The Fondren Library is an asset to the university and one would be remiss to discount its tremendous assistance as an educational resource to any patron. Architecturally, the facility is aesthetically pleasing to the eye, but as much so to the mind. The library is impressively populated with resources, yet welcoming and maneuverable; paper-based, yet digitally liberating; it is an indoor enclosure draped with sunlight; all the while representing cumulative, classic world knowledge yet embracing twenty first century modernity.

The creation and completion of this research project was contingent upon library tools and resources of multiple formats available in the Fondren library. Even the Fondren DVD collection provided reinforcement for relevant educational concepts. However for this project, chiefly, a literature review of peer-reviewed scholarly articles and hardcover physical library resources accessed through the Fondren library were integral. Integral, for a project delving into research featuring a primary thematic focus of both educational and psychological disciplines requires a facility with relevant, quality resources. Combing through an impressive section of in-print scholarly journals for relevant articles was fascinating. However, more impressive, was the fact that the sheer volume of related material available surpassed any effort I could have made to collect and read everything. Perhaps any student would agree it is better to reflect back that he or she had enough resources as opposed to not enough resources. Even better, with this project, I felt there was not just enough, there was more than enough access to information in Fondren, so
that my best effort, however imperfect, would make this project as accurate and relevant as possible.

The actual foundation of this qualitative research assignment is a literary analysis of Fondren’s collection of psychological and educational contributions. In addition to physical books for this research paper, electronic journals and databases made available by Fondren were heavily used. Academic Source Complete, ERIC, and JSTOR helped to supplement the physical sources that I was able to borrow from the Fondren Library. Additionally, the interlibrary loan system was utilized several times and was tremendously efficient. The Fondren staff has always been kind and resourceful. And in regards to the interlibrary loan system, every article that was requested was made available usually within that business day.

In the fall of 2011, while in MLSC 600 taught by Dr. Barrett, I accidently stumbled upon an unassigned page that lured me to read on. I thus met Howard Gardner, on page 503, of one of our textbooks entitled A World of Ideas. Gardner first postulated that our intelligence is composed of a collection at least seven distinct intelligences. As Gardner’s initial multiple intelligences publication Frames of Mind was at least twenty-five years old, I sought to conduct research on the current state of intelligence testing, theories on intelligence, and, if they were to be found, implications for successful learning strategies. After consultation, I embarked on a qualitative research assignment concerning the implications of multiple intelligences and learning styles for my term paper. In retrospect, part of the takeaway value of the effort was coming to learn: what we know about assessing intelligence teaches us how much we don’t; what intelligence is we do not necessarily agree upon; and how we prefer to learn, let alone learn best, is a finicky matter. Moreover, what has been particularly rewarding at the conclusion of this assignment was coming to see a bigger picture for everybody, including myself, who was
ever teased as a child. Specifically, for a potential reader who interacts with younger learners that have ever been devalued as “lesser than”, this project may help to build positive esteem as efforts to evaluate human intelligence are argued as relative constructs lacking the scientific support of unanimity.

Through the effort expended on this project, it was my hope as an aspiring life-long educator to come to a definitive understanding of how instruction can best be suited for learners, as well as come to peace with what intelligence actually is. While I have not yet reached these destinations, the research has helped me to progress along on my journey. It is my hope that readers of this study may progress on their respective journeys as well. For instance, this qualitative study provides an opportunity for readers to contemplate questions briefly alluded to throughout the project such as: what constitutes intelligence, what are the shortcomings of intelligence testing, do multiple intelligences more comprehensively describe human cognitive ability, do the multiple intelligences correlate with visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning preferences, and what are the challenges of incorporating visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning preferences with the multiple intelligences to achieve enhanced learner outcomes. As for takeaway value, perhaps a reader, through exposure to Gardner’s multiple intelligences theory referenced within, may come to understand human intelligence no longer as a linear, unidimensional rating. Furthermore, perhaps a reader may even develop an enhanced intrapersonal awareness of his or her own learning style preferences and multiple intelligence inclinations.

Preceding the Friends of Fondren Graduate Research Award Committee, the readers of this unpublished project initially were students in the Rice University Master of Liberal Studies class Introduction to Graduate Research, Analysis, and Exposition led by Dr. Deborah J. Barrett,
Ph. D. This group of budding scholars (now enrolled in new course offerings) is composed of adult learners who are committed to lifelong learning. The curriculum of the MLS program is multidisciplinary indicating interests in a variety of fields, including but not limited to literary analysis, philosophy, psychology, natural science, sociology, physics, and politics. While the interests of the students within the class are diverse, all students seem to appreciate an opportunity to learn new concepts, or for that matter, perceive old ones in new ways. The Fondren Library is a renowned resource that enhances the ability of students enrolled in the Glascock School of Continuing Studies to cultivate knowledge in such areas of interest. For this project, the literature review of peer-reviewed scholarly articles as well as relevant physical library resources serve as a testament to the preceding declaration.