

# PETER'S SEARCH FOR GENDER IDENTITY REFLECTED IN KIM FU'S FOR TODAY I AM A BOY

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## PETER'S SEARCH FOR GENDER IDENTITY REFLECTED

### 3 IN KIM FU'S *FOR TODAY I AM A BOY*

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#### ABSTRACT

This study discusses the issue of gender identity in the novel *For Today I Am A Boy* written by Kim Fu in 2014. *For Today I Am A Boy* is a novel that tells the story of a confused boy, Peter, whose soul is trapped in a male's body. This novel is interesting to discuss because this novel is based on the issues that are currently popular, namely transgender. This study aims to describe Peter's process of searching for his gender identity and how he finds his gender identity. In analyzing Peter's search for his gender identity, queer theories and gender performativity are applied. In addition, this study is designed as descriptive qualitative study that applies queer criticism. The results of the analysis show that the main character's search for gender identity is triggered by social pressure created by the community's stigma about binary opposition. Moving to a new city and trying to make changes to his appearance becomes strategies for Peter to find his identity. His new identity is presented in the form of appearance and use of female names. Based on the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that the process of changing the identity of Peter's character offers a discourse about the struggle of transgender figures for recognition of their identity.

**Keywords:** gender identity, gender performativity, transgender

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#### 1. INTRODUCTION

##### Background of the Study

People's identity is important because it can determine what they want to be while living in the world and fulfill the demands of life. However, the searching for identity is still a complicated issue in the world. Many young people who are in the process of seeking identity sometimes take the wrong path. One of the ways to determine a person's identity is through his or her gender. So far, society only recognizes two gender identities, feminine (all aspects related to the female sex) and masculine (all aspects related to the male sex). The problem of gender identity, namely feminine and masculine, is always motivated by the public's view that a woman must be feminine, good at cooking and has an interest in men, while men are required to have strong masculine traits, be wise and always have an interest in women (Ritzer, 2014: 393). In other words, gender identity refers to

the way certain cultures distinguish between masculine and feminine roles. Culture influences what constitutes the beauty of gender and how it is presented among cultures.

However, today people see variations of gender outside of the feminine and masculine known as LGBT. LGBT is often seen as something queer and unusual because society is in conflict with social constructions that have been adopted by heterosexual society for a long time. This conflict gives result in the emergence of the term gender deviation or gender identity. This term means that there is a conflict between a person's gender and gender identity. Lack of information and knowledge about gender causes confusion in society and ultimately gives society a negative label about people outside the binary gender. Society's negative view related to non binary gender may cause confusion for the non binary gender to identify their gender identity. According to Butler (1990:137) gender is a role, choice and construction that a person uses. People can freely decide which gender they want to go with. People who fails to identify their own gender status are referred to as transgender. The terms transgender refers to people who present their gender differently from their natural gender, that is the gender they receive from birth as a sign that they are male or female and includes identities as transmen (FtM), transwomen (MtF), and transgender who do crossdress (Rowland & Incrocci, 2008: 379).

The issue of finding gender identity also becomes a concern in literary work. One of them is a novel by Kim Fu entitled *For Today I Am A Boy*. This novel tells the journey of Peter Huang, a Chinese immigrant child who lives in Ontario, Canada. He is the only boy among his sisters. Since in his early age, Peter has desire to be a girl and he eagers to do activities and to dress like his sisters. When he is six years old, he lets his sister know the biggest secret about himself. He talks about his desire to be beautiful woman, but his sister Helen tells him that he could be handsome instead.

While Peter is looking for a way to adapt himself to the new environment, Peter faces many obstacles such as bullying, ridicule, violence with boys on the playground and being taught to shave at a very young age. All of these problems have the aim of attracting him into the male profile that is expected, but in reality it does not work well. This method shows the limitations of gender identity that exist in society. Peter's father takes every step to shape his son as a strong west man. Peter also struggles to figure out the connection between who he really is and what society and the world say about him. Peter ends up getting in big trouble. Even after graduateing from high school and follows his desire to live happy in the new city as a woman in Montreal Peter still felt unhappy and lonely than he ever imagined.

Peter realizes that his journey to self-awareness seems more difficult than ever. His desire not to have male genitals has to be postponed because of his limitations. But it didn't last long when Peter met a coworker named John. John is a transgender person who finally helped Peter realizes that internal changes also need to be considered, not just external changes. At this point, Peter is fully aware and sees himself as a woman in all aspects. The whole storyline in the novel tells about a young teenage boy who tries to find out which gender identity he is comfortable with.

The writer is interested in analyzing the novel because the issue of the novel offers a very interesting storyline. This novel discusses the issue of gender identity that often appears in society. Gender identity issues also often become one of the topics to be discussed in various platforms such as TV, radio, news, talk shows, reality shows etc. The popularity of this gender identity issue makes researcher is interested in analyzing the novel, focusing on the main character, Peter, who has experienced gender identity issue. Gender identity issue can be experienced by anyone, including children.

## 2. METHOD

Related to the research topic in this study, the researcher uses queer criticism as the main theory to analyze the gender identity experienced by the main character in the story. Belongs to Queercriticism theory to emphasizes the problem of identity such as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender. In this study, This study uses a qualitative research design especially descriptive qualitative. According to Bryman and Bell (2007) "quantitative research is built as a quantification research strategy in data collection and analysis. The research instrument is the researcher herself, who reads and understands the references which support this study. A research instrument is a tool used to collect data. In order to collect valid data, one instrument or tool is usually required. According to Yin (2011), this tool is known as a research instrument. In this study, the researcher uses questioner and interview as the data collection instruments. For the data analysis the researcher analyzed by involving the following steps in the first step, the classified data are interpreted to find the main character's reasons in searching for his gender identity and how the main character finds his gender identity in accordance with the performativity theory of Judith Butler the second the researcher analyze the data based on the problem of the research and for the last step, the researcher draws conclusion based on the result of the analysis.

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### 1. REASONS FOR SEARCHING HIS GENDER IDENTITY

In the story entitled *For Today I Am A Boy* by Kim Fu the main character is described as having curiosity about his gender identity. His curiosity about gender identity starts when he is six years old. The process of searching for gender identity by the main character to find his true gender identity.

##### 1.1 Feeling Comfortable Being Feminine

A person who can not determine their self in one gender will try to look for a gender identity that makes them feels comfortable. In that process, a person will do many things such as crossing to another gender or doing other gender activities. Same thing happened to the main character Peter Huang in *For Today I Am A Boy*. He has curiosity which tend to try another gender activities such as wearing women clothes, doing make up and acting like women.

Working in studious silence, I drew myself as a Mommy. I thought of the mommies in magazine ads and picture books, always bending at the referee over their teid apron with their breasts on display-serving pancakes, wrapping presents, patting the heads of puppies, vacuuming sparkling-celan floors. I drew myself with a stiff halo of hair, swaddled babies around my feet. A satisfied smile form ear to ear." I want to be a Mommy (Fu, 2014: 2)."

This quotation takes place in the classroom. Peter gets a school assignment about what he will do in the future. The teacher writes down several options such as astronaut, business man, scientist, policeman and mother. All of his classmates choose their dreams same as their natural gender. But Peter preferto draw his dreams as a mother. He relly loves doing girls activities He feels that doing girl activities arevery interesti thing. He is imagining if he becomes a mother in the future, she will do female activitiy such as serving pancakes, wrapping presents, patting the heads of puppies, vacuuming sparkling-celan floors. He can not describe how he happy he is because he can do female activities without hiding behind his real gender, as a man.

<sup>3</sup> I turned on my back to the mirror and looked over my shoulder. Those legs! Coming out of the bottom of my bathrobe, a little pale, but so slim, so shapley. Legs made for high heels. Legs made for short short skirts. Legs made to be seen(Fu,2014 : 75).

The quotation above shows Peter really act like woman he is admires himself in the mirror compliment his own body shape with bathrobe around his slim body. He says that his skinny feet are perfect to wear short skirts.The statement above describes that Peterreally love to act like woman and he love to admire everything about woman.

A jaunty trumpet played the same song over Close-ups of gourment dishes,intercut with govetta dancing. She only swayed her hips and sanpped her fingers, her huge body pushing the bearders of our nine-inch TV. I imitaed her movements, sliding on my socks. At the end, with the show titel under her round face, she bit an empaty fork while starting right into the camera(Fu,2014: 37).

As can be read from the quotation above, Peterfeels comfort in being a woman. It happens when Peter is fourteen years old, his desire to be a woman continued until he dreamed of acting as a female with his younger sister Bonnie. At that time Peter and Bonniepretends to play the drama in the film on the television.

I fluffed blus onto <sup>5</sup> my cheekbones, trying to sharpen them into Adele's high <sup>5</sup> angels. Bouncing near me on the mattress was a pot of violes eye shadow that made me thinkof an eye Force open. I brushed it Otto my eyelids. I wet my thumb on my tonge and smeared the shadow into an opaque layer, all the way from the tear ducts to the outside corners(Fu,2014: 22).

The quotation above shows that Peter can usehis sister's makeup and clothes with strong passion. The role model in Peter's life is Adele.He seems really understand how Adele's makeup style is. He imitates everything Adele does and applies it to himself. It can be concluded that Peter tries to transform himself into a woman by puting on his sister's makeup to build his female identity.

On one occasion Peter decided to wear make up because he is feeling sad. For the first time Peter decided to use makeup. As can be read from the quotation bellow.

For the first time in a long time. It felt too small. I put on my sisters'decades old makeup. It was hard to get colour to transfer from the dried-out lipstick. I wiped it on over and over again charfing my lips, willing it to work (Fu,2014: 149).

Basically Peter has an interest in makeup. Peter really like doing girls Activities expecially with make up he think tahat make up is the mian point for being feminin. He really likes to play with make up. Watching his sistersdoing make up in Adele's room makes Peter want to try it too. But, he never tell his sisters about that, becausehe know that his sister never allow him to join with them. Without hesitation his sisterskeep doing their activity in front of Peter. Because from the beginning Peter hasalready interest in make up, Peter does it secretlyand practicing very hard, he tries to look beautiful like his sister. The explanation above shows Peter really like doing girls activities.

<sup>6</sup> She let me wear one of her bikini tops, as long as I wore a boy T-shirt over the top. I felt I warm sunshine through my T-shirt, and I Hope I was getting a tan around the leather starps of the bikini(Fu,2014: 21).

This incident happen during the summer vacation. At that time Peter and his sister are on vacation at the beach. Before sunbathing, Peter seeAdele wearing a beautiful bikini.He look at Adele



and admire her how perfect she is with those bikini. Suddenly, he imagine how to wear it too, this interest is coming because Peter really loves about female stuff and activities. He can not control his desire to wear a bikini so he tells Adele about his wish to wear a bikini. At first he is afraid when he tells to Adele but, unexpectedly Adele allow him she says she let Peter wears her bikini as long as he wears t-shirt on the top. He felt very happy wearing women's clothes was his dream even though he had to use a t-shirt as his top.

<sup>21</sup> I'd spent an hour circling the block of rue Sainte-Catherine that contained the shoe store, sweating into wool coat and willing myself onward. <sup>20</sup> When I went in, I picked up the shoes I had been looking at and announced in awful, loud, artificial voice (Fu, 2014: 82).

Walking around for shopping from one store to another store is the most exhausting activity for a male. Because they usually tend to buy something in one place without strolling around like female does. But for Peter strolling around the mall is the best activity for him and he seems to enjoy it. Peter is really conscious with what he is doing, he knows that shopping is something unusual for men so that is why he has to hide her true feelings from everyone. When the shopkeeper asked who it was for, he says that he brings the shoes for his girlfriend. His love about shopping makes him forget about his true identity.

<sup>28</sup> Everyday, I came home took off my kitchen shoes and socks, and put on the sandals. I wore them whenever I was in my apartment. As I made meals, washed the floor on my knees. At first Love looking down at my still meticulously hairless legs—all the muscles extended and activated by the shoes, which tilted at the same sharp angle as Barbie doll's feet—and then it was routine (Fu, 2014: 83).

Inside his apartment Peter feels that he can express himself freely. He can do everything he wants. When he is doing his activity such as make meals and wash the floor is really interesting because he wears high heels. He feels wearing high heels make him look beautiful because his feet have sharp angle like a Barbie doll. He feels comfortable because only in the apartment he can be the real Peter. Peter feels that apartment is the most comfortable place for him. It shows that Peter feels happier being feminine.

<sup>4</sup> Nothing would be as good as how it felt: the sweet constraint around my hips from the dress, thigh as a sausage casing, squeezing joy into my skull, making it swell. The satin on my hands, my spidery eyelashes, the weights of the hair and jewelry. I love the sound of the gown's train swishing behind me (Fu, 2014: 166).

The data above shows Peter's true feelings when Eileen dresses him like a woman. He feels really happy, he imagines how to be a woman. He can describe how great the clothes are and describe them in detail. He says that the fabrics used, hairstyles and types of jewelry. His explanation about the clothes describes his obsession with women's clothes.

I continued to scrutinize her legs as Ollie did his second set. The hair on my legs grew long but relatively sparse, compared to my sisters', and mostly on my shins. This girl was hairless as a seal. I imagined the curve of my ass popping straight out in short shorts as she did (Fu, 2014: 63).

The statement above shows that Peter is thinking about comparing himself with women's body. His interest in women's activities makes him compare himself with his sister. Peter

imaginethat he will get a soft skin, hairless body and he will get the perfect body shape when he wears shorts. He really admire his sisters body beacuse hisgoal wants to have a perfect body like a woman.

## 1.2 Feeling Uncomfortable with His Natural Gender

Peter's feelings discomfort with his natural gender arises when Peter is taught by his father about masculinity. The masculinity presents in the family through the father figure dominates in Peter's life. The father's strong desire for masculinity is always shown through the attitudes and actions. Masculinity can be seen from how the values spread by the father figure in his children lives. Even when the father figure dies, the masculinity that is thought in the family life does not fade.

Why I might love Chef as zealously as a supplicant loves a god, why Ollie would be my friend and Simon my enemy when they were both small-harted,dangerous men. Why I felt like Jeanine was an intruder on a World I had barel entered,glimpsed through a doorway, seen through the stema of a high-pressure hose (Fu,2014: 67).

In the explanation above shows, that Peter regreting being a male.Because he can not confess his true feeling to the chef that he realy loves him. He is also implisitlysays that he is uncomfortable about Jennie's presence, he think that Jennie is an intruder in the world he had just explored. He loves the chef but hates Jennie, the statement confirms that Peter doesn't like his real gender

Roger stood up. "New game,"

He repeated. He used the juice bottle to grind a hole in the dirt the size of the bottle's base so the bottle stood upright on its own.

"Stand three steps back and try to piss in the bottle. Whoever can't do it has to drink from the bottle."

I felt i have panic. I never peed standing up. When I had to, I thought of my body as a Machines, a robot that did my bidding(Fu,2014: 6).

When Peter is playing during school break his friend Roger ask him to play. The game uses bottles which will be urinated. This game makes Peter feel uncomfortable because basically Peter does not know how to pee like a boy properly. When Roger give a challenge in the game, he does not feelcomfortable becausewhenever he wants to pee, he had to force his body to work like a man.

This is to say he pees standing up. He feels uncomfortable when he has to pee in that way.It can be concluded that Peter is not comfortable with his natural gender because he never pees standing up like a normal man if he does so Peter's body will respond like a machine which ends up making him uncomfortable.

"Come with me," He said

"Today's special, for father and son. You learn to shave," my father said. He winced at the sound of his own voice, mouthed the words a second time.

"I am going to teech you how to shave."

I ran my hand over my smooth chin, a wordless reminder that I was six years old. "What do I do," he said. He mixed the shaving Cream in a cracked wooden bowl(Fu, 2014: 11).

In the illustration above, masculinity has been taught to Peter when he isvery youg. Shaving is an activities that should be done for adult.His father wants to educate Peter how to be a masculine

at young age. His obsession about masculinity really embrace him. The masculinity that he get in his eraly agemakes Peter hates his natural gender even more because he feels masculinity thought by his father is not what he wants.

“Your hair is getting long,” he said instead.  
“You should cut it before you start looking for work.”  
“Hmm,” I said (Fu, 2014: 77)

Masculinity is shown in the conversation between Peter and his father. The conversation takes place on the way to Monternal. The conversation above reveals his father feels discomfort with His hair. His father thinks that his hair looks like a woman, his father says that long hair belongs only to women and not for a men. Peter thinks that a man with a long hair is fine as long as he feels happy. Peter's feelings about his gender identity begin to be disturbed so that he questions why men should have short hair and women should not.

Died in a mine explosion, Father said, like a point of pride. “That was <sup>7</sup>forty years ago. Still, I’m careful, everyday, not shame him. Not to do anything that would make him ashamed. I know he’s wathing.” (Fu, 2014: 103).

As a man who is raised with masculinity, his father believes that the right path is chosen as a man is not through dialogue, but by showing muscle strength. He taught his son to be masculine. Not to do anything that would make him ashamed. This sentence shows the values of masculinity that are believed by the father in educating his children are the values of masculinity that are obtained and duplicated from their parents.

One morning, a Saturday , I awoke with a fever. For a couple of years in <sup>19</sup>my teens, I sometimes got <sup>29</sup>fevers, with no other symptoms, that lasted a day and a half-thirty-six hours, like clockwork. My mother said it was related to growing; My father said it was sign of weakness, of a delicate constitution. (Fu, 2014: 69).

The masculinity taught by the father's character to Peter. Masculinity such as strong and brave. Therefore his father do not like weak person so when his father found out that Peter was absent because of illness he will be angry because when his father felt that men should not be weak. If his father knew about it then his father is the first person who against against him. The masculinity appear in his thought because of the doctrine of masculinity being taught to him every day.

<sup>7</sup>“I want to tell you that I’m proud of you. I’ve known men like you. Men with weaknesses.” I Close my eyes. His voice grew stronger in the darkness. “they were weaker than you. They always gave in, and let it destroy them. I want to thank you,” he said, “for not shaming me.” (Fu, 2014: 103).

The compliment above explains how proud his father how proud his father is. So far his father only knew that Peter always obey to his orders about maskulinity without knowing his true feelings. Peter who heard the compliment is not satisfied, because the compliment will only put a burden on him. He Feels uncomfortable about his father's demands about masculinity. Peter obey to his order is just to makes his father happy.



Then I don't know what you are." Perhaps from the way I sat there staring at the floor, he added quickly, "I'm not queer". I have girl up in Innisfil." Keep it staring at the floor. "hey, you okay?"

"I just don't like about it."

"what?"

"Sex." It was over-the-top enough, absurd enough, that it didn't feel real (Fu 2014; 61).

The conversation above explains Peter's feelings. The topic of conversation is discussing about sex he feels that sex is not something that should be discussed openly in public. Sex is a belief about their gender, besides that for someone like him who still can not determine his gender the conversation is too sensitive, therefore Peter feels uncomfortable in that conversation by saying that sex can not be felt for real.

I watched him pick the shell when he rolled it on the floor and drop the shard back into the paper bag. "Well, do you want Buy to stuck your dick?"

I felt a revolution so strong it was Close to. "No."

He hate half of the ego in one bite. "Do you want girls to suck your dick?"

The revolution didn't change. "No." (Fu, 2014: 60).

From the statement above Peter does not like the conversation about something that has to do with his natural gender. He does not want to admit that he has a natural shape like that. He thinks something is ugly, weird and disgusting. Because once again he feels that he is a woman and totally different from them. Talk about 'something' Peter felt that he was being overshadowed by his natural gender as a man.

"Don't think Father likes you spending so much time with us," Adele said.

"Why?" I asked again. I focused on Adele's gentle, reluctant face and avoided Helen's shrewd eyes, her eyebrows that stopped to a point.

"Because he wants you to be like him," Helen said.

Adele added, "Big and strong like him."

"But I want to be like you," I said, grabbing Adele's knee. "I want have hair like you. I want to be pretty like you. Her sad, saintly expression frightened me (Fu, 2014: 8).

The data above shows that masculinity is not only taught by his father but also his older sister Hellen. At that time Helen said that Peter could not play with her because her father will be angry. Hellen doing this puts Peter back in his line. In the quotation above, Helen implicitly warns Peter that his father doesn't like them playing together because Helen knows Peter is a boy who should be playing outside, not staying indoors with them. In the data above shows about his regrets being born a boy. He looks very upset and angry when his sisters says that he can not to be a boy like them, Helen say that he is a boy who must be act like a man. In that situation Peter already know that his feelings is not the same as his sister think. He does not comfortable being a man and trying to find his true identity that make him comfortable.

I sprayed more shaving Cream into my hands and spread it over my legs. Just running my palms up my legs. Just running my palms up my legs and smoothing down the foam felt good. The razor felt even better as it slid up my shinbone. Clumps of hair washed away. Keep it going. Stripping free the contours of my knee, the scatter hair of my thighs (Fu, 2014: 75).

The quotation above shows us that Peter is not comfortable having hairy legs so, he chooses to shave all the hair that sticks to his body. At that time Peter really does not like the signs of a man sticking to him. He hates everything about man characteristics. He feels disgusting and he will erase everything without exception.

1 It had nothing to do with me. My real body was somewhere else, waiting for me. It looked like my sister's bodies.

1 Boys were ugly and foreign, like another species. Like baboons. I was not one of them (Fu, 2014: 6).

In the quotation above Peter feels that he is trapped in the wrong body. Peter feels that he is more inclined towards his sister's. Peter believes that in the future he will become like his sister. Peter implicitly admits that he is not queer he rejected call as a man. Because Peter feels that men are ugly and strange, he says that he is not the part of them. He tries to declare implicitly that he is a transgender.

"How do you look like that?" I said loud.

Ollie took the question at face value. "Diet and exercise. I'm doing a bulk. If you want to like her, you'll have to keep your fat quite low.

He didn't seem to think there was anything strange about my wanting to look like her-like it was as legitimate as his desire to be hulking and large.

5 Another thing we had in common: we wanted different bodies than our own (Fu, 2014: 63).

At that time Peter was invited by Ollie to do the gym together during Peter's day off. When entering the gym room in front of the door there is a picture of a woman who has a perfect body, like all men want. When Peter arrived at the door of the gym Peter really thought about what he wants to have. The perfect body shape he wanted to get without a doubt he asked Ollie about how to get such a perfect body. Ollie gave directions and told Peter to follow every move he makes. In his heart Peter hopes that his body can slowly change and be perfect like the woman in the poster.

It can be concluded that the data above shows that Peter does not feel comfortable with his body as a man. He just wants to have a sexy body as a woman in the poster. For the second time Peter dares to tell others about his desire to become a woman. Even though Peter still feels uncomfortable with the question he just said in front of Ollie. But Peter has managed to express his wish with a female poster as a reference.

8 "Today's special, for father and son. You learn to save," My father said.

He winced at the sound of his own voice, mouthed the words a second time. Nobody heard his accent accurately than he did.

"I'm going to teach you how to shave" (Fu, 2014: 11).

The data above explains that Peter's father with all his arrogance wants to change Peter to become a boy but with the characterization of the father in this novel not so close to his children he invites Peter to do things that adults do. His father does this kind of thing because he wants to educate Peter about male activities to help Peter understand how to be a normal man. These data explain if his father's obsession about masculinity is very clear. Peter was taught to do the routines that adult men do at a young age. But Peter does not enjoy it at all. He was a young boy who still did not understand who he really was and what his identity was. In front of a mirror in the bathroom

where he was standing at that time Peter still felt that he was not a man but a beautiful woman. Even though Peter was not comfortable with the activity he complied and continued to do it.

“Don’t mess with her makeup, Peter,” Hellen said, as though that were the worst of things I’d done. She tapped a pen against her lips. She made no effort to stand. “you look insane” (Kim Fu, 2014: 23).

The data above shows that their existence is rejected by their social environment. At that time the setting occurs while in the room when Peter was eight years old, basically at this age an individual was able to determine their gender identity. This happened to Peter Huang.

Her older sister, Helen is already know that there was something wrong with Peter. At that time, Helen said that she does not like seeing Peter using women's things. She said that Peter looked crazy with his clothes and makeup.

It can be concluded that Helen also opposes any changes that lead to strangeness. So the author thinks that the data quoted above can be included in the category of rejection by the social environment. Another refusal was shown by Peter's father. By forcing Peter to do social activities like a man even though he doesn't understand Peter's true feelings and desires.

Another refusal was shown by Peter Father. By forcing Peter to do social Activities like a man even though he does not understand Peter’s true feelings and desires. “You used to be friends with that one,” Father said (Fu, 2014: 54).

The data above describes a situation where Peter's dad expects his son to be a strong and active man like his friends. In the novel Peter's dad is the most strict person with masculinity himself because all this time the pressure given by his father is not in accordance with the state of his feelings.

Although the rejection by his dad is not clearly shown in the conversation in the novel, the implicit sentences spoken by the father character can describe that Peter's dad is not happy if a boy does not act masculine.

4 I went back to the main room. I dumped the wig into the sink and turned on the garbage disposal. I crammed it down with one of my platform sandal, running the tap. The shoe exploded 6 into chunks of cork as it hit the blades..... I stayed in the bathroom with the door closed. I wanted to die like my father. Wearing crisp, new pajamas and issuing order. Honored more than love. A man (Fu, 2014: 116).

In the conversation above, Peter is confused about determining his gender identity, this is proven in the quote above. At first Peter wanted to wear a wig sent by his sister Adele but after he is reminded of his father's teachings of masculinity when he is still alive suddenly appeared and finally he chose to throw the wig away and said I wanted to die like my father. Even though Peter's father was gone. Masculinity is inherent in Peter even though this masculinity is not implemented properly by Peter.

### 1.3 Pressure from Society

Social pressure can influence someone's life because social pressure comes from society and can change someone's beliefs. Social pressure can be a powerful weapon to make someone follow or conform to the opinion about what is true and what is wrong. Social pressure can affect anything including the decision someone will take in the future.

<sup>33</sup> “Look i don’t know that well, and it’s really none of your Business. I’m a guy. That’s all you need to know.” He hovered over me, still more concerned than threatening. “Why are you crying?”

<sup>6</sup> “It’s not fair. Give it to me.” Give me your girlhood, John, I thought nonsensically. You don’t want it? Give it to me (Fu, 2014: 154).

In the quotation above, shows that Peter feels the society around him gave him pressure by telling him about John childhood story. After know about John's background story, Peter feels that his life as a man is unfair. He thinks that he should not be living like this if her gender is the same as her feelings she will be happier being a woman. As his goals to be a woman comes to his mind that he wants to achieve his goals.

<sup>11</sup> They each heald one of my arms and guided me to the full-legth mirror in their bedroom. Three she stood, at last: the iconic Audrey, only with Adele’s almond eyes, her sloping cheekbones. The face a little more drawn, a little harder, but undeniably her. Let’s take this on the road,” John said (Fu, 2014 : 166).

Quotation above shows that society push him to be confident being a female. He is join the halloween party,at first he feels really uncomfrtable being dress as woman but Ashe the Midler of the conversation about his friend Jhon said that Peter should be cameout with those dress they can not waiting for long John is the first person who very excited when Peter dresingd with woman dress, he is very excited about John’s new appearance.

“Drink,” she said. , I pulled away. I don’t like-“. I stare down into the bottle. “You Look beautifull,” John said. (Fu, 2014: 166).

One more time his society pressure makes gives him support to change his apearence become a woman. In this quotation John said that Peter looks very beautiful with those dress. But here Peter still uncomfortable show him self to the public, he said thet he does not comfortable at first. He is confused about what people might think about him when he in those dress. He feels really Weird but here John said that Peter is really beutifull in those dress. John is the biggest reason wht peter looking for his gender identity. She explain appearance is expecially the society is really important.

## 2 PETER’S FINDING HIS GENDER IDENTITY

In this subchapter, the researcher will analyze the process of finding the identity of Peter Huang through the influence of his environment that influencePeter to gain confidence to change himself as a transgender.

### 2.1 Apparance of Using Female Name

For a transgender person, a name is something important because from the name someone can be identified what gender he is. The appearance of the female name can make other people dan be increased their feelings and using a female name can make a transgender person more confident because his identity can be recognize as a female.

“What are you guys doing for Halloween?” Yellow asked.

“Sounds cold,” Yellow said. “Dressing up?”

“Of course. What about you, Peter?”

“Nothing ,” I said . “I’m too old.”

“ It’s Halloween. You can be whoever you want.” (Fu,2014: 163).



In the quotation above, Peter's new environment give him support by inviting Peter to come to a Halloween party at Parc-Ex. Peter's friends say that at the party Peter can be anyone, including a woman. The support system provideis a trigger for Peter to establish his gender identity as transgender.

"Don't mess with her makeup, Peter," Helen said. As though that were the worst of the things I'd done. She tapped a pen against her lips. She made no effort to stand. "You look insane." I peered into the compact mirror again. I thought I looked lovely (Fu, 2014: 23).

In the conversation above Helen says if Peter looks crazy, wears Adele's makeup and dresses up like a woman. In the conversation above Helen explicitly tells Peter not to wear Adele's makeup she also calls Peter crazy, Helen does this to attract Peter returns to his natural gender as a male but Peter firmly rejects it. He feels that Helen's perception of him is wrong, this is evidence by the sentences that Peter said in the conversation above, such as **I thought I looked lovely**.

"What do you want to do?" he asked.

"Well, we could actually cook a steak so I can see how you plate them."

No I mean-long term, what do you plan to do? You want to have your own restaurant? Wht's ur dream?"

If I had other dreams, they stayed hidden behind the bulk of the one dream that consumed all my thoughts, dominated my existence. What else did I want? I couldn't see past it. I had no energy left for other fantasies.

"My own restaurant. Sure." (Fu, 2014: 146).

The conversation above explains about Peter's thoughts. When John asked about what Peter would do after this, as a person who still doubts his own identity, Peter was hesitant to say his true wishes. Questions like this feels more sensitive to them, this was proven when Peter decide not to directly explain what he wants to do in the future. In the quote above John implicitly wants to help Peter to express his desire to be a transgender and in the conversation Peter looks interested in having a wish but does not want to say it directly.

"Where having some people over for dinner tomorrow. You could come, and pick up your stuff then."

"I'm busy."

He exhaled. the mouthpiece ckled. "I want to help you. Tell me how to help you."

I looked down into my lap. I picked at the skirt I was wearing: white denim, yellowed with age, ending several inches above my knees. Bonnie's.

My mouth was gluey with lip gloss. His questions bothered me a lot. What are your life goals? Why don't you hang out with us? Tell me how to help you. As though all people understood themselves and had neat, one-word answers. "There's a lot about you that I don't understand. I tried to be honest.

"I'm sure I want understand."

"We don't have to talk about anything you don't want to talk about. It's just dinner." (Kim Fu, 2014: 155).

When John invite Peter to have dinner with Peter, he politely rejecting John's invitation. He felt that meeting other people was exhausted. This feeling is shared by all transgender people, they



feel insecure and comfortable to socialize with other people. What's more at that time Peter was dressing up as a woman in his apartment room. The conversation above shows John who wants to help Peter to slowly show his identity to others in his environment. Because if John also experience the same incident as what is felt by Peter at this time, therefore John is eager to help Peter get out and tell him how he feels right now. John allows Peter to share his feeling. But in that conversation Peter still feels that he is not ready if other people know the real situation, this statement is emphasize "**I'm not sure I want to understand.**" Which means Peter is not ready. Even though John's actions to help can motivate Peter to think that there are still people who want to accept him even though his choice is not what society wants.

I starter yanking open the drawers, pulling them all the way back until they snapped at their farthest opening, then slamming them shut again, looking for the one where the utensils went. Moved to Toronto made it sound like he came out as a snarl, surprising both of us.

"Are they happy with this?"

"My father is dead," I said, "and my mother is a born-again Christian, so we don't talk about it so much. She calls every other week to remind me that we're going to hell" (Fu, 2014: 159).

Since childhood, Peter's mother has known the strange things that happened to her children, especially Peter, but Peter's mother did not want to tell her children directly about the truth. After the death of Peter's father, his mother became more sensitive when it came to their children. In the quote above, it can be conclude that Peter feels that his parents donot care about him anymore, his cursing Peter to go to hell. The disappointment he get from his mother makes Peter believe that change his identity to a transgender is the right choice.

"Get out of my house."

"Mother...", I began.

"Get out of my house. Both of you. I gave up everything for you. He made me give everything for you. you ungrateful, useless Children. You garbage." "You faggots and whores." (Fu, 2014: 113).

Once again some bad words come from his mother. After his fathers funeral is over Peter and his sister Hellen entered their parents' house, they both paid their respects to their ancestors. After that they sat at the dining room table.

Basically his mother in the novel is described as someone who is gentle but not close to her children. She knows that Peter had a strange personality, but his mother keep holding herself to say anything about Peter personality. Her all feelings about Peter's strangeness keep by her own until his father's dead. Based on the data above, it shows that his mother gave a trigger to Peter by cursing and yelling at him with bad words such as you faggots and whores.

Without coming any Closer, the boy calked back, "I said you're bunch of faggots!"

Ellien said " Come Over here! You want to see what a bunch of faggots can do?" (Fu, 2014: 168).

At first, Peter is very concern about what other people think of him especially about his personality. But during the time peter meet people who supported him in various situations. In quotation above someone called him with a bad word this is happen because that night wearing women clothes at Halloween party, but Ellien defended him back. At that time Peter felt that he have a good support system to fulfill his desire as a transgender. The support system that was given

when Peter was abused by the children made Peter believe that changing his identity to transgender was the right choice.

I should have been woman to these kids. As soon as I said it, as soon as I said what they wanted me to say, everything would change. (Fu, 2014: 165).

Quotation above explain that Peter has establish himself as a transgender person. Even though Peter said it implicitly, the data above has proven that he is a transgender person. He do not care about people's judgments about his personality, especially for foreigners. Because he feels that he already choose his new gender identity as transgender.

I wanted to be Adele, the way she looked silhouetted by the screen, more striking than the thirty-foot-tall Sabrina.

I heard myself say, "Audrey Hepburn." (Fu, 2014: 163).

In the statement above peter truly needs it, he says it loud that he want to be Adele. At the halloween party he wants to look the same to his sisters especially Adele. He feels that Adele is the most lovely, attractive and charming woman in his eyes. Adele is the perfect role model. This is evident during the Halloween party. At that time he wants to dress up like Adele with all kinds of attributes his eldest sister used. At that time Peter indirectly tell everyone if he wanted to dress up like a woman. Therefore, it can be conclude that the data above shows Peter's desire to become a woman. This setting is taken in chapter 10 when Peter is dressed by Elieen. He feels at that time his subconscious says if Audrey Hepburn is the person he wants to represent himself as a woman.

This is Audrey," John said to some group of half-naked monster, bits of flesh and bright colors under a strobe light. I saw Yellow among them. "Hell-o I said it myself, the voice effortless. "My name is Audrey." (Fu, 2014: 167).

The quotation above explain that Peter has recognized himself as transgender. At the time of the celebration of Halloween he and his friends met and immediately Peter declared himself as Audrey. A little bit hard to introduce himself in front of new people as a new person as Audrey Hepburn but finally Peter has managed to say it.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In the teenager stage is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood. Teenager is very sensitive person they can get easily influenced by negative things. When a teenager is looking for their identity, a teenager will determine his personality to support their future. During the process of searching his identity the main character, he was under various pressures. The social pressure created by society and the stigma about binary options triggered Peter to find the right gender identity for him. Through the description and behavior of the characters in the novel, it can be seen the social pressure and stigma about binary oppositions that are followed by his society. Moving to a new city makes him make him optimistic of being able to find his true identity. While in the city of Montreal Peter trying to establish which gender he should be. In order to find a match for his gender identity Peter take a part in every activities for both male and female genders. Peter is more comfortable doing girls activities that are considered feminine such dressing up. Feeling uncomfortable about his natural gender makes him follow his feelings to change his appearance.

Changing appearances becomes a new strategy for Peter to find his identity. His new identity is a presented in the form of appearance and use of female names.

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