

Issue Editor's Note



Gender has always been an issue and a concern in studies about and on the media. It is an issue that never ends, has never been resolved, and has always been evolving through generations. I argue that there is no end to the pursuit of this concern, it can never be resolved because everything and everyone is changeable, and the concept of gender will always evolve as long as there are people who continuously explore its still little known vast territory. The basic concern about gender and the media is how the mass media create social constructions, representations and discourses about and on gender. It is a serious concern because the media have been perceived as being powerful or influential and can create and influence people's perceptions about different genders. There have been various and diverse developments in understanding gender and the discursive formations of gender, such as the concept of the fluidity of gender, the contradictions between performed gender and gender identity preferences, and the various new gender terms (transgender, intersex, transman, transwoman, etc.).

Gender interacts with the media because media forms carry images of how people represent themselves, how people perform their identities, and how people articulate both. With a continuously developing technology that the mass media operate with (to increase media reach) and with people in the media organization ensuring that the messages and the visual and aural texts that they produce are securely reinforced on the media consumer (and that includes us as well), there is a clear and present danger that the media can influence cultural norms and values on and about gender. Hence, it is important and salient to carry on the examination and exploration of the various interactions of media and gender to open the doors of inclusivity and to hopefully think no more of personal choices that are usually based on negative constructions, beliefs, and narrow-mindedness.

This issue of the PCS Review navigates the reader through the meanderings of aspects of Philippine life, culture, and the media where influences of gender come into play.

The article "Complementarity in Movement and Performance: Critiquing Gender Roles in Philippine Cultural Dances" by Cheeno Marlo M. Sayuno, examines the meaning of dance movements in relation to gender roles by comparing dances across four suites: *Ngilin* from the Cordillera suite, *Lancers de Tayabas* from the Maria Clara suite, *Tinikling* from the Rural suite, and *Karasaguyon* from the Moro/Tribal suite. Using Eisler's Partnership Model, Sayuno attempts to evaluate the presence of complementarity in movement and performance of female and male roles in the dances using the standards of 1) equality and partnership; 2) body integrity; 3) self-determination of the female gender, and 4) promotion of peace between genders. The article is a fresh look at how dance can create discursive formations through its performativity.

Joanna Cay S. Garcia's article entitled, ""www.iamtrailing spouse.ph": The Constructed Identity of a Trailing Spouse in Blogs" looks into the constructed identity of a trailing spouse that is narratively presented through blogging. Garcia's article sheds light on the little known concept of the "trailing spouse" in the Philippines but is a concept well-known in Western countries. Garcia analyzes three trailing spouse blogs to see how each one uses socially constructed concepts in their sense-making and where the concept of gender is located within the blog posts. Using a Social Constructionist lens, Garcia subjected the blogs to document analysis of the communication narratives that revealed three levels of identity presentation among the blogs.

Thea Pamela Pauline A. Javier's article, "The Concept of Forever as Perceived by Women in Long-Distance Relationships (LDR) with Seafarers" investigates the intricacies of long distance relationships (LDR) in the context of Filipino women who are in long distance relationships with seafarers. Javier's interest in the topic was brought about by the thriving marine industry in the Philippines. The concept of "forever" is understood in the context of permanence in a relationship; as Javier finds out in her study, "a permanent relationship is possible despite the permanent distance."

Investigating on mass media icons, Mae U. Caralde's article, "Iconic Performance and the Media: The Case of Kris Aquino", examines the celebrity of Kris Aquino, the daughter of a past Philippine president and the performance of her icon. As a Philippine media icon, Kris Aquino is "worshipped" by the Filipino mass audience. Whatever her performance is, she has a large following of admirers and haters at the same time. Dubbed as the "queen of all media" in Philippine pop culture, Caralde conducted a thorough document and textual analysis of archival videos and photographs of Kris Aquino and the Aquino family, being a Philippine political figure. Caralde argues that "Kris's popularity in media is attributed to how she skillfully transgressed kinship and social norms, and asserted herself as a woman in control of herself, in spite of her entanglement in different controversial relationships." Caralde also provides a "historical approach in the role of media as instruments in the construction of a personality cult or icon that obliquely advances a political economic agenda at specific moments in history."

The article, "Look Who's Watching: An Audience Reception of ABS-CBN's 'The Legal Wife'" by John Evan Orias, Jezreel Lopez, Rachele Pascual, Janice Roman, and Regina Mariano, studies a newly emerged genre in Filipino soap operas known as the "adultery genre." Such genre has proven to be popular and enjoys high ratings because it depicts complex family relationships and fuels the voyeurism of its audience to get sneak previews of extramarital affairs. Orias et al. examine the television soap opera entitled, "The Legal Wife". The article inquires into how its viewers are influenced by the TV series' representation and depiction of marriage and marital life.

This issue also contains two relevant and timely essays, namely, Anna Lorraine D. Galura's "*Si Mocha at ang Kanyang High Tech na Pluma*" and Ma. Daniella Louise F. Borrero's "*Tiis Ganda: Beauty as a Tool for Consumerism within the Context of the Filipino Media*".

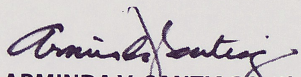
Galura's essay deals with the rise to fame and notoriety of Ms. Mocha Uson, with her journey from being an admirer of President Rodrigo R. Duterte as a blogger, to becoming a staff member of the Presidential Communication Office, and presently as Assistant Secretary in the same office. Galura argues that Mocha Uson may be considered a

“Nationalist Feminist” or in her essay, *Peministang Nasyonalista*. Galura further writes in her essay how Uson has impacted in the flow of information through the web. Galura’s essay is an oppositionist view of Mocha Uson from the usual grain of critics and discriminators.

Borrero’s essay explores the commodification of Filipino beauty. She writes about the continuous and persistent search for beauty by Filipino women and men as constructed in various mass media forms by producers and manufacturers of beauty products. She discusses the techniques of pushing and marketing a beauty product as well as the bombardment of the concept of beauty as much like the Western mold of beauty.

Another interesting feature in this issue of the PCS Review is the interview with broadcast journalist and documentary maker, Ms. Kara David by Julienne Baldo-Cubelo. The interview article is very insightful and offers a glimpse of the inner workings of broadcast news and how this impacts on women like Ms. David. It also articulates the way women journalists meander within and without the multi-faceted world of constructing and producing news and various forms of text through the media.

The articles, essays and interview in this issue of the PCS Review has shown that the concept, notion, and ideas on and about gender have permeated into the social and cultural life of Filipinos through the mass media. Moreover, a new platform has penetrated the usual arena of media forms – we now have the Internet, where it has become an agora or marketplace of various engendered messages. The complexities of gender have become noticeable even in our cultural dances. Gender as a performed icon is also explored through a celebrity. New ways of entering into relationships have been articulated. These are indeed new explorations and examinations of gender and the media. The discourse on gender continues. And that is a good sign!



ARMINDA V. SANTIAGO, Ph.D.

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