

Foreword



This issue of the Philippines Communication Society Review is a collection of research papers, essays and interviews focused on stories and narratives of women in diverse contexts and circumstances. In many ways, this is a celebration of women's voices and insights from a gender perspective, which are too often muted in many studies.

With the theme, "Gender and the Media," this volume highlights key discourses on gender as they are negotiated and performed within specific, localised contexts.

The study of gender roles in Philippine Cultural Dances reveals that in general, the representation of women and male roles does not reflect subjugation nor subordination of men over women but instead emphasizes complementarity and equity. In *Ngilin* and *Tinikling* both men and women perform the same dance routines with similar if not equal grace and agility. The author surmises that the less influenced by Western culture the dances were, the more equal they portrayed women.

In "Trailing Spouses", blogging has become a platform for the many ways women, construct, negotiate and present their identities, subjectivities and realities to make sense of the situation they find themselves in. Through their personal and professional narratives, women in three case studies examined – the Diplomatic Wife, Almost Diplomatic and Diplomatic Garbage – grapple to find meaning in their enviable position of being diplomatic wives lest they become mere "footnotes" in their husband's lives. To construct a world that diplomatic wives/ bloggers create for themselves is an important way to communicate to an audience with whom they can share their varied interests, ideas and insights. In so doing, they affirm their relevance, importance and value made almost invisible by living in the sidelines of their spouses' diplomatic careers.

How can marriages withstand and sustain the challenge of long distance relationships? In dealing with this interesting topic, the author juxtaposes the concept of marriage underpinned by the promise of forever on one hand, and the harsh reality of long distance and long term separation between seafarers and their wives or girlfriends. For many spouses

whose partner /husband/wife are working abroad, this poses one of the most difficult aspects of maintaining relationships . How can intimacy, desire, exclusivity and love be nurtured given the reality of long term separation between husbands and wives. Using a gender discourse analysis of women's narratives , the study provides a glimpse of the dominant insights of women engaged or married to seafarers about their notions of permanence or "forever" in relationships. Precisely because of the reality of distance, women's narratives describe "forever" as a "long and winding road", "a road less travelled" and a "ship being tossed by the waves of the sea," which reflect the difficulties and challenges that they face in keeping the relationships, which they are willing to face. By keeping mutuality and reciprocity in their long distance relationships , wives work very hard to keep the communications with their husbands open , sustaining hopes and dreams alive by planning for the future and delighting one another through gifts and tokens. To women, what is important is the constancy of relationship—a "forever" and distance is something that they can overcome .

In "Iconic Performance and the Media: The Case of Kris Aquino", the author interweaves the rise of Kris Aquino as a media icon with the historical milestones of Philippine history that helped to maintain, sustain and nurture the so-called "Aquino magic" in Philippine politics. Tracing Kris' emotional appeal to support her father Ninoy when she was a child , her media construction as an iconic figure in media, the author continued on when her mother Cory ran for President and when the latter died. In spite of her scandalous affairs with married men and tactless revelations of her private life, Kris Aquino' appeal, connection and resonance with the masses were tolerated and accepted by the public. Kris' personality was in direct opposition to the image of her mother and sisters' proper manners, but it is precisely her weakness and her flaws which were viewed as transparency and authenticity that demystified the "Aquino magic" and made it accessible to the common people.

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Prof. Aurora Javate-De Dios is a feminist leader who combines academic excellence and advocacy for women's human rights and gender equality. She is currently the Senior Project Director of the Women and Gender Institute after serving as its Executive Director for 10 years. A specialized center for feminist learning and teaching; research and training at Miriam College, in the Philippines.

Prof. De Dios has had a long academic career as a former College Dean and Professor teaching courses on international relations, global governance, migration and gender, development and feminist leadership at the Miriam College .

She held various government positions as the Philippine Representative to the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Women and Children's Rights (2010-2017) Chair of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (2001-2003); Member of the UN Committee on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, where she became Rapporteur from 1994 to 1998. Prof. de Dios represented the Philippines (1994-1998) and was a Member of the Philippine Interagency Council Against Trafficking in Persons. She presently sits as a Member of the CHED Technical Panel on Gender and Women's Studies.

Prof de Dios has long been engaged in various NGO work with the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women International (as President), the Women's Studies of the Philippines and the Women's Crisis Center. Most recently, she is Co-Convener of the Women's Peace Collective which is working with Muslim women in conflict affected communities to strengthen their political participation in peace processes and in the governance of the Bangsa Moro communities.

Prof. de Dios was also Chair of the External Advisory Board of the Asian Development Bank and works as Gender Consultant and Trainer on Women's Rights, CEDAW and Gender Mainstreaming with government agencies, international organizations and NGOs .

Among her notable publications include : Dictatorship and Revolution: The Roots of People's Power (1988); Springbook: Readings in Women's Studies (2001) Violence Against Women is Not Inevitable (2008 Social Cost of Migration (UN Women, 2012); Stories Told in Whispers (2014) .