



ROSENBERG LIBRARY
MUSEUM BOOK CLUB

About the Author BILL HOLMAN

In spite of his unstable and tumultuous childhood, William Holman obtained degrees from two universities, got married, and raised three sons of his own. He had a long and distinguished career as a library administrator (including serving as the director of Rosenberg Library during the 1950s), a professor at the Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas, and—with his wife Barbara—owner of a fine printing press, Roger Bechan, Publisher. They have produced more than a dozen titles which are prized by collectors for their typography and design. Two of these books have been included in the prestigious American Institute of Graphic Arts *Fifty Books of Year*.

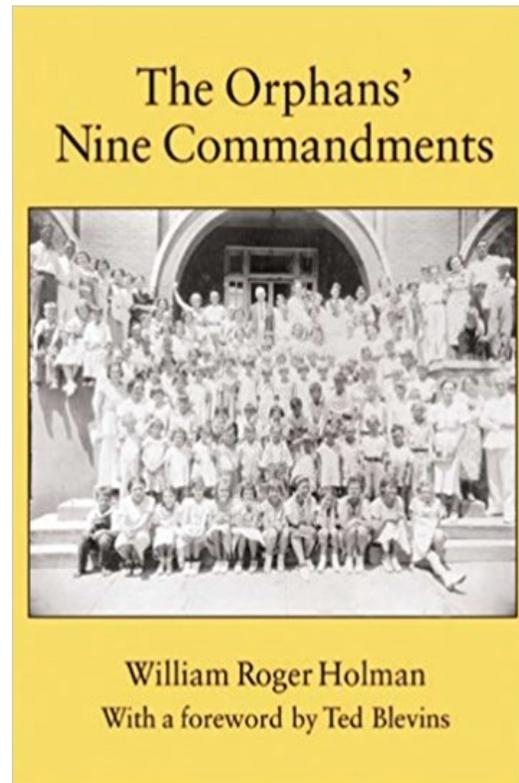
Holman serves as a mentor for the Orphan Foundation of America. The Holmans live in Austin and enjoy golfing, sailing, and book collecting.

PROGRAM AGENDA

Summer 2017

Presented by Rosenberg Library

12:00 noon	Welcome & Introductions
12:00-12:15	Historical Presentation
12:15-1:00	Book Discussion



Rosenberg Library's Museum Book Club provides a forum for discovery and discussion, linking literary selections with artworks and historical objects from the permanent collection.

1. Legendary Texas novelist Larry McMurtry described *The Orphans' Nine Commandments* as “a compelling memoir...[it] takes us into a world of orphanages—private and state—in a way that will move you, inform you, and haunt you.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Did you find Holman's story depressing or uplifting?
2. Although Bill Holman discovers the identity of his father as an adult, he never knew what became of his mother after she placed him in an orphanage. Why do you think she made this decision when he was six years old rather than when he was born? Do you have any theories about what may have happened to her?
3. As an adult, Holman expresses curiosity rather than anger toward his birth parents. Would you have had the same reaction had you faced this situation? How do you think his mother and father could have best taken responsibility for the child which resulted from their affair?
4. Roger was adopted and then “returned” by several families who decided they were not happy with his precocious behavior. Were you surprised by the lack of support and advocacy for children or counseling for prospective parents in the foster care system during the 1930s? Do you think adults today are more sympathetic toward children than they were in the past?
5. Will and Helen Minter were aware of the circumstances of Holman's birth and formed a protective relationship with him for a time. Why do you think they didn't adopt Roger themselves? If you had been one of the adults who knew the identity of Holman's birth parents, would you have eventually told him the truth? Why or why not?