



Survival Through Pluralism

Michael L. Tan

To cite this article: Michael L. Tan (2001) Survival Through Pluralism, Journal of Homosexuality, 40:3-4, 117-142, DOI: [10.1300/J082v40n03_07](https://doi.org/10.1300/J082v40n03_07)

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1300/J082v40n03_07



Published online: 12 Oct 2008.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 449



View related articles [↗](#)



Citing articles: 10 View citing articles [↗](#)

Survival Through Pluralism: Emerging Gay Communities in the Philippines

Michael L. Tan

It is the eve of Queen's Day in Amsterdam and I am at a party on Herengracht-one of the canal streets-in a bed and breakfast owned by a Filipino gay man and his Dutch lover. The Filipino now has Dutch citizenship, as do most of the dozen or so Filipinos attending the party. Some are with long-term partners, others with recent boyfriends, and still others, alone. Many have lived in Europe and the United States for several years now. I hear Tagalog and Cebuano-Filipino languages-mixed with English, Dutch, German, and French.

Occasionally, there is talk about returning to the Philippines. Those who have been "home" recently talk about their visit, complaining about the heat and the traffic and about how little has changed with the gay scene, how it has remained so terribly commercial with mainly brothels and massage parlors flourishing. A few days after Queen's Day, I, too, return home and wonder: Where indeed is the gay scene in Metro Manila, this vast metropolis of 9 million people? There are a few watering holes in three cities-Manila, Quezon City, and Makati-but even on a weekend, they seem quite empty. In fact, at least one gay bar I knew of-which used to be so packed patrons had to stand outside on the sidewalk-had closed down.

The Library Foundation, a gay organization doing HIV/AIDS work, used to have weekend workshops twice a month and rap sessions

[Haworth co-indexing entry note]: "Survival Through Pluralism: Emerging Gay Communities in the Philippines." Tan, Michael L. Co-published simultaneously in *Journal of Homosexuality* (Harrington Park Press, an imprint of The Haworth Press, Inc.) Vol. 40, No. 3/4, 2001, pp. 117-142; and: *Gay and Lesbian Asia: Culture, Identity, Community* (ed: Gerard Sullivan, and Peter A. Jackson) Harrington Park Press, an imprint of The Haworth Press, Inc., 2001, pp. 117-142. Single or multiple copies of this article are available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service [1-800-342-9678, 9:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m. (EST). E-mail address: getinfo@haworthpressinc.com].

twice a week, with a gayline counseling service in a large old house rented as a drop-in center. But funds for gay groups are drying up—the foundation moved to a smaller center and then gave this up as well in January 1996. It now works out of borrowed space from other NGOs. The weekend workshops have stopped while the rap sessions attract a few men each week. (In January 1996, the foundation gave up this smaller center as well and now borrows space from the Remedios AIDS Foundation.)

In the early 1990s, I felt gay organizing had finally arrived in the Philippines, but such hopes may have been premature. It has taken time for me to understand that maybe these “boom-and bust” cycles are to be expected in emerging gay and lesbian communities, ever unpredictable, ever paradoxical. What comes to mind are Gagnon and Parker’s (1995: 3) views about sexuality research: “This is such a time in the human sciences—a time of epistemological doubt, when the issues are not solely how do you know or what do you know, but whether you can know.”

Can we “know” then if there is an emerging gay and lesbian scene? I know that I can write about what I know, but that it is from a certain “gaze” of someone in his 40s, who has been part of a diaspora of Filipino gay men, often more at home in Amsterdam than in Manila, but driven to return to Manila for many reasons—“nationalism” (I cringe at the word but cannot find an alternative); aging parents; even a masochistic attachment to the anarchy of a Latin culture—none of which relate to being gay. I am aware, too, of the dangers of attempting to write about “others,” of gay men of different generations, of men who do not necessarily self-identify as gay, and of the still largely invisible lesbians and bisexuals. In earlier papers (Tan 1995a, 1995b), I described the range of “homosexualities” and “bisexualities” in the Philippines, with detailed descriptions of what people “do” and “think.” Preparing this paper was more difficult because I had to shuttle between the micro- and macro-levels of individual “coming out” as well as of communities that seem to be emerging.

I write as an academic person challenged by the ambivalence of movements and processes. Because of this background, my paper will focus mainly on communities of gay men. I feel I have no right to describe the emerging lesbian communities at great length. There are lesbian organizations that have been quite active; in fact, in December 1996, three lesbian organizations convened a First National Lesbian

Rights Conference with more than a hundred participants, an unprecedented event in Philippine gay and lesbian history/herstory. The lesbian movement is itself an enigma, given its low profile (compared to gay men's groups) and yet it is able to move with such unity (again, in contrast to gay men's groups).

I write, too, as an activist working with NGOs on health and development issues, and with strong feelings about "relevance" in research—thus the final section is entitled "So What?". In all candor, even as I put the finishing touches to the article, I still wonder if I have answered that part adequately. That is the part that I will never know.

SOCIAL HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Before we go specifically into the issue of gay communities, I feel it is necessary to present a brief sociohistorical overview of the Philippines. The Philippines went through more than three hundred years of Spanish colonization and half a century of U.S. colonial rule. Among Asian countries, the Philippines is perhaps one of the most westernized, and in many ways seems to be a chunk of Latin America that ended up on the wrong side of the Pacific.

As with Latin America, most Filipinos will profess to being Roman Catholic. The Roman Catholic Church is quite powerful, but people generally practice a syncretic form of Catholicism blending in pre-colonial animism. The sexual culture reflects this eclecticism: many Filipinos will say that sex between two men is a sin, but will also agree that homosexuality is probably just another alternative lifestyle and then qualify again that this is all right as long as it is not a brother or son who's gay.¹

Understanding Filipino sexual culture also means understanding its political culture. The Philippines went through martial law and the Marcos dictatorship from 1972 to 1986, a period that brought the country to the brink of economic disaster. While other Southeast Asian countries went through rapid economic development as "little dragons," the Philippines was called "Asia's sick man." In fact, if it had not been for Filipino overseas workers, now numbering about 4.5 million (out of a population of 70 million), the economy would probably have collapsed many years ago.

Even after Marcos' ouster, the Philippines continued through a period of economic and political instability. In the last few years, there

have been rapid economic changes occurring under the neo-liberal government of former President Fidel Ramos, with an open-door policy on foreign investments, deregulation, and privatization. A middle class seems to be emerging, partly because of domestic changes but also partly because of the continuing deployment of overseas workers.

The country's economic and political past are important factors that influence Filipino sexual cultures. A colonial past and a native landed elite created a very feudal culture based on authoritarian values, which, in a way, predisposed the country to the Marcos dictatorship. At the same time, the excesses of the dictatorship—more than 100,000 Filipinos died from the armed conflicts, arrests and torture—have also created a distinct political culture. Public debating is common and spills over into all kinds of issues, including those related to sex and sexuality.

A final word: until recently, much of Filipino economic, political and cultural life centered on Metro Manila, also known as the National Capital Region. This area consists of 17 cities and towns including Manila, Quezon City, Makati City, Pasig City, and others. Most Filipinos will refer to Metro Manila simply as Manila, and it is only in the context of conversations that one makes a distinction, e.g., “*Tagasaan ka sa Maynila*” (Where are you from in Manila?) is a question asking which city in particular you are from.

This article centers on Metro Manila, although I also refer in passing to developments in other areas of the country, developments which will probably speed up in the next few years as the government pushes its policy of distributing investments to areas outside the capital.

WHAT IS EMERGING?

What/who is emerging? *Bakla*-identified mainly as cross-dressing effeminate men—have been organized for many years, usually as neighborhood associations in cities. Members of these associations have been mainly low-income *bakla*, also sometimes called *parloristas* because they usually work in beauty parlors. The *parlorista* associations function mainly to provide entertainment, usually around May when fiestas are held for a neighborhood patron saint. The entertainment consists of beauty pageants and/or Santacruzans—a Roman Catholic religious procession where *parloristas* come out in drag, with

male escorts, representing different characters from early Christianity, from Mary Magdalene to Queen Helen of Constantinople.

The neighborhood *parlorista bakla* have specific niches, not just as beauty parlor workers but also as domestic helpers, market vendors (vegetables, fruits, fish, but never of meat), and in the entertainment industry. The *parlorista* have also served the function of servicing sexual needs of young and not-so-young male victims of the Philippines' madonna/whore culture: raised in a society where they cannot access their girlfriends, but neither can they afford female sex workers. Older married men are also known to seek out the services of the *parlorista*, who can perform, to use the words of one middle-aged woman I was interviewing for a research project, "unspeakable dirty sex."

In the beginning, then, there were only *bakla* and *lalake*, the "real men." A proper *bakla* would never have sex with another *bakla* for that would have been tantamount to lesbianism. A *bakla* was a "girl," and "girls" go for "real men."

The *bakla parlorista* is clearly associated with urbanization. While the government defines a location as urban once it has an "industrial establishment" (e.g., a factory), two types of service establishments seem to be more indicative of urbanization in the Philippines: beer houses (a hybrid of a bar and restaurant) and beauty parlors. Beauty parlors attract rural *bakla*, who can find there social mobility and a degree of acceptance. The parlors tend to sprout in clusters, along specific streets. This usually starts out with one *bakla*, who then hires younger *bakla* migrants. The younger apprentices eventually save up enough money, or fight with the older one, and start their own establishment. Despite rivalries and intramurals, the *parlorista* will inevitably form a neighborhood association. In some cases, a richer *bakla* in the community becomes a *ninang*, a "godmother," by extending financial and logistical support for the activities of these groups.

The community associations are important, too, in allowing some form of intergenerational passage. One example of such an association is SKRF or the Sining Kayumanggi Royal Family (literal translation: Brown Arts Royal Family, "brown" used to refer to Filipinos), which was established in 1968 and holds annual parties that include several drag beauty pageants, including one called Golden Girls—from the American sitcom about older retired women living in a house in Florida—for older *bakla* still interested in competing.

Canell (1995) gives an extensive description of the “culture of beauty” in a Filipino town outside Manila, describing the importance of the *bakla* in mediating and creating this culture, both as make-up artists (beauticians) and as made-up women in drag beauty pageants. Canell also describes how these activities become major town activities, attended by townsfolk and with boards of judges composed of government officials and other local celebrities. In recent years, such beauty contests have become quite popular, launched by *barangay* (village) councils as fund-raising activities. Late in 1996, for example, I visited the southern city of Zamboanga and saw banners all over the city announcing a Miss Gay Zamboanga beauty pageant sponsored by the provincial council and the Save the Filipino Youth Movement.

Many *bakla* groups are small and localized. In recent years, two national organizations of hairdressers and parlor workers have been set up. One of these groups, HACAP (Hairdressers and Cosmetologists Association of the Philippines), has at least 15,000 *bakla* members, and, although they also have women members, the large number of *bakla* members probably makes them, in a sense, the country’s largest organization of cross-dressers. The other national organization, Fil-Hair, has been active in self-help programs, offering vocational training classes in dressmaking and cosmetology, which attracts many young *bakla*. Showing its political clout, the former First Lady, Amelita Ramos, often attends Fil-Hair’s functions, which also mobilizes the organization for fund-raising activities.

The *bakla* does not cross-dress for special occasions: cross-dressing is standard daily wear for the shop and for the streets. In many ways then, the *parlorista bakla* was out long before the terms “out” and “outing” were even coined. The local term for coming out, *magladlad ng kapa*, has a literal translation of unfurling one’s cape and was clearly coined in the context of the *parlorista bakla*.

There are some parallels to the *tomboy*, loosely equivalent to the butch dyke in western societies. If the *bakla* is a man with a woman’s heart (*may pusong babae*), the *tomboy* is constructed as a man trapped in a woman’s body. Like the *bakla*, the *tomboy* has particular stereotyped occupational niches, mainly as security guards and bus conductors.

The high public visibility of the *bakla* and *tomboy*-complete with cross-dressing in varying degrees-is often interpreted as public tolerance, even acceptance, of homosexuality in the Philippines. The few

published articles on male homosexuality in the Philippines, written by Westerners (Hart 1968; Whitam and Mathy 1986), focus on the *bakla* and this acceptance. This interpretation is not quite accurate: “acceptance” is conditional, as long as the *bakla* remain confined to certain occupational niches and fulfill certain stereotypes, of the man with a woman’s heart, of the village entertainer, of the outlet for male sexual drive. Some professions—nursing, for example, and even medicine—have some space for *bakla*, but generally, a gay professional finds it more difficult to come out publicly. Somehow, and this becomes clearer later in the paper, “gay” means *bakla* and *bakla* means being entertaining and funny and an outlet for male libidos.

GAY AND LESBIAN?

There can be no doubt that the “gay” movement in the west had some impact on the local scene. In the late 60s, local newspaper articles were already referring to “gay bars” in Manila. The “gay men” were usually from the elite, men who had studied and lived in the United States and Europe. The gay scene was associated with the “rich and the beautiful,” with approval from the authorities. The former First Lady, Imelda Romualdez Marcos, was the ultimate fag hag, traveling with a retinue of couturiers and hairdressers and extending her patronage to the “arts” and to “cinema,” fields that had attracted many of those who were now self-identifying as “gay.” The Philippines was under the Marcos dictatorship from 1972 to 1986, but upper income gay men were generally apolitical, spending weekends in discos with names like Velvet Slum and Coco Banana, places that also became chic for straight men and women. Cross-dressing was common in such places, but this was clearly camp drag, not daily-routinized *bakla* drag. Not surprisingly, “gay” became associated with the elite. Gay men who joined the political anti-Marcos underground at this time still remember how “comrades” would talk of homosexuality as “bourgeois decadence” and as an import from the west. Such views were grafted on to older norms. For example, at public rallies, one had to contend with comments such as, *bakla ang speech* (The speech is *bakla*), meaning it was too weak. The *bakla*, and by extension gay men, were weak and soft.

While the terms gay and lesbian came into common use in the 1970s—now part of Taglish, a hybrid of Tagalog and English used in

many parts of the country—interpretations of the terms still vary. Generally, even among gays and lesbians themselves, the terms are interchanged with *bakla* and *tomboy* and used in the traditional sense, i.e., one could not be *bakla*, or gay, if he was not effeminate, and one could not be *tomboy*, or lesbian, unless she was masculine. This is reflected in the media, including the letters of young men and women writing to agony aunts asking why they are attracted to persons of the same sex, but have no desire to cross dress.

The emerging gay scene was, in many ways, an amplification of social expectations and construction of the *bakla*. A Filipino “gay bar” was not a cruising bar where one could meet other gay men. With a few exceptions, gay bars were establishments where *bakla* could pick up *lalake*, “real men,” and pay them for sex. At the same time, some of the gay men from the 1970s were now talking of what was forbidden for the *bakla*, having sex with each other.

We see here that “gay” and “lesbian” take on very specific but varied meanings. In the late 70s, there were gay men called *Kakasarian* (of the same sex), who set up at least one middle-class group, but this lasted less than a year. *Kakasarian*’s members were mostly middle-class professionals espousing a kind of gay activism that did not catch on because of the argument, coming from *bakla* themselves, that there was no need to fight for “gay rights” in the Philippines. “Gay” did take on an organized form: it was there, visible but amorphous.

While this first wave of organized gay groups disappeared in the 1980s, the “gay scene” did evolve, drawing in more people from the middle-class, many of whom had never traveled outside the Philippines. The exposure to “gay” was, therefore, a mixture of international media as well as local reinterpretations from gay men who had lived overseas. The emerging middle-class gay men sought relationships with other gay men and not with “straight” men. These were men, too, who generally did not want to cross-dress and who talked of themselves being “decent gays” as opposed to cheap *bakla*-Philippine society’s class stratification was now being reproduced in the gay scene.

It was not until the 1990s that we see another wave of emerging gay and lesbian organizations. This wave is significant, with different “currents” that compose distinct gay politics. Examples of such groups are The Library Foundation, Katlo, Pro-Gay, LesBond, Les-

bian Collective, Can't Live in the Closet, Amaranth and Sulo Davao (now Iwag Davao). Most of these are based in Manila, but there are also associations in other larger Philippine cities. While none of these groups were formed specifically to respond to the AIDS problem, several did eventually become very active in HIV prevention work, in fact, surviving through financial grants for HIV programs. (Conversely, as with The Library Foundation, several face possible closure as donor fatigue begins to hit the AIDS industry.)

Also distinctive was the establishment of student gay organizations. Let me describe some of these organizations at greater length since their emergence again parallels wider social trends. At the state-owned University of the Philippines (UP), which has over the decades turned into an elite university because of the difficulties in hurdling its entrance requirements, there has been only one gay organization, UP Babaylan, *babaylan* being cross-dressing religious functionaries from the pre-colonial period. UP Babaylan's rhetoric comes closest to that of the queer movement in the United States, its members going around in camp drag and wearing T-shirts with statements like: *Bakla Ako. May Angal Ka?* (I'm *bakla*. Any objections?).

At the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (UP), another state-owned university with students coming from middle- and low-income families, the main gay student group is Pro-Gay (Progressive Organizations for Gays). Pro-Gay is a militant nationalist organization that has joined public rallies and demonstrations in protest of government decisions, such as increases in oil prices, the imposition of new taxes or plans for a national identification card. Pro-Gay's statements do not mince words, hitting the government for being a lackey to imperialism or for being fascist.

At the Far Eastern University (FEU), a private university, there are two large gay organizations. One is called BANANA, a whimsical name that has a more ponderous meaning: *Baklang Nagkakaisa Tungo sa Nasyonalismo* (Bakla United Toward Nationalism). BANANA, like Pro-Gay, participates in protest actions against the government. One member of this group describes their role as "*pangharang sa pulis, kasi hindi kami babanatan*" (We block the police, because they won't hit us). The description is striking because the use of the *bakla* as front-liners plays on Filipino society's construction of the *bakla* as women, who are not to be subjected to violence. Yet, as with women,

bakla are in fact quite often objects of violence, usually in more private and domestic settings.

The other organization at the Far Eastern University is called SHE or Society of the Homosexual Encounter, which organizes gay beauty pageants. Some of its members actually attend classes in drag and one attempted, unsuccessfully, to join the university's Miss Accounting, a beauty contest for female students.

We see here that in the 1990s, the *bakla* is reincarnated in various forms. Middle-class gay men consider the term insulting when they hear it from non-gay men, but consider it a term of endearment when used among themselves. At the same time, there are also middle-class cross-dressers, as with university students, taking on militant "queer" roles, although again in different forms.

In 1994, Pro-Gay organized the country's first gay and lesbian march, coinciding with the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall riots in New York City, which is usually invoked as the beginning of "gay liberation" in the United States. The Pro-Gay march drew about 50 participants, and as many media people eager to cover the spectacle. The event made it to the front page of newspapers and into the evening primetime newscasts. That same night, Blue Cafe, a mixed bar in Manila with a largely gay clientele, sponsored a party to commemorate Stonewall and gay and lesbian pride. A hundred people showed up, again with good media coverage.

The following year, there was no gay and lesbian march, but Blue Cafe sponsored another street party, again drawing a crowd. In 1996, several organizations came together to organize two events publicized as gay and lesbian pride celebrations: a march in the afternoon and a street festival that night. The newspapers reported about 5000 showing up for the events. Gay pride, it seemed, had finally arrived in the Philippines

COMMUNITIES?

Can we speak of gay communities in the Philippines? "Community" takes on many political meanings and functions. Certainly, one cannot speak of a gay community, or even of a *bakla* community. In fact, one can even speak of conflicts in the ways these subcultures are constructed. On the surface, some of these conflicts seem to be drawn along boundaries of "traditional" cross-dressing "fem" roles and the

more “western” standards of masculine gay identity. The distinctions can be artificial, often overlapping with class differences. For example, an upper class queen is “chic” while his working-class counterpart is considered cheap. *Parloristas* hold many yuppie gay men in contempt, accusing them of being closeted. A common retort from the *parlorista* would be: “*Sino ang niloloko niya? Naaamoy naman ang kaniyang matris*” (Whom is he trying to fool? You can smell his uterus).

The tensions can be found even with the “gay pride” groups. On the one hand, there is the influence of the queer movement from the west, pushing for “butch” (read closeted) types to come out and camp up, sometimes with a nativistic agenda of returning to a mythical past of “gay” shamans and healers. (Cross-dressing shamanic healers were common throughout the Southeast Asian region. My view here is that they are an important link to the past, but that it would be inaccurate to call them “gay” or even *bakla*.) On the other hand, there is the dissonance that comes with middle-class gay pride groups, “proud” yet cautious. During the gay and lesbian pride activities in 1996, several organizers appeared in print and television interviews and referred frequently to the problem of “stereotyping,” which was equated with “screaming faggots.” The reference to “screaming faggots” is telling, in a sense excluding one group from among “the different faces of homosexuality.”

This exclusion process comes through even more dramatically with a university gay student group called PLM Avant-Garde. (PLM is the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, a university run by the city government of Manila for low- and middle-income students.) In 1993, a local newspaper (*Manila Bulletin*, September 1993) interviewed several members of this group. One member of the organization’s board of trustees stresses: “Entry to the organization is not at all simple. One has to be personable, talented, dedicated, and most importantly, above average in intelligence. . . .” He added that members are not allowed to use hair-dye, have long hair, and, certainly, “no girlie attire.” His explanation for these policies was that the organization “strictly adheres to a social norm of being straight. This straightness is measured in terms of physical projection to solicit a certain respect within the academic community and outside.”

What we find then are attempts to mainstream, to “solicit” respect. Gay “activism” here takes on the role of wanting to mainstream, of

conforming to heterosexual norms, to be “accepted.” This is perhaps “logical” when we look at the class dynamics. The “emerging” gays and lesbians are middle-class. Should it be surprising that the 1996 gay and lesbian pride activities drew a motley group of sponsors that included the Department of Tourism, condom manufacturers, straight bars, and a beer manufacturer? Ten years ago, it would have been unthinkable for such commercial interests to support any gay or lesbian event. But then ten years ago, in the mid-1980s, it would have been impossible to have any kind of gay and lesbian event, period. It is clear that the emerging “community” comes, too, with an emerging middle class that includes gays and lesbians with some disposable income, a potentially profitable market. Thus, a newspaper such as the *Evening Paper* had, for a few months, a weekend section called *Gayzette*, which includes articles such as reviews of recent American gay fiction. Earlier, a popular magazine for teenagers and young adults, *Mr. & Ms.*, began featuring a gay column as well, one which has been sustained for more than a year now. This column responds to reader inquiries while featuring articles about the local gay scene.

Is there “a” gay and lesbian community then? Not in the sense of a homogeneous “group.” No one can presume homogeneity, even in the use of terms like *bakla*. The middle class *bakla*, invoking ancestral links to transvestite shamans, is very different, in terms of language and values, from the low-income *parlorista bakla*. Likewise, the emerging “gay” movement is fluid and includes some middle class *bakla* as well as the *parlorista bakla*-plus so-called yuppie gays. I say “so-called” because even “yuppie gays” can be quite diverse. For example, one group of “yuppie gays,” the so-called “Makati gays”-Makati being the financial district-are often described as being either in banks or in advertising. Indeed, but the “bankers” are quite different from those in advertising, the staid bankers cautiously avoiding the more flamboyant advertising people when they meet in Makati’s streets during lunch breaks. During one workshop for gay men, I actually heard one “banker” apologizing to an advertising executive, “I’m sorry, but there will be times when we meet in Makati and if you say hello, I’m going to have to pretend I don’t know you.”

Class differences can be quite significant. The Library Foundation, composed of mainly middle-class men living in Metro Manila, has been conducting HIV education programs with *parlorista bakla* in different cities. Each time a workshop is conducted, the Manila-based

workshop facilitators come back almost as if they had come from another country, or another world. Even “gay slang” is different across the subcultures, from one class to another and from one city to another. The differences can be so significant that a pre-workshop team is usually sent ahead to draw up a glossary of important terms.

Beyond semantic differences, we also find significant differences in the construction of gay and bakla sex and sexuality. Most amusing is the way the Manila visitors become “the other,” objects of curiosity, as local *parlorista* marvel at how a *bakla* can go to bed with another *bakla* or how a *bakla* can be a *bakla* without cross-dressing. At the end of one workshop conducted by The Library Foundation, one *bakla* from Olongapo—a city about 100 kilometers north of Metro Manila—exclaimed: “Now I can go back and tell my friends it’s true, that in Manila the *bakla* do date and fuck other *bakla*.”

The terms “gay” and “lesbian” and “communities” run the risk of becoming monolithic, often constructed out of middle-class experiences. Filipino men and women often grapple for a politics of identity based on models from the United States, yet are goaded by postmodern arguments that identity is meaningless in sexual domains. We grope for terms: men who have sex with men; men who love men; homosexually active; homosexually experienced. Recently in Davao, one gay academic told me that “someone” (he could not remember who) had done a survey in an urban poor community and found that 85 percent of the men had had same-sex experiences. What does this make them? Gay? Bisexual? Homosexually active? Homosexually experienced?

Quite often, too, there is an element of wishful thinking, a desire not just to reach but to surpass the mythical Kinsey 10 percent figure (I refer here to the influential 1940s survey of male sexuality in the United States, or the Kinsey survey, where around 10 percent of informants were said to lead predominantly homosexual sex lives at some period of their life). Many Filipino gay men and *bakla* will declare that all Filipino men are bisexual. Perhaps reflecting the emergence of lesbians, I have also started hearing from lesbians that all Filipinas are latent lesbians. A movie gossip columnist—himself *bakla*—writes about an actress who was the target of rumors of lesbianism. The columnist quotes the actress as saying, “*Hindi ako tomboy*,” a literal translation of which should have been “I am not a tomboy” but which the columnist translates as “I am not a butch.” One could go into a lengthy

discussion of the meanings of what the columnist meant, but my point here is that the terminology is affected both by globalization and by local currents.

Bakla and *tomboy* become glosses, appropriated and reappropriated, presented and represented. The *parlorista bakla* beauty pageant, for example, has become popular with the middle-class as well and has been transformed through this expropriation. For example, the beauty pageants used to be for local titles like Miss Manila or even Miss Tondo (a district within Manila) but today are more often modeled on Miss Universe contests, complete with a Parade of Nations where the contestants represent such countries as Malawi and Bosnia. The beauty pageants, too, are interesting in that a question-and-answer portion- to test for “brains as well as beauty”- is conducted in English. While pandering to the prestige status of English, there is also a humorous play on English as low-income *bakla* intentionally go into well-rehearsed stereotypical opening lines, such as “An intelligent question deserves an intelligent answer, so it is my opinion that . . .” (Others, more practical, will ask for an interpreter).

Generational differences are also strong in creating divisions within the “community.” Few Filipino gay men over the age of 30 continue to go out. They seem to disappear, eventually marrying women and setting up families or retiring to a semi-celibate life for as many reasons as there are older gay men (I’m too old; they’re too young; I don’t like the music; they don’t like our music; I’m not pretty anymore; they’re too pretty). The few who do remain “in circulation” do not usually date, acting instead as “den mothers” (a term I have actually heard in use) who provide advice and support to younger gay men. It is interesting, too, that the few older men who do remain in circulation are more often Caucasian expatriates who say that they are more appreciated in the Philippines than in their own countries. Older Filipino gay men, on the other hand, say that Filipino gay culture is much more oriented toward youthful “beauty” than in the West and that there is more of a social life for the “gay and gray” in North America or Europe.

Many other “variables” can be named here as significant in shaping and differentiating gay “communities.” Ethnicity is an example: gay men from the south (Visayas or Bisaya) are perceived as being less inhibited and more carefree by their more staid counterparts from Manila and the northern regions. The cohesive nature of the Filipino

gay “community” in Amsterdam, for example, has been attributed to its being mainly “Bisaya.” One Tagalog—the only Tagalog man in fact at the Queen’s Day party I attended—told me: “Only a Bisaya can throw a good gay party.”

What can we conclude then? Certainly, the emergence of a Filipino nation-state means that there is a crossing of ethnic lines among gay men, *bakla*, lesbians, and other sexual minorities. At the same time, I have shown how other variables—class in particular—can persist in setting several communities apart. These divisions are reflected in clothes, gestures, language, and, more importantly, in “values” (e.g., what is “masculine” or “feminine,” what is “decent” or “vulgar”).

WHO ARE WE? POLITICIZING IDENTITY

The evolution of the diverse categories *bakla*, gay, tomboy, lesbian, bisexual, *silahis* (local term for bisexual) shows how, too often, “we” have been named by “them” much like “tribes” and “natives” were given names by colonizers. My own choice of *bakla* and *silahis* as the only words to italicize also reflects this process, for we are confronted with only two “indigenous” terms. Who are we then in the Philippines?

In mid 1995, I received a letter from a Manila-based social marketing researcher who wanted to assess the demand among gay men for lubricants to go with condoms. He asked if it would be safe to accept the “3 percent figure” for gay men in the country. I was puzzled: what was this “3 percent figure?” I realized shortly after that this had been lifted from a recently concluded national Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality Study conducted by the University of the Philippines. The social marketing researcher had depended on media reports. I finally tracked down the unpublished statistics. (The full report has yet to be published.) The more specific figures, and the context of the figures, was that 3.3 percent of both male and female young adults had had sex with a person of the same sex. Disaggregated by sex, the figure was 5.1 percent for males and 1.8 percent for females.

In this example, we see how the academe and the media have clearly been drawn into the reinventing of the Filipino *bakla* and tomboy. The condom distributors are convinced that the gay men form 3 percent of the population because a survey—and the media—say so. The focus of course is on sex acts, which tells us nothing about sexual

identities or, more importantly, identities in flux. The survey actually had a separate section on “homosexual attraction.” About 9.7 percent—so close to that older magical 10 percent—of the young adults said they were attracted to persons of the same sex.

Numbers numb. The non-governmental organization I work with, Health Action Information Network, found that as many as 25 percent of students in midwifery schools said they were “not sure” about their sexual orientation. When we pretested the questionnaire, which was used for various health science institutions, there were nursing students who asked what a heterosexual was. No one asked what a homosexual was—that was clear to the respondents (most probably as an effeminate cross-dressing male, or the *bakla*), but heterosexual was something else. There is no word or even a gloss in any of the Philippine languages for the heterosexual. We often forget that heterosexual is a western construction.

But after all the figures are in from surveys such as those I have described, we are left with more questions than answers. I will not go into research methodologies and questions of validity and reliability. My point is that an emerging research culture in the Philippines converges with other discourse from the media, religion, medicine, and the diverse popular cultures of “us” and “them.” The discourse mixes the old and the new: how many *bakla* are there? The question of course comes from varied sectors with different agendas. *Bakla* themselves want to know: “how many of us are there?” Straight people want to know: “how many of ‘them’ are there?” “Straight” curiosity is not always benign: the newspaper’s advice columns often feature letters from parents wondering about their children; sisters wondering about brothers; women wondering about their husbands or boyfriends. And, always, the question is not just how many are there, but is there a way of “telling?” Detection is the goal in a society where disclosure remains difficult.

Research now names us, lumping all together under academic categories that both represent and contradict the “real” world. Thus, the middle-class yuppie gay man fumes about “stereotyped” media representations. The 1996 gay and lesbian pride statement notes: “As gay men, we are portrayed as limp-wristed weaklings who crumple in the face of danger. We are also shown as sex-starved effeminate sissies who exploit minors. As lesbians, we come across as macho thus prone to violence.” Yet, the organizers seem to forget that it was the “limp-

wristed” men and “macho” women who had the courage to come out to the media at the march and at other events.

The rhetoric about gay rights needs to be grounded. I prefer to talk about space: are we being given space, or are we appropriating space? Recently, I caught a newscast feature, “Youthspeak,” which was quick interviews with adolescents about particular topics. That night, they asked about “the third sex.” Most of those interviewed were “accepting” in the tradition of “they’re people too.” “We’re people too,” I hear a few days later when some *bakla* are interviewed on a television show. But I feel restless with such “they (or we) are people too” statements. Following the American tradition, Philippine television is filled with talk shows, and it is not uncommon to have at least one talk show featuring gay men or lesbians talking about homosexuality. In most cases, the host’s distanced curiosity always comes through, as he or she asks questions such as “How do you people look at yourselves?”

Taking this analysis a step further, gay organizations are also featured in the media. It would, of course, be factitious to assert that all this proves that a gay community exists. To borrow from Durkheim, organic solidarity does not seem to exist. If anything, we find an underground movement, with occasional public appearances, occasions for a cautious test of public sentiment, some bolder than others. When a cartoonist attempts a caricature of gay public school teachers by drawing them in drag with fishnet stockings, Danton Remoto, a gay university professor and writer, dashes off a letter to the editor: “We do not wear fishnet stockings. They are no longer in vogue.” One can almost hear thousands of gay readers applauding, but the applause is muffled and private, as is gay and lesbian space. Perhaps the muffled applause comes, too, in the ways gay space is so often interstitial, overlapping and intruding with “straight” space.

SO NOW WHAT?

With the HIV/AIDS epidemic, there is a real danger of gay men being the targets of scapegoating. There are already signs that this is happening. Dr. Margarita Gosingco Holmes, a clinical psychologist who once had a sex advice column, has compiled letters from and about homosexuals and lesbians in her book *A Different Love* (Holmes

1993). The book includes several letters with scathing remarks about “perverts” and AIDS.

Borrowing from the American tradition, the term “men who have sex with men” was introduced to pinpoint a population for “targeted interventions.” The term “men who have sex with men” has been rejected by at least one gay writer, who says that this allows closet cases to remain in the closet. It is an argument that really falls back on a form of essentialism, almost as if a proclaimed “gay identity” is required to be truly gay.

What we do miss out on is a more vital issue, that of the rubric “men who have sex with men” having been created by a biomedical establishment which focuses on the behavioral component. This draws from a new public health ethic that looks into risks, risk factors, and risk populations. “MSM,” as “men who have sex with men” has come to be abbreviated, is not meant as a substitute identity or as camouflage. A creation of epidemiologists, “MSM” has become, on one hand, a new identity for surveillance, one of six “sentinel groups” that are targeted by the Philippines’ Health Department and USAID (U.S. Agency for International Development) for periodic blood-collecting and occasional social research. In USAID-commissioned behavioral survey in 1995 with the “general population,” there is actually a question: “Have you ever had sex with men who only have sex with men?”

Yet, when wielded by gay men’s groups, MSM becomes a floating descriptor that is necessarily temporary but that has its uses. I have, for example, started hearing people asking: “Hey, don’t you think he’s cute? Do you think he’s an . . . MSM?” Or, people describing a recent sexual encounter: “Oh, I don’t think he was gay. Just another MSM.”

There have been attempts to popularize terms like “homosexually active,” but words like “homosexual” and “gay” remain loaded and alienating. MSM, used as MSM and in English (in Filipino it becomes intimidating: *lalakeng nakikipagtalik sa kapwa lalake*), is tentative, an introduction used in workshops where we can’t be sure. Certainly, it is a term that is completely useless when we deal with the *parlorista*. The *parlorista* can be *bakla*, the *parlorista* can be gay, but the *parlorista* can never be MSM. *Babae kami, hindi lalake* (we are women, not men) parloristas protest. In the last year, attempts have been made to fit the *bakla* into the category of transsexual, again for “targeted interventions,” but the term is again tenuous and inaccurate. Most of

the *parlorista bakla* have no intentions of getting “the” operation. *Banal ito* (this is sacred) several tell me, as they point to their crotch. (But nature’s sacrality is relative: many have put themselves on hormones. Diane, an anti-acne preparation with estrogen, seems to have replaced oral contraceptives as a favorite to grow breasts.)

We return to the word “communities.” I am conscious of my own cognitive filters, filters that need to be given a temporal context. Together with another generation of *bakla*, I mourn the loss of *the* Coco Banana, which was a bar, a coffee shop, and a disco. We talk of Coco days, of a mythical past of better days, pre-AIDS, pubescent innocence. I say “mythical” because the nostalgia for Coco Banana is partly based on a reconstruction of what did exist in that establishment: a choice of dancing, watching a show, or just talking; the relative absence of male sex workers; a mixing of locals and expatriates. Older gay men like myself describe Coco Banana whenever we complain about the lack of “good” gay places to go to, places where one had a sense of community. In retrospect, Coco Banana was actually quite elitist, with its high admission charges and expensive drinks. Nevertheless, there was a strong sense that it was a “truly” gay bar where even straight men and women were seen as “visitors” that one could “tolerate,” rather than the other way around.

But maybe times have changed and no one wants to go into an exclusively gay place. People go instead to straight places and take over the dance floor for half an hour-or the left half, or some corner. I see it happening not only in Manila but also in Iloilo, Cebu, Davao. In far-flung Puerto Princesa, a frontier town, I walked into a raunchy, smoky bar one night and realized half of the customers, all dressed in jeans and shirts, were women. Again conscious that my notions of “space” are created from having lived in the west, I begin to wonder if perhaps this is the “Filipino way.” Even in fairly large cities like Cebu and Davao, everyone knows everyone. You cannot walk into a gay bar and not be seen and talked about. Going into a straight place-with a gay corner-seems to offer, paradoxically, more security because there is still room for doubt, i.e., maybe he is straight and was just saying hello to gay friends. Perhaps again it reflects a middle-class construction of gay scenes, where one can actually be quite courageous in taking over space, and yet be cautious by carving the space within a straight world and by conforming to some of the straight norms.

I will give one more example here to show this process. In 1996

there was a lot of talk, even a formal announcement, about a new gay and lesbian magazine to be launched. It was to be called *Wednesday*, because of Wednesday nights being popular night outs for gay men, a kind of mid-week relief. The magazine would have come out every two months—clearly a test case—and would have sold for P80 each or about US\$3 (the same price for upmarket Filipino glossy magazines). The magazine was never launched. Officially, the financier had backed out, but gay yuppie men also talked about how such a magazine would not have worked out. It was not just the price, I would hear in coffee shop discussions, but the idea of “a” gay magazine. Who would dare write for it? Who would dare buy it?

But even as the middle-class gay men debated about *Wednesday*, several new weekly magazines had in fact been launched early in 1996, all featuring beefcake photographs of young aspiring actors. The magazines sold at P18 each (about US\$0.75), still quite expensive by Filipino standards but fairly affordable to the middle class. The magazines are on newsprint, with barely tolerably readable type, but they sell quite well, with print runs of about 150,000 each, higher than many newspapers. The articles are written tabloid style, mainly news about movie stars with “juicy” headlines like, “Has so-and-so ever had sex with another male?” or “Would so-and-so mind if someone peeked while he was peeing?” There is a page for readers’ letters (mostly letters of unrequited love for another male) and a pen-pal page, with an interesting selection of photographs of cross-dressed *bakla* and men in swimming trunks.

What has happened here? The magazines, with titles such as *Chika-chika* (gay slang for talking); *Controversial*, and *Hot Spot* inserted themselves into the market for movie gossip magazines. They are sold next to the “straight” gossip magazines, with obvious differences in the covers: showing actors instead of actresses. The magazines do not say they are gay magazines; in fact, one magazine actually featured the following disclaimer: “We are the magazine for your uncle and your aunt, your brothers and your sisters. We are the magazine for everyone, and not just *bakla*.”

Perhaps dramatizing how the channels for gay culture can be diverse and unpredictable, I found out about these magazines nine months after they were launched from a Filipino based in Chicago who had heard it from other Filipino gay men through an Internet chat group. Yet, almost a year after the magazines first came out, I was still

running into middle- and high-income gay men who had never heard of the magazines and who would be shocked (but titillated) when I would show them copies. A yuppie Wednesday magazine probably would have flopped. *Chika-chika* was doing well a year after, conforming to tight censorship rules, mindful of discrimination against gay men and *bakla*. Its articles may be “trashy,” but magazines like *Chika-chika*, clearly a *bakla* magazine, have created gay space. I find the magazines are sold throughout the country, even in the more remote areas, and am no longer surprised to find them in run-down beauty parlors as well as in plush condominiums (not in the living room, of course). And, I found out recently from my Filipino friend in Chicago that the magazine is now sold in a Filipino grocery near his place, “for only US\$2 each.”

Creating space also means crossing boundaries. The class boundaries remain the strongest, and this is where we confront the many frightening facets of marginalization taking place within an already marginalized sector. I can never forget the look on a gay professional in one of the southern cities when he responded to our offer to conduct HIV prevention workshops: “Oh, not for us professionals. We don’t need it. Maybe for the lower class *bakla*?” Elitism takes many forms and is particularly dangerous when it enters AIDS education.

“Western” standards are too easily borrowed by a middle class that projects its own perceptions and interests to a larger population. I have seen too many variations of such projections, including the more benign forms such as, “Oh, we have to reach the uneducated ones.” Such perspectives fit perfectly into the agenda of mainstream public health with its focus on “AIDS surveillance.” Not surprisingly, programs like those of The Library Foundation—emphasizing interpersonal workshops—are dying out from lack of funding. The little money that goes into gay or *bakla* programs is limited to one-shot outreach activities that have quite often been co-opted by public health authorities as a way of getting more samples for HIV antibody testing. It is the same tactic used all too often for sex workers, reflecting the power relations where the powerless become the objects of interventions and of surveillance. The HIV epidemic shapes gay “communities” in more ways than might be readily apparent, all too often duplicating structures of oppression and discrimination.

UNITY?

Given that we have diverse communities, is there any basis for unity? Or is it pushing it to argue for unity at this point or ever? There is arrogance and elitism in imposing one view, in setting one standard because, as Weeks (1995) points out, sexual identities embody power relations. There is power in naming an identity; but there is also arrogance in proclaiming that one identity should be superior to all others, or that there should even be just one identity. A kind of internal colonization and marginalization takes place, minoritizing what may actually be a majority, as is happening with the middle class gay disengagement of *parlorista bakla*.

My concern is that we may be looking for unity when such unity, in an organic or formal sense, may not be necessary. The diversity of communities is important because this allows for a constant revalidation, for want of a better term, of what might be a community experience, situated in history. This necessarily includes men and women who do not self-identify as gay or lesbian or bisexual or even MSM. One major achievement in The Library Foundation's workshops was the way such activities brought together different "gay" men: from different classes and including "butch" and "femme" types. It was also striking how, at the start, there would be a clear distinction between the two groups even in seating arrangements. By the end of the workshop, new friendships had been made that cut across the lines, with both groups still teasing the other for being too effeminate or being too butch, but understanding that the differences were not half as important as the similarities.

For want of a better term, I would use the term "cultural expression" to refer to "gay," "*bakla*," "lesbian," "tomboy," "*silahis*," and "men who have sex with men," reflecting the myriad ways in which individuals respond to social conditions. These conditions vary not just from one city to another but even within a geographically contiguous area. Class, ethnicity, and even age need to be considered if we are to understand the many evolving subcultures. We have seen, too, how this evolution occurs as "gay" and "lesbian" Filipinos move in space, searching for and creating space. The diaspora will be especially important in the years to come, given that about 4.5 million Filipinos-including many *bakla*-now work overseas on contracts lasting one to three years. This is not the same diaspora of the 1960s and

1970s-which tended to involve elite families. The current wave involves more middle-class Filipinos.²

It is important to consider how *bakla* ideology interacts with other sexual ideologies. The all pervasive idea that the *bakla* is a man with a woman's heart (*pusong babae*) now competes with other discourses, as in the example of the university student gay group "adhering to a social norm of being straight . . . to solicit a certain respect . . ." and the dismissal of the "screaming faggots." The *bakla* is constructed as having a female heart and is, therefore, not *macho*. In fact, resentment of the *bakla* is often qualified as resentment of the *baklang agresibo* (aggressive *bakla*), a violation of the construction of *pusong babae* or a woman's heart. An example comes from a young adolescent girl interviewed in a Health Action Information Network project on young adult sexuality. Here, she describes the *agi*, the Ilonggo (a local language) term for *bakla*:

Kasi may maraming klaseng agi diyan. Mga agi na baboy, at saka yong agi matitino. Baklang baboy 'yong you know they chase guys nga ganon tapos they have sex with them . . . 'yong baklang matino, they just feel like a girl . . . tapos. (There are many kinds of agi. There are the pig agi and there are the decent agi. The pig agi are the ones, you know, they chase guys and then have sex with them. The decent agi, they just feel like a girl . . . that's all.) (F17AB)

The passive "girl" *agi* is, therefore, acceptable. Notice, though, how the *agi* becomes acceptable after he is de-sexualized.

Conversely, we find *macho* ideologies defined in contrast to the *bakla*. This starts with the most trivial (being too gentle or "soft" in one's movements) and this is totally arbitrary, differing from one class or region to another and can bring accusations of *bakla*. One, therefore, learns to cross his legs or hold a cigarette in the "correct" *macho* style. In other instances, *machoness* takes on more serious implications. A young man who retains his virginity (i.e., does not have sexual experiences with women) is teased or taunted as *bakla*. Here, the pressures to be "baptized" (*mabinyag*)-initiated into sex through a female sex worker or a causal pick-up-can be tremendous.

It is interesting how this construction of being *lalake*-one where sexual experience marks man-hood-takes on a different dimension among the *bakla*. Peer pressure on the *bakla* to have sexual experi-

ences with another male is not as strong. This struck me in several of The Library Foundation's workshops, where there would be such "virgins" attending. One can be *bakla* and remain a virgin, just as women's femaleness is not tied into her sexual experience.

Bakla ideology (or, more precisely, ideologies) is central but understanding *bakla* will mean teasing it out from its social matrix, including its interface with other sexual ideologies. To be more specific again, even "gay" relationships in the Philippines quite often borrow on heterosexual ideologies, for example, in duplicating "male" active and "female" passive roles in courtship. Thus, one aspect of HIV/AIDS programs has been teaching "passive" gay men and *bakla* to challenge this stereotype, particularly in negotiating for safer sex.

I will not go into details of *bakla* ideology. My point here is that "being" gay in the Philippines draws from a *bakla* ideology that finds different expressions. Unless we recognize this, we will continue to deceive ourselves in pretending that we can create what Weeks (1995) has called "fictional unities." These fictional unities, often-fictional deceptions, can become barriers precisely because, in its fraudulent claims to unity, it becomes part of a politics of exclusion and discrimination.

This is not to say that there is no room for community organizing. I recently talked with someone who had just returned from working overseas, and he said it was important to have been "exposed" before leaving. When I asked what he meant by "exposed," he mentioned the books of Margarita Holmes (the collection of letters to her newspaper column) and "Remoto" (referring to Danton Remoto, one of the co-authors of *Ladlad*, the anthology of gay writing). Apparently, such books represented "gayness," not quite Filipino, but not alien either. The images need to be drawn in, reinterpreted until it becomes part of "Filipino" "bakla" "culture." Perhaps some of these definitions come as we define ourselves in relation to the "other." One is struck by Richard Fung's (1995) article on "Asian" "gay" consciousness, of how this develops "under conditions of white racism, either expressed here in the diaspora, or through Western colonialism and imperialism in Asia." It is this political context that often disappears in the artificial attempts to create "gay" pride or solidarity in countries like the Philippines, for being Filipino and gay also means understanding what is not-gay and not-Filipino. The notions of solidarity do exist and sometimes take on global qualities, as in the idea of gay pride being connected to Stonewall- 25 years ago, in a place thousands of miles away.

But much of what it means to be gay is shaped locally, sometimes by very practical considerations. I think, for example, of gay yuppie friends earning more than US\$1000 a month (in a country where the average monthly household income was \$227 in 1994) but who still live with their families, sometimes even sharing a room with a sibling. Some of the limitations of such living arrangements are obvious—such as not being able to bring home a boyfriend—but other limitations are subtler, yet important. One friend, for example, told me he could not watch any of the talk shows featuring the gay and lesbian groups after the march because to even watch the talk show at home would have been “suspicious.”

In contrast, the low-income *parlorista* are quite often independent of their families, having moved out or been forced to move out. The Filipino yuppie gay male, on the other hand, could move out but does not. It is, in a way, a choice, and it is a choice that will, for better or for worse, determine the trajectory of “gay communities” in the Philippines. The dilemmas of describing emerging gay communities are obvious. The communities are diverse, built out of consensus as well as dissonance; shuttling between assimilation and de-assimilation; between globalization and localization.

NOTES

1. In surveys conducted by Health Action Information Network (HAIN, unpublished data) among medical and nursing students, it is not uncommon to find agreement with statements like, “Homosexuality is a sin,” as well as with statements like, “Homosexuality is an alternative lifestyle.”

2. Another indicator of this growing importance of a “*bakla* diaspora” comes with two incidents in 1996 in the Middle East. The first case involved the flogging and deportation of 26 Filipinos in Saudi Arabia for “homosexuality.” The second case, in Kuwait, involved the deportation of seven Filipino hairdressers accused of using their beauty parlors as a front for massage services.

REFERENCES

- Cannell, Fenella. (1995). The Power of Appearances: Beauty, Mimicry and Transformation in Bicol. In: Vicente Rafael (Ed.), *Discrepant Histories: Translocal Essays on Filipino Cultures*, Manila: Anvil Publishing. 223-258.
- Fung, Richard. (1995). The Trouble with “Asians.” In: Monica Dorenkamp and Richard Henke (Eds.), *Negotiating Lesbian and Gay Subjects*, London: Routledge. 123-130.

- Gagnon, John H. and Richard G. Parker. (1995). Conceiving Sexuality. In: John H. Gagnon and Richard G. Parker (Eds.), *Conceiving Sexuality*, London: Routledge. 3-18.
- Garcia, Neil C. and Danton Remoto (Eds.) (1994). *Ladlad: An Anthology of Philippine Gay Writing*. Manila: Anvil Publishing.
- Hart, Donn V. (1968). Homosexuality and Transvestism in the Philippines: The Cebuan Bayot and Lakin-on. *Behavior Science Notes* 3(4): 211-248.
- Holmes, Margarita. (1993). *A Different Love*. Pasig, Metro Manila: Anvil Publishing.
- Johnson, Mark. (1995). Transgendermen and homosexuality in the Southern Philippines: Ethnicity, political violence and the protocols of engendered sexualities amongst the Muslim Tausug and Sama. *South East Asia Research* 46-66.
- Manalansan, Martin IV. (1995). Speaking of AIDS: Language and the Filipino "Gay" Experience in America. In: Vicente Rafael (Ed.), *Discrepant Histories: Translocal Essays on Filipino Cultures*. Manila: Anvil Publishing. 193-221.
- Tan, Michael L. (1995a). From Baklato Gay: Shifting Gender Identities and Sexual Behaviors in the Philippines" In Richard Parker and John Gagnon (Eds.), *Conceiving Sexuality: Approaches to Sex Research in a Postmodern World*, New York and London: Routledge. 85-96.
- Tan, Michael L. (1995b). Tita Aida and Emerging Communities of Gay Men. Two Case Studies from Metro Manila. In: Gerard Sullivan and Laurence Wai-teng Leong (Eds.), *Gays and Lesbians in Asia and the Pacific: Social and Human Services*, New York: The Haworth Press, Inc. 31-48.
- Weeks, Jeffrey. (1995). History, Desire, and Identities. In: John H. Gagnon and Richard G. Parker (Eds.), *Conceiving Sexuality*, London: Routledge. 33-50.
- Whitam, Frederick and Robin M. Mathy. (1986). *Male Homosexuality in Four Societies: Brazil, Guatemala, the Philippines and the United States*. New York Praeger.