

Multiple Interpretations of “Gender Transition” under the Institutionalization of “Gender Identity Disorder” : The Practices of Transgender People in “FTM Nihon” Magazine in Japan

TAKEUCHI Kyoko

This study presents the multiple interpretations of gender transition under the institutionalization of “Gender Identity Disorder (GID)” in Japan. Previous studies have indicated a coherent narrative transition along the timeline from the identification of “GID” and binary gender to the acceptance of individuality or the importance of depicting an ambivalent interpretation of “GID” among transgender people. However, they have not clarified the changes during the multiple interpretations of “GID” and “gender transition.” This study, therefore, analyzed all 60 issues of “*FTM Nihon*,” which was a magazine mainly read and written by transgender men from the 1990s to 2010.

Our results revealed that, when “GID” was first introduced, it was differentiated from “mental illness” while justifying medical treatment. Under the influence of “GID” guidelines, transgender people interpreted hormone therapy and surgery as necessary for “gender transition.” In addition, when public awareness of “GID” increased from around 2002 onward, “GID” became a positive identity, but at the same time, it has become increasingly associated with physical treatment, marginalizing those who do not undergo surgery. It was also suggested that the conflict between being accepted as “GID” and being a “normal” man still exists even after the concept of “GID” became popular.