LIBRARY SERVICES TAKE SOME GRIND FROM STUDY

By ANN M. DAVIS

Taking a survey of people around the Thresher office, which may or may not be a representative sample of the student body, several staff members found that to many people the library works in mysterious ways. It was decided therefore to run a series of irregularly appearing articles on the inner workings of Fondren Library.

At the Beginning
For the first article, we begin at the beginning: how the library gets its books and periodicals.

For the most part, new books are ordered at the request of the faculty. Nine out of ten times the orders are given a routine O.K., and the book is charged to the department whose field relates to the subject of the book, e.g., if a chemistry professor orders a philosophy book the book comes out of the philosophy budget. Dr. Hardin Craig, librarian, says that these "multilateral" purchases tend to even out.

The Other 1 out of 10
The other one out of ten times comes, usually, when there is an order over $100 or when a book is ordered in some field not taught at Rice such as anthropology or archeology.

Students are free to order books too. To order a book, one fills out a form available at the circulation desk. Filling student requests is not so automatic as filling faculty requests.

Four Criteria
Dr. Craig mentioned four criteria used in deciding whether the book is to be bought:

1. Is it a book easily available at the public library?
2. Is it a how-to-do-it manual either inexpensive or of interest to only one person?

3. Is it a novel that one expects to see in paperback form soon?
Dr. Craig added that there were no set rules, saying, "It's hard to lay down a rule ahead of time. You just have to wait until the occasion arises."

330,000 Books
Dr. Craig also said that both the amount of money spent on books per student and the ratio of library expenditures to total expenditures are very good. At present the library has 330,000 books.

More "Raw Material"
Talking about Fondren acquisitions generally, Dr. Craig said that he would like to see it become a good research library. He would like to see more of what he called "raw material," manuscripts, diaries, logs, etc.

Microprints
Mrs. Zingler, order librarian, estimates that there were more than 10,000 books received a year. Besides books, the library gets microfilms of periodicals, 3x5 microcards of books out of print, and "early American prints"—books printed in America before 1800—on microprint.

A Whole Library?
Rice also gets books through gifts and exchanges. Mrs. Hamilton, gifts and exchanges librarian, said that a great many gifts are given as memorials and a great many duplicates or back files of magazines are donated. The library also gets a "fair number" of individual books and occasionally receives a whole library.