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When I was assigned this project, I had to choose one question to answer out of a list. Immediately, the one that interested me was “Why didn’t Elizabeth I marry?” Elizabeth I was a powerful, domineering figure in a time where women were treated far subordinate to men. However, I also knew that her counsel and Europe’s political tenor had a fascinating effect on her reign. Using Fondren Library resources, I was able to dig deep into Elizabeth’s relationship with her counsellors and suitors through old letters, political and religious tracts, and analyses by prominent historians.

Before I was assigned the project, I actually reserved all the materials for my professor, which helped me become more comfortable looking for sources in the stacks. I used the library website to check for availability and locate thirty four books on a map to plan how I would collect them all. After collecting the books for all the projects, I knew where I could find more related sources in the stacks if I needed them, and I had a better memory for the call numbers, especially at the reserve desk.

The online resources of Fondren were extremely helpful for accessing primary and secondary sources for my background research. I used the library subscription to Early English Books Online (EEBO) to read John Knox’s *First Blast*, John Aylmer’s *True Harborrowe*, and John Stubbes’ *Gaping Gulf*. EEBO preserved the documents in their original pamphlet format, meaning that I could read the original spelling and characters in Old/Middle English. Though it was challenging to comprehend some of the language and references, I was proud of myself for being able to interact with and decipher these historic, dense documents in a meaningful way. For secondary sources, I used the library’s website to find articles my professor recommended

and read reviews of other articles I could use. The library's JSTOR subscription allowed me to view many of the main sources in my paper, download them to use off campus, and helped me compile my bibliography.

When compiling my research, I wrote best when I had the space to spread my source materials out in front of me and easily access additional help if necessary. Since I live off campus, I don't have a personal space to work in, so I spent most of my time at the computer desks on the first floor of the library. I could access our online subscriptions on location, use the reserves desk and printers, and see all my sources in print and on my laptop while I typed on a large screen. If I needed a more private setting, I reserved study rooms to work in. When I was not at the library, I scanned my sources to my email to use outside of the library. This setup helped me focus on my task and made writing this paper much easier than I expected.

Overall, this project helped me learn more about Fondren resources, find focused study spaces, and made me a better historian. I gained new experience in analyzing primary sources, searching for secondary sources, and writing my first long form analysis. Going forwards, I have a much better understanding of the research process and how Fondren Library can make that process easier.