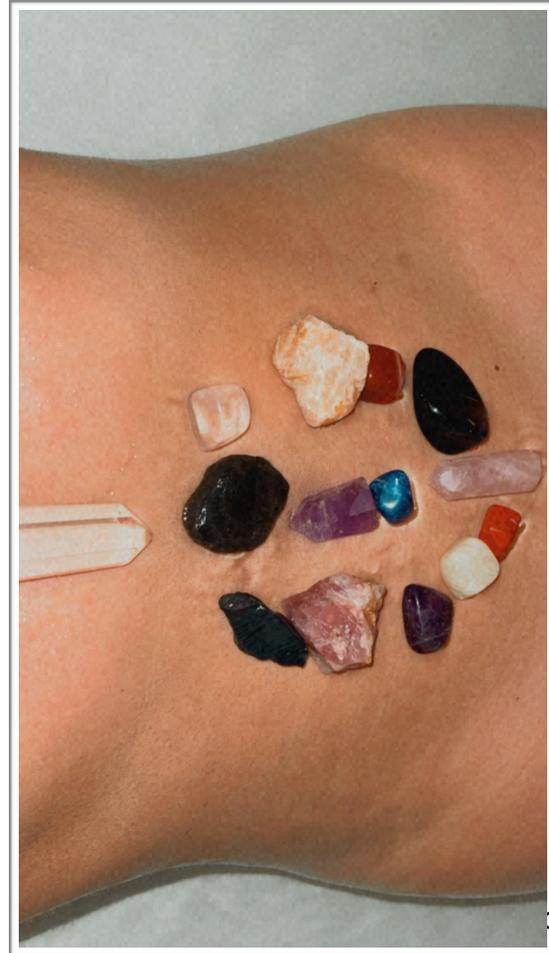
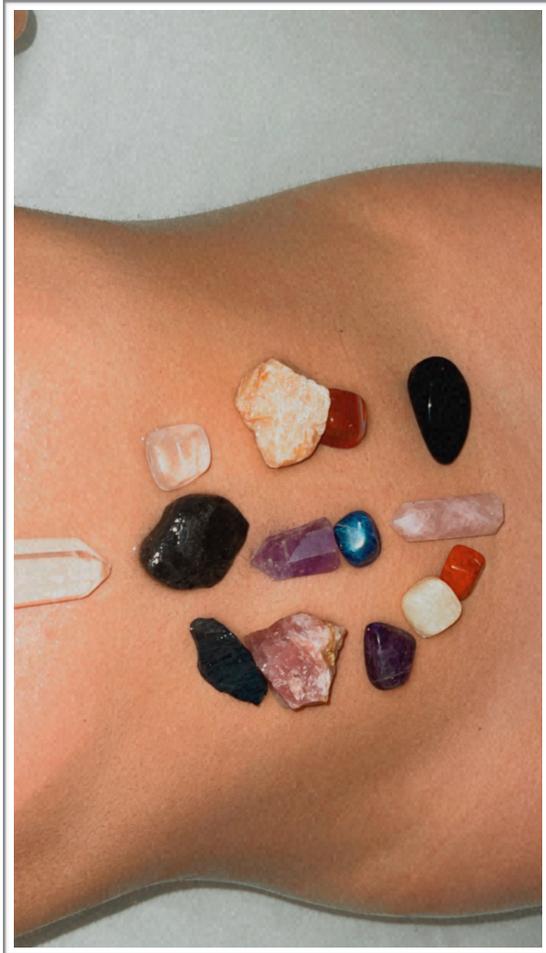


**Gender Manifesto**  
**by Daniela Peckova Watanabe**

**Basic Definitions**

I was born a female, assigned a female gender by my parents and the way they dressed me and treated me. I identify with the gender I was born so I'm cisgender. Regarding my sexuality, I haven't experimented with other sexes but I was instantly attracted to boys so didn't feel the need to. I'm aware many people don't feel the same way, and sometimes it can be a tough journey to find out who you are, mostly because of little support and information given. For a cisgender woman, society's expectation is to marry a good man and have babies. I did the first part but the babies didn't come. That does affect how I feel like a woman. Because the problem is with my eggs something I can't change I wonder how something so natural for most can become such an expensive disappointment for me.



of 6

## **Gender Equality**

When I think if my life could have been different if I was born a man, I realize many times I thought men had it easier. Is the grass always greener on the other side? I thought that because men did not have painful periods, painful childbirth and did not suffer from such hormonal woes during the month. But depending on where they are born there can be lots of pressure in being a man too, in Japanese culture only the eldest son carries the family name and it's supposed to look after the parents and the rest of the family. I also like that men are heard better when they speak. When I began looking for alternative healings for fertility I learned about feminine and masculine energies, in eastern cultures, it's taught we have both inside of us and when one is not in equilibrium it can cause imbalances such as infertility. I might be in denial but that made me feel even worse. Why as a woman I have to be soft? Why according to this philosophy my relationship has to be balanced in a way that I'm not too "Yang" and I'm more "Yin, that seemed quite unfair. Until then I was proud of being a woman that goes after what I want, a person that doesn't take bullshit from anyone. This imbalance might not be the whole reason for the problem but it did make me notice how throughout history women were expected to be soft and nurturing and not too busy, oh yeah because these days if you make yourself too busy you can blame infertility on that too. Anyway in this class, I realized how we are all dealing with something deep trying to find out who we are but while doing that we wish to be respected and heard.

## **Gender Exposure**

My gender socialization during childhood was as straight as possible, I don't remember having contact with any gay person until after I was fully grown. Things have changed so much we have the first transgender in the family now. My mom had 12 siblings that had many kids of their own and my dad had 9 also with many grandkids already. The transgender case is on my

mom's side, a super catholic family from Brazil is being super hard on her. Besides not having much contact with any variety of genders from an early age, my parents are super open-minded if it's not with me and my sister. They expected us to be straight and I can't imagine how they would react otherwise. But with this transgender cousin, they are so nice and made sure to support him from the beginning as he comes from a very humble background and identified himself from a very early age. For myself, I never had that moment "I'm a girl" because I didn't have the doubt, so it was natural but I remember clearly sexuality discoveries; I would suffer to guys when I was like 13.

Now I remember, when I was actually assigned a little boyfriend in the school, our moms would bring us on dates like pre-school stuff, that was kind of gender assigning. If I had a kid I see no problem in treating the kid as a boy or a girl until they say they don't feel that way. I would respect that and treat them as they want to be treated as requested after that. That's because you can be a really girly girl and be gay or trans and you can be a really masculine man and be gay and that's fine, I find the no gender things a stereotype too. Parents always want to do the best and still gonna get it wrong, so just follow what feels natural and listen to the kid.

### **Gender Milestones**

My gender milestone was losing my virginity which I couldn't wait to do because at 15 I thought I was quite late, very different when you have grown up in Brazil and many teens are actually getting pregnant at that age, there were so many cases in my school. We just felt sorry for the girl. The second milestone was getting married to a man. And the third milestone was discovering infertility as that made me feel like a broken woman. When I think of the gay communities that can't conceive naturally it makes me feel more normal than the group of friends I have.

**Non-conforming and Asexual**

I could be gender non-conforming as I don't think we should follow pre-conceived ideas of who we are unless you want to, if you don't identify with any gender that's totally fine. I just happen to identify as woman. I have 3 cases in my dad's side of the family, the Japanese side, where 2 uncles and 1 auntie never dated anyone, never got married, and never spoke about it. I also have a friend like that. I feel sorry for them because we didn't have the opening to discuss gender, maybe there were asexual or maybe they were gay, they would be treated the same way by everyone, just makes me sad that they might not be living their truth for fear of not being accepted. In Japan, this is really common as society is stiff and there is so much prejudice and social boundaries.

**On Gender Stereotypes**

My gender is stereotypical in the way my relationship is with my husband, I cook and take care of the house which I don't mind because if I don't want to, he doesn't expect me to do it. That makes all the difference. We were out of the stereotypical in the way that we both modeled most of our lives, I did so much better than him financially and supported our dreams but that does create an imbalance and everyone should feel accomplished, I don't think the man should be a sole provider, we are much happier now that we share and build together and equally, he feels more empowered. I don't think men should pay when on a date, that just sets the dynamic, where I grow up, we split, we both work on a dream. I want to feel accomplished and have my own money, I feel like women who marry for comfort are selling their freedom and their heart and it's all good until something goes wrong and they are trapped in the situation. They are happy because they will love the babies and not every time goes wrong, it's a less stressful life that's for sure, in the end, I might just be a hopeless romantic.

## Gender and Society

Gender is influenced by religion, society, race, and ethnicity, we could see in the movie Moonlight how hard was to come out as gay in a black community. So in many cases, gender is actually imposed. The movie "The Mask We Live In" displayed all the pre-conceived ideas of manhood. Because more and more people are standing up to their truth over the fear of being canceled by their own people, things are getting better, and more gender knowledge is being spread. In fact, in this latest generation the coolest thing in the school in New York is being gay, and even kids who are not gay and are still discovering, are coming out as gay because it's cooler. Only the fact that we have this class in the requirements already says how things are getting better.



Wearing my brand HARMONIA NY.

Me in Drag, just playing around in NYC.



## **Bibliography**

Moonlight, Movie.

The Mask We Live In, Movie.

Personal Archive, Photos.