ENG 1121

Prof. Garcia

Research Assignment

**Assignment:**

For this assignment you are going to do historical research on a topic and question inspired by Margaret Cavendish’s *Convent of Pleasure*. You will then connect your research to the text and use it to read a passage within its historical context.

**Directions:**

1. First you will pick a topic that is of interest to you. You can either use one of the topics I provide below or come up with one of your own.
2. After you have chosen your topic, you need a question. Here you have two choices:
3. You can find a passage in the text that relates to the topic you have chosen. Then come up with a question about your topic that this particular moment in the text makes you ask.
4. You can choose one of my questions I provide and then find a passage in the text that relates to this question.
5. You will then go out and find two useful and credible library sources on your topic. You should read and summarize these two sources and prepare an annotated bibliography.
6. After your research is done, you will write a one-page reflection and close reading of the passage that relates to your research. Here you explain how your research helps you to better understand this particular moment in the play.
7. As a final step, you will use your research to write a short footnote for future readers so that they can also understand the passage in the historical context. This should only be 3-4 sentences. That means, that you have to decide what is the most important information you found from your research and succinctly summarize it for future readers.

**Possible Research Topics and Questions:**

Women and Marriage Laws

1. What rights did women have after marriage?
2. What could a woman do if her marriage was a bad one?
3. What happened to a woman’s inheritance after marriage?

Convents

1. What was life in a convent like?
2. How did 17th century English society see convents?

Gender

1. How were cross-dressing women viewed by society? What are some historical examples?
2. What were social views on same-sex friendships and/or relationships?

Social Hierarchy

1. What was life like for women of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ rank? (you pick which rank interests you)
2. What was life like for upper-class women?

Clothes

1. What were the clothes worn by each class of women?