

EngWr 482—Essay #1

Assigned texts:

Butler, Judith. "Preface (1999)." *Gender Trouble*, 2nd ed. Routledge, 1990, pp. vii – xxviii.

Foucault, Michel. "Part One: We 'Other Victorians'" and "Part Two: The Repressive Hypothesis." *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1*. Translated by Robert Hurley. Vintage, 1978, pp. 3 – 49.

NaMaste, Ki. "The Politics of Inside/Out: Queer Theory, Poststructuralism, and a Sociological Approach to Sexuality." *Sociological Theory*, vol. 12, no. 2, Jul 1994 pp. 220 – 231. *Academic Search Complete*.

Nordberg, Jenny. *The Underground Girls of Kabul: In Search of a Hidden Resistance in Afghanistan*. Crown, 2014.

Rubin, David A. "'An Unnamed Blank That Craved a Name': A Genealogy of Intersex as Gender." *Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, vol. 37, no. 4, 2012, pp. 883 – 908. *Academic Search Complete*.

Said, Edward W. "Chapter One: Knowing the Oriental." *Orientalism*. Vintage, 1978, pp. 31 – 49.

Both Edward Said and Michel Foucault highlight the historical use of social and political power to define and manage identity, and in both cases a more powerful group seeks to manage a much less powerful group. Judith Butler, Ki NaMaste, and David Rubin, on the other hand, seek to critically analyze *how* that power has been employed as well as explore the social impact of that power. In all these texts, underlying beliefs (warrants) of Western civilization's concepts of identity are explored and questioned.

Assignment:

In a 1500 to 2000 word essay, apply the concepts discussed in the previous texts to analyze Jenny Nordberg's book *The Underground Girls of Kabul*—that is, read Nordberg's book through the lens of other texts we have read. You will want to explore the interplay of social and political power structures that Nordberg discovers, and you will want to analyze how the employment of that power shapes the identities of the girls Nordberg investigates. Finally, you will want to explore how the culture's unspoken beliefs are revealed in Nordberg's text.

In addition to Nordberg's text, you *must* parenthetically reference *at least* three of the five texts we have read in preparation for this writing assignment, which means that you *must* use the ideas from those texts to compose your paper. Focus on these *ideas*; do NOT simply string together a series of quotes. Instead, look for the interrelationships between the ideas and weave together a focused argument. I am looking for a reasoned response to these authors' ideas, not a simple summary.

I expect your paper to demonstrate proper MLA formatting, which includes page set up, parenthetical referencing, and a works-cited page.