

GUEST EDITORS' NOTE

## Love (and LGBT Psychology) Lovelier the Second Time Around

In December 2013, the Philippine Journal of Psychology published a landmark special issue focusing on the lives, experiences, and well-being of gender and sexual minorities in the Philippines. It was the first and only peer-reviewed publication of its kind in Asia to focus on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender psychology (Manalastas & Torre, 2016).

Now, we can happily revise and say it is not the only one, nor the last.

At the rainbow-ribboned heels of that first issue — which sold out within two months in its first printing and was nominated for a National Academy of Science and Technology Outstanding Book Award — comes this second which aims to continue the conversation around LGBT lives and experiences with more contributions by Filipino psychologists. We have gathered another nine original articles that answer the call made to incorporate context and cultural specificity, intersectional analysis, positive psychology, action research, and multiple frames and methodologies in LGBT psychology research in the Philippines (Ofreneo, 2013).

Using case narratives of sexual minority Filipinos from urban poor backgrounds, Arjohn Ceperiano and colleagues analyze the intersections of gender, sexuality, and class in Filipino notions of *bakla*, *bisexual*, *tomboy*, and *girl*. Lived experiences of stigma, discrimination, and minority stress are further explored by Miguel Silan and colleagues in their field study of trans women navigating the understudied context of public transport spaces (specifically Manila's infamous Metro Rail Transit system). Another under-investigated context, prison, is featured in the article by Leonel Relis and colleagues,

who use a life story approach to examine the experiences of gay men behind bars in a regional facility. These three papers demonstrate how attention to the contexts, including the material, physical, and social environments in which lives are played out, provides for rich insights into LGBT populations, showing that indeed, we are and can be everywhere.

The next four papers center on themes that unfold in lifespan development: careers and work, faith and religion, ageing, marriage. Gian Ledesma and colleagues explore career aspirations and decision-making of gay youth using qualitative interviews, while a team led by Zyra Evangelista apply techniques from Sikolohiyang Pilipino to unpack the integration of sexual and religious identities in an LGBT faith community. Social support (or lack thereof) and life satisfaction among older lesbian and gay adults over 60 are documented in a study by Celinne Charmaine Guevara on the intersections of being “gay and gray.” Finally, the question of support for or opposition to equal marriage in our ostensibly religion-centered society is taken up by Danielle Ochoa and colleagues in their work on social attitudes toward same-sex marriage.

The last two papers in this issue focus on two applied areas of LGBT psychology: teaching and therapy. Moniq Muyargas and colleagues examine a simple but impactful active learning exercise to raise awareness about anti-lesbian/gay stigma, while Divine Salvador presents practitioner reflections on engaging in trans-affirmative psychotherapy in the local context, both papers showing how researchers can adopt an action research orientation to effect change while producing useful, interesting insights.

Finally, we highlight contributions made by two Filipina psychologists to “give away” psychology, including LGBT psychology, to the reading public. Pierce Docena reviews the updated 25th anniversary edition of Margarita Go Singco-Holmes’ *Life Love Lust: Straightforward Answers to Provocative Questions*, while Margaret Udarbe-Alvarez uses a clinical practitioner lens to read feminist psychologist Sylvia Estrada Claudio’s *And Then She Laughed: Counseling Women*. Though not specifically LGBT-focused, both books demonstrate how psychological knowledge, when substantively inclusive of LGBT concerns, can be transformative, emancipatory, and

even satisfying for all (Ofreneo, 2013).

In 2011, the Psychological Association of the Philippines took a step previously unheard of in organized psychology in Asia by crafting an LGBT-affirmative policy that called upon all Filipino psychologists to reject the pathologization of sexual and gender minorities and to take action against the stigma, prejudice, and discrimination faced by LGBT people. Five years later, we continue to make that policy come alive and to build the four pillars of LGBT psychology in the Philippines (Manalastas & Torre, 2016). This second special issue is another cornerstone in this ongoing construction. Everyone, LGBT or otherwise, is welcome and free to come in, come out, love, and enjoy.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS FOR THE SECOND SPECIAL LGBT PSYCHOLOGY ISSUE

The lesbian feminist poet Audre Lorde once wrote that there is power in “the possibilities of support and connection for which we all yearn, and about which we dream so often.” The dream of a second LGBT psychology issue of the PJP was possible because of the warm support and connection we received from the following colleagues: former PJP editor Allan Bernardo, for facilitating a special three-day residential publishing workshop; former PJP editor Meling Macapagal and PAP president Margie Udarbe for their trust and patience throughout the publication process; Eds Lantin once again for our layout and cover design; and the members of the PAP’s LGBT Psychology Special Interest Group, for their queer cheers. The following researchers, scholars, and practitioners generously contributed their time and expertise in reviewing manuscripts for this second special issue:

Cynthia Battle  
*Brown University*  
USA

Hiyasmin Mattison  
*Sun Life of Canada Inc.*  
Philippines

Makiko Deguchi  
*Sophia University*  
Japan

Timo Tapani Ojanen  
*Thammasat University*  
Thailand

Kim Felsenthal  
*Berkeley College*  
USA

J. Enrique Saplala  
*Oshawa Psychological &  
Counselling Services*  
Canada

Dagoberto Heredia Jr.  
*Texas A&M University*  
USA

Jojo L. Tandoc  
*DMCI Power Corporation*  
Philippines

Julie Koch  
*Oklahoma State University*  
USA

Ryan Thoreson  
*Human Rights Watch*  
USA

Erin S. Lavender-Stott  
*Virginia Polytechnic Institute  
& State University*  
USA

Karl James E. Villarnea  
*Silliman University*  
Philippines