Fondren library resources were essential for a research paper that I completed for HIST 291 (20th Century American Presidents). The project is titled “Tet Offensive: How Lyndon B. Johnson Won the Battle but Lost the War”. My final product is a 3658-word historical essay that uses 16 cited sources and many other uncited background readings, all from Fondren library.

For the project, I used a myriad of primary and secondary historical resources from the Fondren stacks. These resources included the autobiography of Lyndon B. Johnson, the memoirs of wartime journalists, original transcripts of famous speeches, compiled wartime posters, and various scholarly analyses.

To start my research, I used the Fondren library catalog computer on the first floor to find areas of the library that had books on the Vietnam War. I quickly narrowed down the floor to 4th and found the appropriate stacks ranges that had materials relating to the Vietnam War and the Tet Offensive. Once I went to the stacks, I was pleasantly surprised by not only the volume of materials available, but also the superb organization of the resources. The order of resources were very intuitive, and I found a wealth of diversified sources to draw on for my paper.

Once I found the list of books that I would use for my paper, I used one of the nearby desks on fourth floor to start drafting my paper. Since the research paper required several days of work, I kept the books at the desk and attached a note asking the librarians not to return them. Over the course of one week, I had finished my paper, working exclusively in Fondren while using only Fondren resources. As such, Fondren served as a one-stop-shop for a very extensive historical research paper. It streamlined my research efforts and made it stress-free.

As a history major, Fondren library has been a tremendous help for my studies over the last four years. It has helped hone my independent research abilities while providing ample support. I am deeply grateful for Fondren, and I hope that it continues to flourish for the benefit of all future Rice students.