

The Queerness of *Malasakit* and *Pagdamay* as a Response to Pansexuality and Depression: A Narrative Exploration

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Introduction

The acronym LGBTIQ+^[1] appears to ensure the collective inclusion of a broad range of sexual and gender identities both within and outside the spectrum. However, most literature, conversations, and representations focus on gays, lesbians, and queers in general. As asserted by John Elia, the 'plight of the alphabet soup approach to inclusion,'^[2] has made other gender identities, in this case, pansexuality invisible and erased. In the same way that pansexuality is subsumed under the queer umbrella, depression is subsumed to an array of mental health issues. Depression can happen to various genders. According to the latest report of the World Health Organization in 2020, it is estimated that more than a quarter of a billion people were affected by depression.^[3] Indeed, depression is a human experience, but, like pansexuality, depression is often invalidated, invisibility is enforced and the mental illness—erased. In this regard, it is worth unfurling the similarities and intersections of pansexuality and depression.

This paper foregrounds the micro-narrative of Boots (nom de plume) who identifies as a pansexual with chronic depression. His story serves as a prism through which the invisibility of pansexuality and depression are made real. In one of his severe depressive states, he was able to come to the realisation that life was still worth living through an unexpected friend's *malasakit* and *pagdamay*, where the former pertains to 'care, solicitude, or empathy,' while the latter is roughly translated as 'an act of support.' Through a queer reading of Silvan Tomkins's affective framework, Boots's experience of the queerness of the Filipino indigenous virtues of *malasakit* and *pagdamay* will be explored. This paper positions queer as a theory that questions binarism and normality. It is my hope that this paper can contribute to the existing conversation on the intersections of gender and mental health, as well as the possible inclusion of *malasakit* and *pagdamay* to queer discourse.

Pansexual: Invisible minority within a minority

It is fair to say that the recognition of LGBTIQ+ is progressing not only globally, but also in the region. In the Philippines, Geraldine Roman, a transwoman, made history by winning a seat in Congress in 2016.^[4] In January 2021, Taiwan became the first country in Asia to legalise multinational same-sex marriage, with an amendment to Articles 46 and 63 of Taiwan's Civil Code.^[5]

The acronym LGBTIQ+ conveys a sense of inclusivity; however, the dominant voice within this group are gays and lesbians, who are trailed by transgendered and bisexual people. There is less representation of bi+, plurisexual, pansexual, and asexual people. As an emerging identity, pansexuality is defined differently by pansexual people based on their experiences. For Boots, pansexuality is a nonconforming gender/sexuality that is fluid and flexible.

Another factor that could have contributed to the invisibility of pansexuality is the scarcity of literature

about and conversations by those that disclose their lived experiences.[6] This could have yielded pansexuality to be an understudied gender[7]—a minoritarian within a minority.[8] Boots also observed that his current social environment—hetero/cisgender majority is unfamiliar with pansexuality. Further, he noticed the need for public policies or laws, organisations, education systems, churches/religions and workplaces to revisit and rethink their role in the invisibility of non-conforming gender people. Boots asserts that to dismantle gender erasure and phobias,[9] and provide a sense of acceptance (not tolerance), institutions must create a safe space for diverse gender and sexuality.

Furthermore, the misrepresentation of the media[10] about pansexuality has contributed to its scant understanding of pansexuality. Still an evolving identity,[11] some pansexual individuals face skepticism in a compulsorily heterosexual society making them susceptible to abuse, exclusion and negation, and therefore leaving them vulnerable.[12] Research conducted by Lara Greaves, Chris Sibley, Gloria Fraser and Fiona Barlow reveals that their pansexual respondents' experience more psychological distress than bisexual respondents.[13] Similarly, in a study by Brisa Anna Peña, she noted that her pansexual respondents shared their frustration whenever they were required to explain their gender/sexual orientation during a therapy session.[14] In the same study, one respondent expressed frustration when they 'are often expected to teach others about their identity, which is an unfair burden on top of the discrimination they often face, whether it be due to confusion or outright bigotry.'[15] In a similar vein, Boots recounts,

I find it hard to come out (be visible) because pansexuality is something quite incomprehensible for some, even in my circle. Some associate pansexuality with fickle-mindedness or being unsure of my gender, which to me is invalidating. So, to avoid explaining and even justifying my gender, I opted to be closeted and just remain an ally. True, people who might have some degree of awareness of non-conforming gender, are wedged with homonormative orientation or gay and lesbian stereotypes. In fact, I indirectly hinted, in a way, to make my gender visible to my two closest friends. But what I received were invalidation and silence. To be honest, it was painful to receive disapproval as well as silence at a moment when I was at the edge.

Boots's choice to be visible to selected friends continues to render him invisible or partly visible; to a similar degree, the reception of his closest friends (his circle) reaffirms his invisibility.[16]

The Philippines is known to be a gender-tolerant nation where homonormative orientation is legitimised, to a certain extent. It is all right that you are a transwoman but, do not use the female toilet; it is all right that you are lesbian or gay, but please do not have relations with any of my siblings. The reality is that the Philippines is far from a haven for LGBTIQ+ people. A major factor is the colossal influence of the Roman Catholic Church in being unaccepting of other genders and sexuality. They have a faulty understanding of gender (thinking that this is mainly a Western ideological influence) that has perpetuated gender stereotypes in families, institutions and politics. LGBTIQ+ people are rendered unorthodox and indecent.[17] This view has a significant influence on the refusal to pass the SOGIESC (an Anti-Discrimination Law) that would protect LGBTIQ+ people from varied forms of discrimination resulting in stigmatisation and marginalisation.

In their book, *Love the Sin*, Janet Jacobson and Ann Pellegrini view tolerance as exclusionary, hierarchical, and an improvement over hate.[18] I assent with their view, because, when looked at closely, tolerance disavows freedom and justice, because the ethical matrix invoked as a response to differences, discrimination, and even hate is tolerance. Tolerance maintains binarism grounded on bigotry, such as us/them, dominant/margins, majority/minority, hetero/homo, excess/debility, able/disable, and so on, where the former in the binary tolerate the latter.[19] Another argument as to why tolerance negates justice is because, when tolerance is invoked, there is no expectation that a stance will be taken against injustice; both sides are merely 'tolerated.' This results in a failure to discern and distinguish, as Jacobson and Pellegrini assert 'between competing claims and groups that it is supposed to tolerate ... while those who are placed in the category of "minority" have few options for responding publicly to their marginalisation.'[20] This being said, tolerance indeed is exclusionary, it has taken a form of pseudo-

acceptance where the binary and line between us and them is maintained. A genuine acceptance in the form of freedom and justice opens the possibility of being inclusive.[21]

Stigma, invalidation and exclusion bring distress to Boots and some pansexual people.[22] Feeling demoralised could lead to depression or suicidal ideation, which surely adversely affects their mental health.[23]

Depression: Invisibility by invalidation

World Mental Health Day was commemorated on 10 October 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the condition of depression in the lives of many, making it one of the most prevalent mental health concerns. Depression is often medicalised and moralised. Likewise, depression and suicidal ideation are either avoided or invalidated in conversations. Just like pansexuality, depression is driven to invisibility.

When Boots went to a neurologist, he was told that it is highly probable that his depression is caused by a chemical imbalance.[24] This medical perspective implies that depression is beyond his control and therefore must be treated with medication.[25] Individuals who fail to measure up with normality of mental wellness, who project melancholy or lack energy are pathologised as depressed.[26] For Anastasia Scrutton, the term 'medical illness' is problematic because it is seen as a negative condition that must be cured or fixed.[27] Dependence on antidepressants could reduce the hope of recovery because a medication is a reminder that without it, individuals who have depressive episodes will be back to square one.[28] Pathologising depression has paved the way to a therapeutic culture, making it a personal/individual problem that one is responsible to fix by 'providing' agency[29] to the 'patient' through therapy or medication. Consequently, in pathologising depression, we fail to recognise its cultural, social and neoliberal configurations[30] that have influenced a person's definition and source of debility, loss, and unhappiness. This means that depression is also socially produced.[31] Boots was aware of the influence of his environment that led to depression, but he refused to take medication or spill his guts to disclose details of his life in a therapy session. He recounts,

I was brought up in a family that instilled secrecy. I was told, again and again by my parents that I should not disclose any family matters to others. So, even when I felt the need to express what I was going through, especially when I was at my lowest, I kept things to myself. But there was one incident that I felt the urgency to share or else I will lose my mind. So, I searched for possible competent people who will listen. So, bravely I went to a therapy-counselling session with a Catholic nun who was highly recommended to me by a priest. He told me that she was trained to handle cases like mine. During the session, I was blamed by the nun for my condition and was put down. I felt my esteem shrink into nothingness. I walked out of the room sobbing, feeling more devastated than when I entered. Since then, I lost trust in professional therapy.

Boots also recalled another experience when he disclosed his depression to a good friend, who insisted that his depression would not happen if he refrained from entertaining depressive thoughts. Boots shared,

the comment of my friend deeply offended me. Knowing her for years, I thought she will understand. On the contrary, I felt so small after confiding to her about my depression. Her words made me feel even smaller and guilty, which worsened my condition and sense of self. What I needed at that time was somebody with whom I will feel safe. I just ended up more alone and invisible instead.

Boots never wanted to be in a depressive state. At times, in his case, depression is invisible, even to him. Sometimes it occurs gradually, while other times it happens in a snap and can be intense. Depression is a state where one experiences an overwhelming and excruciating emotional anguish, a sense of unworthiness, numbness, or emptiness that some cannot bear. The depressed person wants the depression to end, but they do not have enough strength to get out of it or neither do they know how to deal with it.[32] Unfortunately, many people lack understanding about the gravity of depression and that people with depression would rather be invisible.

In early Christianity, *acedia* was a form of spiritual despair. Acedia as sin or a visitation, a gradual incitement, and infiltration by a demon resembles depression, and in effect defines the latter as spiritual problem,[33] where God's grace or favour is absent.[34] In this sense, depression is moralised and demonised. Whenever he is in his lowest moments, Boots on several occasions had suicidal ideation. Being brought up a Catholic, he believes that when he commits suicide, he will end up in hell. In this sense, moralising and demonising depression is problematic because of its ethical implication that damages the individual's self-image. The belief that persons who are depressed are accountable for their 'abnormality,' 'reflects an essentialist mode of thinking,'[35] that one must conform to normality, gauged with a cheerful 'Christian' disposition,[36] which is tantamount to the invalidation and erasure of depression.

In disclosing his experience of depression, Boots imparts to us that we need to compassionately listen to the context of every individual because depression varies for each person. Similarly, his refusal to submit to therapy or take medication can be considered an act of de-pathologising depression.

Depression: A shape of unbecoming

When Boots was in a depressive state, nothing mattered, including his life. His suicidal ideation lingered, and each day Boots wrestled with the battle not to take his own life. Each day ended in exhaustion. Hence for him, death is life. He sees depression as a private and personal experience but does not discount the influence of the social environment on its conditioning. To some extent, this echoes Ann Cvetkovich's view that depathologises depression and considers it 'as a cultural and social phenomenon rather than a medical disease.' [37] Indeed, depression can be viewed from varying angles.

Cvetkovich who herself experienced depression has observed the spatial connotations linked to depression, such as dead-end, being stuck somewhere, or experiencing inhibited movement, that is, one is unable 'to figure out what to do or why to do it.' [38] For Cvetkovich this captures the notion of impasse, of being in a gridlock but not without possibilities of (flexible) movement, where an inward (and outward) gaze is worth exploring.[39] This means that a person who goes through depression is led to look into the inner self (inward) triggered by incidents or events (outward). Thus, when the person gazes inward–outward, this movement can effect new self-discovery. By considering depression as an impasse that is temporal, Cvetkovich claims that there is no need for immediate relief from depression. Perhaps, gazing at depression is a moment to explore the negative[40] affect without consciously aiming toward wellness or hope. At times, by gazing at depression, one can also experience a sort of spirituality—a dark night of the soul[41]—an affirmative view of depression, hopelessness and numbness.[42] In connection to this, José Esteban Muñoz offers a nuanced view on hope; hope will disappoint and fail us, but for him this is not a negation but rather a possibility. Thus, when we are coerced to submit to the pressure of immediacy to wellness or normality dictated by the majority, we can turn to 'queer and minoritarian ways to live the impossible present,' that can chart, 'new paths toward different and queerer future.' [43] Depression as an affective turn can be viewed as a state and a shape of unbecoming.[44] When depression is embraced as part of reality in everyday life, it forges a new way of living facilitated by the sense of loss, of disconnection, of being stuck.[45] Also, depression has the potential to create new forms of relationality and sociality.[46]

Robin McDonald compared depression to queerness, where the former is a disengagement or a moment when the person is 'out of line' from what constitutes a purposeful, pleasurable, and hopeful life.[47] Here, I would apply Sedgwick's notion of queer from its etymological origin meaning twist,[48] which has several meanings, such as 'to frustrate; or to upset arrangements.' Like queerness that upsets hetero- and cisnormative, depression frustrates or disrupts/interrupts the chrononormativity of life. Chrononormativity here pertains to the 'straight time,' which is an expected pattern in life that constitutes normality. In the

case of depression, chrononormativity is the medical standard that constitutes a symptom of sadness, anger, worthlessness, fluctuating sleep patterns and so on, which manifests for two weeks (my emphasis) and would result in life's dysfunctionality. These symptoms are indicative of depression, where one should seek professional help. If life is the coherence of things, the queer can be considered a pull away from life's chrononormativity. Boots struggles with chronic depression, yet by way of de-pathologising it, he transgresses the chrononormativity of what is deemed pathologically and neurologically normal in a social environment. Boots shares his queer view on depression, 'I consider my depression a paradoxical process that is not "straight" but a looping gaze inside and outward to a society that avows "compulsory normality".' Depression is a queer experience that upsets the familiar and the 'straight' state of himself,[49] where Boots is ushered to transgress the unbearable, by living each day of unbecoming.[50]

Exploring the queerness of *malasakit* and *pagdamay*

In his recent episodic severe depression, Boots bravely hinted to selected friends about his depressive state, yet only one knew exactly what he needed at that crucial time. Boots recounts,

It was this friend who, due to our geographical distance, I least expected to respond with *malasakit* and *pagdamay*. In extending *malasakit* and *pagdamay* she also shared her journey of years of depression. It was excruciating to relive and feel my pain, yet my friend's *malasakit* and *pagdamay* was an invitation to gaze within and without myself.

The time spent (through video call) with his friend was a process of gazing that brought Boots to explore the queerness of this Filipino affect. Through that experience, Boots saw how *malasakit* and *pagdamay* invite us to 'know each other through depression, then perhaps we can use it to make forms of sociability that not only move us forward past our moments of impasse but understand impasse itself to be a state that has productive potential.'[51]

Employing a queer reading of Silvan Tomkins's affective framework, we shall analyse further Boots's experience of the queerness of the Filipino indigenous virtues of *malasakit* and *pagdamay* in the succeeding discussion.

Tomkins's affect system: A ground for queer affect interest

Conventionally, our body is considered a fixed entity that passively waits for sensory stimuli and responses. Part of our faculty is the affect, which can be understood as the flow of energy that 'circulates across the body and mind, the individual and social, and the private and public, in which bodies and subjects are constituted and reconstituted.'[52] In this sense, affect theory rethinks the body as having the capacity to affect and be affected, where its energies can transgress 'the boundaries of bodies creating and undoing subjectivity through the dynamic relations of transmission, repetition, and incitation.'[53]

In the field of affect, Silvan Tomkins has made a significant mark. Generally, Tomkins's affective framework (he refers to this as an affect system) comes in a variety of forms, such as time, bodily location, responses and objects.[54] Tomkins's affective framework about time has highly variable temporalities. For example, one can be depressed for days, weeks or so; the frequency is indeterminable. Similarly, in Tomkins's affective framework about relationship, he asserts that there is no fixed template or standard response; it all varies.[55] In a penned summary of his contribution, Tomkins writes, 'the affect system is a separate but amplifying set of mechanisms which can be activated with any other mechanism, drive, perceptual, memory, cognitive or motive'[56] to startle a response. Further, as queer theorist Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick notes, Tomkins's 'resistance to heterosexist teleologies is founded in the most basic terms of his understanding of affect' that has no single output.[57] His affect framework is analogous to a periodic table of 'infinitely recombinable elements ... or has the possibility of change.'[58] He further asserts that 'the general advantage of affective arousal to such a broad spectrum of levels and changes of levels of neural

firing is to make the individual care about quite different states of affairs in quite different ways.' [59] The affective framework of Tomkins is a 'neural firing' that incites interest in queerness because it transgresses the binarism and normality that a cultural and social description of affective experiences has instilled into our psyche. Tomkins also emphasises that the meaning-making of affect is not fixed nor fated, rather it can trigger and amplify an 'assembly of memory, perception, and cognition during interaction.' [60]

In addition, affect with no fixed response involves queer vulnerability, inviting mutual gaze, interconnectedness and different expressions. [61] Indeed, we can think of affect as closely related to bodies, but queer theory seeks to transgress the normally prescribed ways of affect. Queer discourse on affect envisions, as Jason Lim explains: 'New modes of practice and new ways of relating to other people, places, situations, and material things. It has sought to offer insights into the creativity involved in the processes of making community and of negotiating (social) encounters.' [62] Tomkins's framework of affect can also be analogous to a prism that manifests fluidity, flexibility and freedom of expression, which can be a ground for queer interest.

***Malasakit* and *Pagdamay*: Exploring a Queer Horizon**

Malasakit and *pagdamay* are Filipino indigenous values that pertain to the affective aspect of the Filipino psyche; the former is translated as 'care, concern, solicitude, or empathy,' while the latter as 'commiserate or shared sorrow.' These affective aspects of Filipinos are usually the basis for furthering a relationship. The Tagalog term *malasakit* is composed of the prefix 'mala' and the root word *sakit*, where the former can mean, 'similar, like, semi, equivalent, or half' while the latter could have a plethora of meanings, such as, 'feeling of pain, illness, affliction, anguish, or tribulation.' Hence, a person who has *malasakit* to another, shares and feels the other's anguish.

Similarly, *pagdamay*, is also composed of two words, where 'pag' is a noun prefix that pertains to the action expressed by the root, which in this case is 'damay.' The verb *damay* can mean two things, namely (1) to help and (2) to get involved; it is further rooted in the word *dama*, which is the pathic aspect of the personality and the underlying component of emotivity. [63] Hence, *pagdamay* would mean that a 'person chooses to get involved as an act of support.' The closest translation of these two would be 'to suffer with or to suffer together.'

As such, affect can create differing relationships that shift and are open to augmentation, which can be empowering. [64] Muñoz asserted that 'Queerness is not yet here,' [65] however, we can position ourselves on a queer horizon imbued with potentiality. [66] Taking Tomkins's affect theory, it can be viable to consider *malasakit* and *pagdamay* as a Filipino affect that does not ascribe to the ideal and normative prescription to wellness. Like Tomkins's affect where responses vary, *malasakit* and *pagdamay* are open to exploring the possibilities of encounter, where a pansexual person with depression together with a person or community can recognise the glimpses of everydayness, and thus, discover varied ways of existence in the face of upheaval. Wellness is not compulsory. Through his experience of *malasakit* and *pagdamay*, Boots was able to explore the potential to live in-between crumbs (temporal feel good) and the cracks (brought by depression) of every day. From Boots's experience, *malasakit* and *pagdamay* provide him with a queer affect that does not conform to any moral matrix or compulsory normality. It impels us to rethink what is right, safe, beneficial and what is wrong, harmful and precarious in a life of constantly being forged. [67]

Given the premise of queerness as something yet to unfold and be known, or 'perhaps even forever unknowable,' [68] the existing moral framework and matrixes are being challenged by the indeterminacy of *malasakit* and *pagdamay*. [69] In *malasakit* and *pagdamay* 'no one knows ahead of time the affects one is capable of ... you do not know beforehand what good or bad you are capable of; you do not know beforehand what a body or mind can do, in a given encounter, a given arrangement, a given

combination.'^[70] In this sense, *malasakit* and *pagdamay* as a queer affect can engender new ethics.

The queerness of *malasakit* and *pagdamay*, as Boots experienced, rests on openness to freedom, flexibility and fluidity. Such an engagement can unfurl new forms of existence, meaning, living, relationality and sociality, that are perpetually being modified.^[71]

Malasakit and *pagdamay* as a response do not impose healing, wellness, or resolution, but at best offer compassionate listening/journeying.^[72] Indeed, depression 'cast[s] a negative or critical picture of the insufficiencies of the present,'^[73] yet *malasakit* and *pagdamay* as a single response has the potential to be a momentary spiritual arousal.^[74] The process of accompaniment invites us to rethink the productive possibilities or the utopia of negative or disapproved feelings.^[75] In his book, *Cruising Utopia*, Muñoz described utopia as still gripping to hope even 'in the face of heartbreaking reality.'^[76] Muñoz considers queerness as about hope, wherein queerness is always on the horizon.^[77] Hope is something active, something that we work on because we will certainly experience disappointments, hurdles and obstacles. In rethinking hope that postures potential disappointment and demands normality, Boots's paradoxical process resonates with Marcella Althaus-Reid's notion that 'Queer Theology acts as a mirror... which allows us to search for the Queer who is entombed in us, pointing us to a different praxis of the holy in our lives.'^[78]

To be forthright, my process of engaging with *malasakit* and *pagdamay* in this article was exploratory in the hope of opening up prospects for further research. In disclosing his micro-narrative, Boots de-privileges and destabilises hetero/homonormativity and normality as compulsory by positioning pansexuality and depression at the visible periphery. He made visible the doubly invisible reality of a pansexual with chronic depression. Also, when Boots explored the queerness of *malasakit* and *pagdamay*, as readers we were invited to transgress compulsory normality. Further, the queerness of *malasakit* and *pagdamay* steer us to openness without judgment that can create meaningful relations with others. The queerness of *malasakit* and *pagdamay* invites us to hope, rehearse, dream and chart new ways of living, relationality, and with a sociality yet to be known,^[79] toward different and queerer futures.^[80]

In grounding theorising and theologising on lived reality, Boots's micro-narrative is privileged in exposing pansexual and depression's invisibility, while his exploration of the queerness of *malasakit* and *pagdamay* (through his experience) is a trajectory towards a queer horizon of unbecoming.

Notes

^[1] In the Philippines, LGBTIQ+ refers to queer (or *bakla* an umbrella Tagalog term) in general, where the latter term 'queer' is rarely used; hence, I will use LGBTIQ+ about the gender spectrum as well as diverse sexuality.

^[2] John P. Elia, 'Bisexuality and school culture: School as a prime site for bi-intervention,' *Journal of Bisexuality* 10, no. 4 (2010): 452–71, at p. 457, doi: [10.1080/15299716.2010.521060](https://doi.org/10.1080/15299716.2010.521060).

^[3] World Health Organization, 'Depression,' 13 Sep. 2021, online: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/depression>, accessed 9 Jul. 2022; Linda Searing, 'Depression affects about 280 million people worldwide,' *Washington Post*, 27 Feb. 2022, online: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2022/02/27/depression-worldwide/>, accessed 9 Jul. 2022.

^[4] To this date (2022), Roman remains the Bataan 1st District representative in Congress.

^[5] In 2019, Taiwan has allowed same-sex marriage provided that both parties are from countries that

allow same-sex marriage. But the amendment now legalises same-sex marriage regardless of whether the couples' country allows same-sex marriage or union. Matthew Strong, 'Taiwan to allow multinational same-sex marriages, but not with China,' *Taiwan News*, 22 Jan. 2021, online: <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/4109284>, accessed 23 Jan. 2022.

[6] I am not in any way imposing that 'P' be included in the acronym. Rather, while working on this paper, I observed that there are few works of literature and representations of pansexuality in the current conversation and discourse.

[7] Brisa Anna Peña, 'Clinician perspectives on pansexuality: Exploring clinicians' knowledge, beliefs and clinical experiences related to pansexual youth,' PhD diss., Rutgers: The State University of New Jersey, 2020, p. 80, online: <https://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/rutgers-lib/64798/PDF/1/play/>, accessed 22 Dec. 2021.

[8] The lack of broad knowledge about varied gender and sexuality brought to a halt the passing of the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Expression (SOGIE) Equality Bill in the Philippines. The Anti-Discrimination Bill was proposed by Congress in 2000. An expanded bill, SOGIESC-based Anti-Discrimination Act (added to the acronym is Sex Characteristics) was re-introduced by Senator Risa Hontiveros on 1 Dec. 2020, in the Eighteenth Congress of the Republic of the Philippines with Senate Bill No. 1934, online: <http://legacy.senate.gov.ph/lisdata/3408830843!.pdf>, accessed 12 Oct. 2022.

[9] Hayfield, *Bisexual and Pansexual Identities*, p. 92.

[10] Hayfield, *Bisexual and Pansexual Identities*, p. 117.

[11] Lara M. Greaves, Chris G. Sibley, Gloria Fraser and Fiona Kate Barlow, 'Comparing pansexual- and bisexual-identified participants on demographics, psychological well-being, and political ideology in a New Zealand national sample,' *The Journal of Sex Research* 56, no. 9 (2019): 1083–90, at p. 1083, doi: [10.1080/00224499.2019.1568376](https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2019.1568376).

[12] Greaves et al., 'Comparing Pansexual-', p. 1087.

[13] Greaves et al., 'Comparing Pansexual-', p. 1087.

[14] Peña, 'Clinician perspectives on pansexuality,' p. 72.

[15] Peña, 'Clinician perspectives on pansexuality,' p. 73.

[16] They were friends for decades. To this date, this friend of hers has remained aloof and silent after her indirect reveal.

[17] The term 'unbecoming' in this context is associated with improper. However, the same term will be used later in this paper, but it will be associated with queerness.

[18] Janet R. Jacobsen and Ann Pellegrini, *Love the Sin: Sexual Regulation and the Limits of Religious*, New York, NY: New York University Press, 2003, p. 45.

[19] Jacobsen and Pellegrini, *Love the Sin*, p. 50.

[20] Jacobsen and Pellegrini, *Love the Sin*, pp. 59, 65.

[21] Jacobsen and Pellegrini, *Love the Sin*, pp. 68, 73.

[22] Emily K. Sanders and Holly McCartney Chalk, 'Predictors of psychological outcomes in nonheterosexual individuals,' *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research* 21, no. 2 (2016): 100–110, p. 101, <https://doi.org/10.24839/2164-8204.JN21.2.100>; Peña, 'Clinician perspectives on pansexuality,' p. 74,

[23] Sanders and Chalk, 'Predictors of psychological outcomes in nonheterosexual individuals,' p. 101.

[24] Anastasia Philippa Scrutton, 'Is depression a sin or a disease? A critique of moralizing and medicalizing models of mental illness,' *Journal of Disability and Religion* 19, no. 4 (2015): 285–311, at p. 287, doi: [10.1080/23312521.2015.1087933](https://doi.org/10.1080/23312521.2015.1087933).

[25] An interesting take on depression in connection with the profitability of debility and her critique on liberal eugenics of lifestyle programming was examined by a queer theorist, Jasbir K. Puar in her book, *The Right to Main: Debility, Capacity, Disability*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017.

[26] Ann Cvetkovich, *Depression: A Public Feeling*, London: Duke University Press, 2012, p. 12, doi: [10.2307/j.ctv11smrx4](https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv11smrx4).

[27] Scutton, 'Is depression a sin or a disease,' p. 286.

[28] As shared by some they opted to stop taking antidepressants. Antidepressants can calm and make them functional, yet as soon as they withdraw, all suppressed emotions resurface with more intensity than before. While for others, the effect of antidepressants is that their minds are so quiet, which ironically results in anxiety because they fear they are losing their grip on themselves. It is the drug that controls them, not themselves. The 'noise' is an indication that they exist; removing it equates to death or non-existence, which is more terrifying for them.

[29] Cvetkovich, *Depression*, p. 25.

[30] Depression in the form of professional ambitions, according to Cvetkovich, 'can be the frequent fallout of the dreams that are bred by capitalist culture—the pressure to be successful ... have a meaningful job, to juggle the conflicting demands of work.' Cvetkovich, *Depression*, p. 17.

[31] Cvetkovich, *Depression*, p. 15.

[32] Cvetkovich, *Depression*, p. 31.

[33] Cvetkovich, *Depression*, p. 24.

[34] Scrutton, 'Is depression a sin or a disease,' p. 288.

[35] Scrutton, 'Is depression a sin or a disease,' p. 288.

[36] Scrutton, 'Is depression a sin or a disease,' p. 288.

[37] Cvetkovich, *Depression*, p. 1.

[38] Cvetkovich, *Depression*, p. 20.

[39] Cvetkovich, *Depression*, p. 21.

[40] I want to note that I have a reluctance to call depression a negative affect because terms such as negative, and discomfort have strands of heteronormative tropes, binarism of positive/negative and normality. But due to a lack of alternate terms, for the time being, I am limited to using 'negative' to pertain to depression.

[41] As described by St. John of the Cross in his book, *Dark Night of the Soul*, trans. and ed. E. Allison Peers, New York, NY: Image Books, 1959.

[42] Cvetkovich, *Depression*, p. 14.

[43] José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*, New York, NY: New York University Press, 2009, p. xi.

[44] Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*, pp. xiv, xvi. The concept of unbecoming in this paper echoes that of Judith Butler, who 'opens up the space to think queer becoming as unbecoming, as a question of the lack of fit, the difficulties of interpretation, the moments of textual resistance or of unintelligibility that scholars in literary, film, and cultural studies wrestle with in their work.' See E.L. McCallum and Mikko Tuhkanen, 'Becoming unbecoming: Untimely meditations,' in *Queer Time, Queer Becomings*, ed. E.L. McCallum and Mikko Tuhkanen, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2011, pp. 1–21.

If becoming is compulsory to constant change to achieve the norm and ideal, then unbecoming is the resistance to and undoing the compulsory linear, straight expectations in life. It counters the ontological 'norm' through language; in the case of depression, it is countering the linear progress to something different and unknown.

[45] Cvetkovich, *Depression*, p. 192.

[46] Cvetkovich, *Depression*, p. 6.

[47] Robin Alex McDonald, 'Comics, corn, and the queer phenomenology of depression,' *Literature and Medicine* 37, no.1 (2019): 96–112, at p. 98, doi: [10.1353/lm.2019.0003](https://doi.org/10.1353/lm.2019.0003).

[48] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Tendencies*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003, p. xii.

[49] Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006, p. 170; McDonald, "Queer phenomenology of depression," p. 103, doi: [10.1515/9780822388074](https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822388074).

[50] McDonald, 'Queer phenomenology of depression,' p. 110.

[51] Cvetkovich, *Depression*, p. 23.

[52] Wen Liu, 'Toward a queer psychology of affect: Restarting from shameful places,' *Subjectivity* 10, no. 1 (2017): 44–62, at p. 45, doi: [10.1057/s41286-016-0014-6](https://doi.org/10.1057/s41286-016-0014-6).

[53] Liu, 'Queer psychology of affect,' p. 45.

[54] Adam J. Frank and Elizabeth A. Wilson, *A Silvan Tomkins Handbook: Foundations for Affect Theory*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minneapolis, 2020, p. 17, doi: [10.5749/9781452965802](https://doi.org/10.5749/9781452965802).

[55] Frank and Wilson, *A Silvan Tomkins Handbook*, p. 17.

[56] Silvan S. Tomkins, *Affect Imagery Consciousness: The Complete Edition*, New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company, 2008, p. xxix.

[57] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003, p. 99, doi: [10.1215/9780822384786](https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822384786).

[58] Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, p. 114.

[59] Silvan S. Tomkins, 'The quest for primary motives: Biography and autobiography of an idea,' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 41, no. 2 (1981): 306–29, at p. 318, doi: [10.1037/0022-3514.41.2.306](https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.41.2.306).

[60] Liu, 'Queer psychology of affect,' p. 48.

[61] Liu, 'Queer psychology of affect,' pp. 48, 52.

[62] Jason Lim, 'Queer critique and the politics of affect,' in *Geographies of Sexualities: Theory, Practices and Politics*, ed. Kath Browne, Jason Lim and Gavin Brown, 53–67, Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2007, p. 53.

[63] Dionisio Miranda, *Loob: The Filipino Within: A Preliminary Investigation into a Pre-theological Moral Anthropology*, Manila: Logos Publications, Inc., 1988, p. 31.

[64] Liu, 'Queer psychology of affect,' p. 56.

[65] Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*, p. 1.

[66] Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*, pp. xvi, 1.

[67] Liu, 'Queer psychology of affect,' p. 56.

[68] Jasbir K. Puar, 'Queer times, queer assemblages,' *Social Text* 23, nos. 3–4 (2005): 121–39, at p. 137, doi: [10.1215/01642472-23-3-4_84-85-121](https://doi.org/10.1215/01642472-23-3-4_84-85-121).

[69] Liu, 'Queer psychology of affect,' p. 56.

[70] Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley, San Francisco, CA: City Light Books, 1988, p. 125.

[71] Liu, 'Queer psychology of affect,' p. 56.

[72] Compassionate listening is a term used by Dr. Gabor Maté, which is a step of a therapeutic process toward healing, which he terms as 'compassionate inquiry.' Maté is a Hungarian–Canadian physician whose special interests are addiction as well as childhood development and trauma.

[73] Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*, xi.

[74] Scrutton, 'Is depression a sin or a disease,' p. 307.

[75] Lisa Blackman, 'Affective politics, debility and hearing voices: Towards a feminist politics of ordinary suffering,' *Feminist Review* 111 (2015): 25–41, at p. 25, doi: [10.1057/fr.2015.24](https://doi.org/10.1057/fr.2015.24).

[76] Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*, p. x.

[77] Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*, p. 11.

[78] Marcella Althaus-Reid, *The Queer God*, London: Routledge, 2003, p. 154, doi: [10.4324/9780203331453](https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203331453).

[79] Cvetkovich, *Depression*, pp. 192, 202.

[80] Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*, p. xi.

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