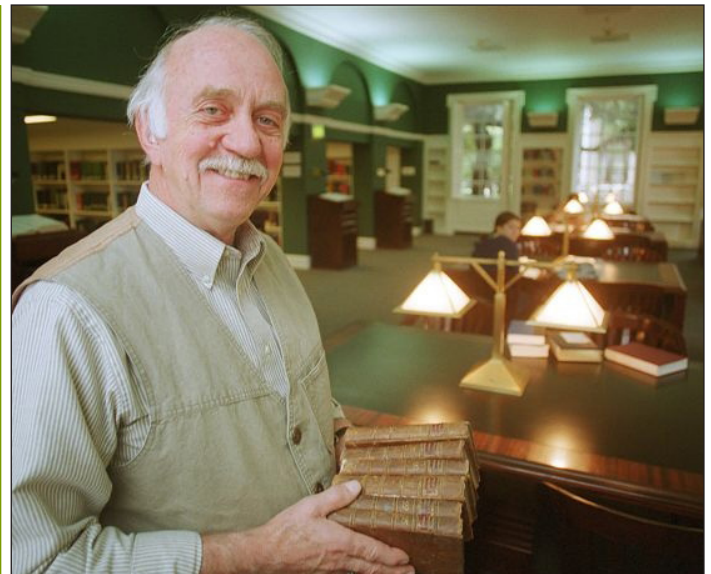


## Remembering Reverend Page A. Thomas

Rev. Page A. Thomas, who served in multiple capacities at Bridwell Library for nearly half a century, including as director of the Center for Methodist Studies, died Friday, March 8th near Fairview, Texas, north of Dallas. Thomas was well-known throughout Southern Methodist University for his enthusiasm, energetic charm, professional integrity, and affinity for Western wear. Among American Theological Library Association colleagues he was regarded by many to be a “total librarian” and was much admired for his wide-ranging knowledge of Methodist history.

Thomas was licensed to preach in 1956 at the Leslie (Arkansas) Methodist Church. He received a BA in 1958 from Hendrix College, where he served as a student pastor. Thomas was ordained a Deacon (1959) and Elder (1962) in the North Arkansas Annual Conference of the Methodist Church. He earned a BD [MDiv equivalent] from Perkins School of Theology in 1961. From 1963 to 1965 Thomas preached at Bethel Methodist Church near Greenville, Texas. He held the record for the longest single appointment in the United Methodist Church: forty-six years at Bridwell Library.

Thomas began working at Bridwell Library on September 6, 1961, four months after graduating from Perkins School of Theology. His one-year contract turned into a nearly five-decade long career. Originally hired to be the circulation desk supervisor, he moved into other areas of librarianship and administration: cataloging, public services, technical services, curator of exhibitions, collector of archival records, director of the Center for Methodist Studies, and acting library director.



**Page A. Thomas, Former Director of the Center for Methodist Studies at Bridwell Library**

His professional interests included Methodist history, historical research, rare book cataloguing, and archaeology. In his free time, Mr. Thomas enjoyed blacksmithing, fishing, raising horses, and volunteering at the Heritage Farmstead in Plano.

To mark his thirtieth work anniversary, Bridwell Library established the Page A. Thomas Collection for the History of the Book in 1991. In 1996, Decherd Turner, the founding director of Bridwell Library, wrote in tribute to Page Thomas: “The best personnel-related event I brought off in my thirty years at Bridwell was hiring you. You became not only my right hand, but my left as well. Much of the best in Bridwell today bears the stamp of your aid.” Page was mentored by Kate Warnick, SMU’s first theological librarian, and worked for five directors: Decherd Turner, Jerry Campbell, Robert Maloy, Valerie Hotchkiss, and Roberta Schaafsma. He retired in 2007.





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## Remembrances of Page Thomas

*Valerie Hotchkiss, University Librarian and Professor of English, Vanderbilt University  
and Former Director of Bridwell Library (1993–2005)*



When I first met Page, he had an armadillo under his arm—a real live armadillo. Two years after that, when I walked into Bridwell as the 32-year-old new director, I'm sure Page was thinking he'd rather deal with a wild armadillo

than me. But Page was wise and figured out how to make me into the kind of director he could manage.

We had such fun and so many adventures, bibliographic and otherwise. He loved all things Methodist, and was forever explaining arcane polity issues to me, but John Wesley was his true and abiding interest. After he curated his big exhibition on the letters of John Wesley, he always ended his notes to me with "I am your affectionate brother, P. Thomas."

Page was not a typical academic. One might better describe him as a cowboy scholar. He liked the thrill of the chase and was always eager to pack up an archive or get a "deal" at an auction house. He also liked to introduce students to the trail of archival research or regale them with some of the more colorful parts of Methodist history such as John Wesley's health regimes (little electrical shocks and lots of lemons and onions) or his curious method of folding the over eighty thousand letters he wrote as well as Wesley's repeated failure to pay proper postage on them. It was well-known that Page took his love of the eighteenth century rather far. He was an accomplished blacksmith, for example, and devoted a great deal of effort to a historical farm near his house.

Page had the perfect first name for a librarian. We often joked that Decherd Turner, the great founding director of Bridwell, and the man who converted Page from theology student to theological librarian, should have adopted him to create a real Page Turner. He laughed at that one no matter how many times he told

it. Page was also like a book in that he loved to tell stories. When Wanda Smith—Page's true friend and sometime nemesis—once warned Page that everyone in the library's break room had already heard a story he was "fixin to" launch into one morning, he told her to keep quiet because he was telling it for his own enjoyment, not hers. His homey way of spinning a story was a huge hit with visiting scholars, especially those from England who came to study our vast eighteenth century holdings. And they all left with stories of their own, for Page always gave them a taste of Texas, whether by taking them to lunch at Peggy Sue's or giving them the full tour, complete with a rodeo or a trip to the Fort Worth stock yards. Page is single-handedly responsible for the fact that dozens of Europeans attempt to sport cowboy boots.

In my time with Page at Bridwell, we built up our collections (Page with Wesley letters; me with incunabula), we increased the library's endowment by many fold, and we produced numerous great exhibitions with creative colleagues, among whom Jon Speck, Eric White, and Jan Sobota stand out as particularly devoted to the cause and always ready for adventure. We also joked around a lot and enjoyed our work and each other immensely. Memorable scenes with Page: horse shoes and barbeque at the annual Savonarolafest picnics we celebrated for over a decade; smoking contraband Cuban cigars behind Bridwell, climbing up on the library's roof to see the King of Spain pass by; singing Methodist hymns with funny reworkings of the lyrics, soliciting Page's help to catch a rat (a real live one until Page finished the job), running into Willy Nelson—the real live one—and seeing him high-five Page. When my son Sam was born, Page arrived soon after with a gift of some very tiny cowboy boots. He diligently continued these efforts for many years, providing Sam with advice, as well as the right hat, bolo, walk, and attitude to keep him on the path to being a real Texan. Page was a character. Page was a great librarian. And Page was a dear friend.

\*Photo credit V. Hotchkiss and Vanderbilt University Libraries



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## Remembering Clyde Putnam

*Jane Lenz Elder, Reference Librarian*



On October 23, 2018, the staff at Bridwell Library lost our friend and former co-worker Clyde Putman, who passed away after a brief illness. Patrons who visited the Circulation Desk in the years between 2005 and 2013 will remember Clyde's humor, attention to detail, and ability to establish rapport with just about everyone. Clyde possessed a deep fund of stories about everything from tuning harpsichords to replacing steam locomotive braking systems. He was as much at ease visiting the Metropolitan Opera in Manhattan as the Blue Swallow Motel in Tucumcari, New Mexico, and he was equally enthusiastic about vintage racing bicycles as he was about historic pipe organs.

Clyde was a native of Arlington, Texas, and a graduate of UTA. He began working at SMU in 1994 at the Hamon Arts Library before moving to the Media Center (as it was then named) of Fondren Library for a number of years. He was eventually lured to Bridwell Library, where he remained for eight years. Clyde dedicated several weeks every summer to volunteer work for the Cumbres & Toltec historic railroad operating between Chama, New Mexico, and Antonito, Colorado. He was an accomplished church organist, who played at various Episcopal churches in DFW. He also participated in the group overseeing the reconstruction of Canterbury House (St. Alban's) at SMU after its building sustained significant damage in a 2003 fire. Clyde wore an astonishing variety of hats and, in each role he took on, he made friends who remember him fondly, including those of us at Perkins School of Theology.

## Three Bridwell Directors Meet



At the recent gathering that celebrated the life of former Bridwell staff member Page Thomas, the past and present came together, and three Bridwell Library directors gathered to share memories of the beloved library. Pictured here are Valerie R. Hotchkiss (r. Bridwell Director, 1993—2005), Roberta A. Schaafsma (l. Bridwell Director, 2007—2018), and Anthony J. Elia (c. Bridwell Director, 2018—present).





## A Visit to Wichita Falls

Very early on the morning of March 25, 2019, the Deans of SMU Libraries and Perkins School of Theology (Holly Jeffcoat and Craig Hill, respectively), along with Bridwell Library Director Anthony Elia, began their trek north to the city of Wichita Falls, Texas. The city, founded in 1872, and built on old cattle ranch land, was known in the early years for its oil boom, but is also home to Sheppard Air Force Base, a major bicycle race (the “Hotter’N Hell Hundred”), parks, the Newby-McMahon Building (known as “the world’s smallest skyscraper”), and the Professional Wrestling Hall of Fame. Even though many might imagine a trio of SMU admins must have been going to Wichita Falls for the wrestling, it was not the case. Wichita Falls also happens to be the home of Mr. J.S. Bridwell, namesake of Bridwell Library, and the J.S. Bridwell Foundation. The SMU visitors enjoyed the morning in downtown Wichita Falls, with its artsy café and street art, and had an excellent and productive meeting with the Bridwell Foundation chairman, Mr. Mac Cannedy. For those who have never ventured to that part of Texas, there’s a fair share of regional culture, which was discovered especially on the way back—this part of Texas truly does have the best Beef Jerky.





## Bridwell Staff Members Visit UT Austin and Ransom Center

*Anthony J. Elia, Director of Bridwell Library and J.S. Bridwell Foundation Endowed Librarian*

In late February, I had the opportunity to attend a symposium at UT Austin that was an interdisciplinary meeting of area studies, South Asian studies, History, and Religious Studies. The events brought together a wide-ranging number of scholars and academics, and was a thoroughly engaging gathering. While at the university, I also stopped at the famed Harry Ransom Center, visited their extraordinary collections, some of which were on display (including the world's oldest "photograph"), and met with one of the associate directors of the center. A month later, I had planned on attending the 2019 Flair Symposium, but due to scheduling conflicts, I was unable to go. Our Bridwell staff member Arvid Nelsen attended in my stead, and offered the following reflections on that experience.



## 2019 Flair Symposium at the Harry Ransom Center

*R. Arvid Nelsen, Curator and Rare Books and Manuscripts Librarian*

On the evening of Thursday, April 4, the author Joyce Maynard addressed the gathering of the 13th biennial Flair Symposium in Austin at the Harry Ransom Center, the special collections library at the University of Texas at Austin. Ms. Maynard spoke openly and gracefully about her experience with J.D. Salinger, who had reached out to her in response to a piece of hers published in the New York Times when she was eighteen years old. Revealing more about herself and focusing less on Salinger, she also addressed the possibly more troubling experience she faced as a memoirist later in her career. Her discussion of the sale and fate of collections of personal correspondence and public reaction to fictive and personal writing set the tone for the next day and a half of discussions around the timely and relevant theme of "Ethical Challenges in Cultural Stewardship."

Through this lens, panels and participants explored and discussed questions such as: how does one—and who gets to—determine the appropriate institutional context for collections seeking homes in archives, libraries, and museums; how do we respond when it is determined that collections in our holdings rightfully belong elsewhere; how do changes in our communal understandings around sensitive issues affect the way we frame or feature the existing collections we already serve; how do we ethically interpret and present emotionally-charged materials, especially those involving hatred and oppression; and how can institutions rectify exclusionary practices in collecting, interpretation, hiring, and promotion.

The perspectives and experiences of professionals from museums, libraries, archives, digital consortia, and university faculties were presented by a national and international group of presenters and attendees. Speakers came from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the National Civil Rights Museum, the Association of American Indian Affairs, University College in Dublin, Bodleian Library at Oxford University, as well as a number of colleges and universities in the United States. Yet, for its global scope the gathering was intimate enough to promote a lot of conversation among old friends and newly discovered colleagues.





## Tables of Content, SMU Libraries Annual Event

On Saturday, March 30, 2019, the SMU Libraries celebrated their annual “Tables of Content” event and program at the Fondren Centennial Reading Room in Fondren Library, SMU. The event featured the 10th Annual Literati Award, which was given to famed journalist and PBS commentator Jim Lehrer. The event was hosted by twenty different SMU and community members, scholars, authors, administrators, and others, who spoke on a variety of topics from U.S. Presidential History and pipe organ playing to the value of college football. Bridwell’s director Anthony Elia hosted a table and discussed the relevance and study of the Harlem Renaissance in a topic titled “Revisiting the Harlem Renaissance One Floorboard at a Time: the Legacy of a Great Artist.”



## Rabbi Olan Lectures

Over the course of four weeks, Bridwell staff members Tim Binkley and Anthony Elia led four one-hour conversations based on the radio addresses of Rabbi Levi Olan, who was a Perkins faculty members from the 1960s. The series was titled “Rabbi Levi A. Olan: The Conscience of the City”, and at the weekly sessions held at Temple Emanu-El, just north of the SMU campus here in Dallas, Tim and Anthony facilitated conversations that were rooted in nearly sixty-year-old reflections of the day (now digitized and available on the Bridwell Library website), and whose message is still relevant to the struggles, politics, and societal concerns of today. Tim Binkley discussed Olan addresses “The Conservative-Liberal Debate” broadcast—March 18, 1962 on 3/12/19; and “On Being Unimportant”—March 20, 1966 on 3/19/19; while Anthony Elia discussed “The Poor Condemn Us”—Nov. 4, 1962 on 3/26/19; and “Life’s Work is Never Done,”—Oct. 20, 1963 on 4/2/19. The Olan lectures and conversations have been an excellent opportunity for reaching out to our community of neighbors.



(l. to r.): Anthony Elia, Joshua Hirsch (grandson of Rabbi Olan),  
Liz Hirsch (daughter of Rabbi Olan), Tim Binkley



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## The Bridwell Renovation

*Jon Speck, Exhibitions Designer, Director of Operations*

Students are enjoying their return to the refreshed Red Room (Recent Periodicals and Corpus Christianorum) and Green Room/Hughey Room (Reference Collection) and have remarked on dramatically improved lighting. Contractors are still at work attending to a few remaining tasks, including the installation of shelf lights, programming of all lighting, installation of a new wireless access point, and the installation of replicated crown molding above the spacious new reference office. The current reference office will undergo a transformation during Phase 2 of the Bridwell renovation, as a centralized location for copiers, scanners, and other public-use equipment.

A glimpse into the planned entry hall was offered by design consultant Adam Bush through a pair of virtual reality goggles that he brought to a recent planning meeting. Bridwell Director Anthony Elia, Access Services Manager Kimberly Hunter, and others were able to experience the sensation of walking past the new access services desk below a lofty ceiling and head up the stairs as a promise of what is to come.





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## The Bridwell Renovation, Virtual Reality Previews

*Kimberly Hunter, Access Services Manager*

I had the opportunity to participate in a virtual reality (VR) tour using VR glasses. It took a few minutes for me to adjust, so I focused in on a single object before beginning the tour. As I began, Adam served as the initial host and provided general instructions on how to use the glasses and the controls. As a result, I was able to (virtually) walk around the desk and into the Gill Room. I was able to further navigate by turning around to see the two front reading rooms and possible configuration for the new Entry Hall doors. Continuing on, I went up the staircase which led to the 2nd floor.

Overall, the experience was quite vivid and informative. There was great detail showing the doorways and new circulation desk. Maneuvering around objects, like figurines, was like movement in a video game. Navigating became easier with time. For the experienced video gamer, there won't be a learning curve. It was exciting to visualize how patrons and staff will be able to interact with our department after the renovations are complete!







## Bridwell Library Renovations Part 1: Early Renovations







## Bridwell Library Renovations Part 2: Renovations Near Completion







## Bridwell Library Renovations Part 2: Renovations Near Completion

