

## Sample Final Paper: thesis and body paragraph

### Sample Thesis:

'Whites' by Norman Rush, 'Middlesex' by Jeffrey Eugenides, and 'Orlando' by Virginia Woolf challenge the ideas of gender norms within society by presenting the reader with a character who frees themselves from the gender norms they are faced with, ultimately proving that gender is a social construct.

### Sample Paragraph:

While 'Whites' examines the impact of stereotypical gender roles as they are impacted by a racial hierarchy, 'Middlesex' perhaps gives the best representation of false ideas of gender that have been created and idealized by society for far too long. When Callie first started noticing that she may in fact, be a Cal, her first thoughts were not "Wow, how interesting, I could play the part of man or woman!" Instead Callie was absolutely terrified of the harsh criticism she knew she would receive from society if all of a sudden she decided to play the full time role of a male. Callie had literally become trapped inside her own body with nowhere to run because society has told her she was a "monster". When Callie makes the life altering decision to fully become Cal, she is giving a big slap in the face to everyone who has helped perpetuate these discriminatory gender stereotypes. Cal's moment of freedom came when he saw himself in the barbershop mirror as a boy for the very first time. When Cal leaves the barbershop he exclaims, "The other people passing through the bus station, to the extent they noticed me at all, took me for a student at a nearby boarding school" (Eugenides 445). This moment represented the first time Cal had accepted himself as a hybrid person, not male or female, but both, existing in perfect harmony together. Even greater than this miraculous moment however, was the fact that Cal could lead a perfectly normal life. Did Callie's transformation cause outrages and riots and overall become a burden to society? Not at all, in fact no even noticed. Cal being able to live just as any other non-hermaphrodite human being clearly illustrates that gender is a completely formulated idea that has been created to keep order in society. Queer theory can also be used here to help examine Cal's "alternate form of sexuality." Cal would have only been treated like a "monster" if people knew that he was a hermaphrodite, but because they did not know, Cal was able to lead a perfectly normal life. This proves that the idea of gender is only discriminated against when people are presented with something they are not accustomed to, and therefore classify it as being outside of the norm.