

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

The Language of Militarism: Engendering Filipino Masculinity in the U.S. Empire

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
Requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

Ethnic Studies

by

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2008

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University of California, San Diego

2008

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My dissertation advisor and mentor, Dr. Yen Le Espiritu, asked me early on in the dissertation journey whether and how a relatively small body of work on Filipino Navy families was *enough* to stop thinking about them, or about my own? The answer was (and is) clearly a resounding no. Moreover, I learned from Yen that, in fact, it is *more than enough* to engage in subjective, critical inquiry throughout the dissertation journey. I realize now how my own engagement with the critical production of knowledge depends first on the courage to be honest with oneself—regardless of the theater of trends and trendsetters. Over the past nine years that I have been her student, I have grown to admire Yen’s humility, humor, confidence, and compassion as a teacher, scholar, and more. By her example, I believe my dissertation writing reflects the best in me at this point in my career.

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Prior to beginning my graduate work in Ethnic Studies at UCSD, my M.A. adviser in Asian American Studies at UCLA, Dr. Paul M. Ong in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning, asked me a question for which I am still so grateful: "Do you imagine yourself teaching?" Responding with an unequivocal yes would affirm my pursuit at UCSD, and serve as a gentle reminder over the years.

Nothing compares to friends you can commiserate with on the ups and downs of graduate study and the academic profession. Dr. Thuy Vo Dang inspires me still by her example and determination to approach the whole of our lives fiercely ("...dau tranh..."), not the least of which the dissertation writing! Dr. Nina Ha is a trailblazer whose loyal friendship and commitment to critical inquiry first showed me the potential of interdisciplinarity between colleagues. At the most unexpected times, Dr. Jennifer Yee

has offered affirmation and consolation. Michelle Magalong has kept me in close touch with my personal and professional stakes in an academic career since day one. These women kept my chin up, my fingers typing, and my heart steady.

After a brief hiatus in my graduate training at UCSD (due to childbirth), the following colleagues helped me believe again in my ability to be engaged in the academic profession as a public intellectual: Michael “Miget” Bevaquua; Dr. Keith L. Camacho; Dr. Vernadette Gonzales; Dr. Lauren Monnig; Dr. Jocelyn Pacleb; and Dr. Setsu Shigematsu.

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My own extended Navy family first engaged me with the rich nuances of everyday militarism: the Cenidoza, Oates, and Suarez families. In particular, I want to acknowledge my parents for their unconditional love and support, Arturo and Teresita Cenidoza, and my younger brother, Jimmy Cenidoza, for his constancy and humor.



Lastly here, but always foremost in my mind, are my husband Danniel M. Suarez and our son Ariel. With unwavering faith, inspiration, sense of defiance, and humor, they bore much of the frustration and joy of this dissertation journey. Some days it was as simple for Dan as a sports analogy, a bag of chips, or a prayer—which, surprisingly, worked more often than not! Of course, nothing beats the surprise of flower petals from the playground by my computer, too. Thankfully, both of them remind me daily of the simple joys of life.

## VITA

1995	Bachelor of Arts, University of California, Santa Cruz
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## PUBLICATIONS

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“Militarized Filipino Masculinity and the Language of Citizenship in San Diego,”  
*Engendering Empires: Militarism and Colonialism Across Asia and the Pacific*, edited by  
Setsu Shigematsu and Keith L. Camacho, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press,  
2008.

## FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field:	Ethnic Studies
Other Research Interests:	Asian American Studies, Critical Gender Studies, Pacific Rim Studies

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Language of Militarism: Engendering Filipino Masculinity in the U.S. Empire

by

Theresa Cenidoza Suarez

Doctor of Philosophy in Ethnic Studies

University of California, San Diego, 2008

Professor Yen Le Espiritu, Chair

My dissertation examines the relationship between militarism and domesticity in the United States through the everyday lives of multigenerational Filipino Navy families in San Diego, California. The militarization and domestication of Filipino Navy families have engendered affective and effective desires to constitute themselves as *legible* subjects despite the violence of U.S. empire in the Philippines and the demands of resettlement in the U.S. imperial center. Arguably, the desire for such legibility in an imperial milieu (as Filipino/ American subjects) challenges the language of belonging (or inclusion) common to analyses of U.S. empire. From the epistemological perspectives of Filipino Navy families in my sample, I posit that such discursive legibility in the U.S. imperial center relies on inventing quotidian expressions of heteronormative Filipino masculinity and manhood alongside co-constructions of heteronormative womanhood

and childhood. My analyses is based on original recorded interview data with approximately twenty Filipino Navy families residing in San Diego over a nine-month period between 2004 and 2005. Three members of each family (male enlistee, spouse, and adult child) were interviewed, for a total of sixty participants with a cumulative affiliation with the U.S. Navy that spans fifty years. In “Militarized Filipino Masculinity and the Language of Citizenship,” I examine how Filipino masculinity and manhood are constituted in and through a distinctly masculine framework for familial relationships, and explore the legibility of U.S. patriarchy and militarism in the lives of Filipino men. I show how the domestic space is always overseen, authorized, and enabled by U.S. authority—regardless of how and whether the Filipino Navy men in my sample identify, cope with, and resolve their expectations of themselves as men through the language of citizenship and the patriotic. In “Militarized Filipino Motherhood and the Language of Mothering,” I examine how domesticity, intimacy, and morality are imagined, staged, reproduced, and transferred intergenerationally by women to constitute a distinctly masculine framework for Filipino Navy families. Specifically, I look at how the incongruities of class consolidation and white bourgeois domesticity in everyday life gesture towards the everyday expressions of dissent and critique of U.S. empire, as well as the limitations. Finally, in “Militarized Filipino Youth and the Language of Respect,” I examine how gendered experiences of militarized childhood both enable and disable the possibilities of *demilitarization* from within the U.S. imperial center.

# Chapter 1

## The Language and Practice of U.S. Militarism and Domesticity in Everyday Life

What is the relationship between U.S. militarism and domesticity in everyday life? By asking this question, this dissertation engages three key fields which broaden the scope of interdisciplinary research in Ethnic Studies: the first, family & gender studies, which benefits from a critical examination of race; second, critical race studies, which benefits from an examination of empire; and third, immigration studies, which benefits from a critical examination of all of these. My dissertation examines the relationship between U.S. militarism and domesticity through multigenerational Filipino Navy families in the U.S. imperial metropole, specifically in San Diego; that is, how the militarization of Filipino “family” life engenders affective and effective desires to co-construct Filipino masculinity and manhood by former military enlistees, spouses, and children.<sup>1</sup> I focus on the “language of daily life,” which refers to the discursive and quotidian ways Filipino Navy families constitute, and are constituted, as national

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<sup>1</sup> Shirley Hune states “In Asian American Studies, race is the organizing category and the master narrative remains male-centered. Hence the historical significance of women is rendered invisible when the lives, interests, and activities are subsumed within or considered to be the same as those of men.” See Shirley Hune and Gail M. Nomura, *Asian/ Pacific Islander American Women: A Historical Anthology* (New York: New York University Press) 2003: p.2. I believe that my approach heeds this call to critically re-examine intersectional, interdisciplinary approaches to research within mainstream academia as an industry that promotes masculinist discourses and practices, especially within politicized fields such as Asian American Studies and Ethnic Studies. Furthermore, given the history of U.S. empire and militarism in my own family history, I am particularly interested in Cynthia Enloe’s call for developing a “*feminist curiosity*” that listens carefully, digs deep, and devotes attention to the blatant and subtle political workings of femininity and masculinity in everyday lives. See also Cynthia Enloe, *The Curious Feminist: Searching for Women in the New Age of Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press) 2004: p. 4.

“American” subjects.<sup>2</sup> The contextual specificity of Filipino Navy families to local San Diego history is important for two related reasons. First, U.S. militarism has a long-standing role in the development of San Diego County, as part of U.S. empire-building in the Pacific Rim.<sup>3</sup> Second, the largest Asian American population in San Diego is Filipino American. Filipino Americans make up 4% of the county’s general population (121,000 in 2000), and comprise more than 50% of the Asian American population in San Diego County.<sup>4</sup>

In chapter two titled “Militarized Filipino Masculinity and the Language of Citizenship,” I re-examine the conditions of labor among enlisted Filipino men from the Philippines as stewards in the U.S. Navy.<sup>5</sup> That is, the contradictions between *feminized* domestic work—such as managing officer’s personal quarters & dining preparations—

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<sup>2</sup> I found Annette Lareau’s ethnographic discussion of language use in analyzing working class childhood helpful to my own work on intergenerational Filipino military families. See Annette Lareau, *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life* (University of California Press) 2003. Critical analysis on the ethnography of everyday life in Filipino communities is available. See also Martin F. Manalansan IV, *Global Divas: Filipino Gay Men in the Diaspora* (Durham and London: Duke University Press) 2003. Rick Bonus, *Locating Filipino Americans: Ethnicity and the Cultural Politics of Space* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press) 2000. The following text was a tremendous influence on my identity as an ethnographer. See also Renato Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* (Boston: Beacon Press) 1993.

<sup>3</sup> Avery Gordon states that “U.S. expansionism and empire-building does not begin or end in the Philippines,” and instead argues that the first U.S. imperialist war was the war to annex northern Mexico fifty years prior to U.S. annexation of the Philippines, in 1848; not to mention, the “long-waged war against indigenous sovereign nations resident on ‘its’ soil.” That “a long line of interventions in Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific” indeed point to the need for a broader conceptualization of U.S. expansionism and empire-building. See Avery Gordon, *Keeping Good Time: Reflections on Knowledge, Power, and People* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers) 2004: p.30. With respect to her analysis then, I contend that the relationship between U.S. militarism and empire-building in the Pacific Rim should, in fact, include Mexico. See also Rudy P. Guevarra Jr., “Mexipino: A History of Multiethnic Identity and the Formation of the Mexican and Filipino Communities of San Diego: 1900-1965” (UC Santa Barbara Dissertation, 2007)

<sup>4</sup> Yen Espiritu, *Home Bound: Filipino American Lives Across Cultures, Communities, and Countries* (Berkeley: University of California Press) 2003.

<sup>5</sup> Espiritu 2003. See also Jocelyn Pacleb, “Gender, Family Labor, and the United States Navy: The Post-World War II San Diego Filipina/o American Immigrant Navy Community” (UC Irvine Dissertation, 2003)

and the hyper-masculinized setting of the U.S. military.<sup>6</sup> I analyze how Filipino Navy men in my sample have created meaning in feminized labor conditions through the transpacific reconstruction of Filipino masculinity as “providers” and militarized fatherhood. Then, I critically examine the language of citizenship as patriotic duty, as a discursive “language” that offers personal meaning and belonging fulfilled in and through masculinized expectations of Filipino manhood, and the extent to which such language reinforces the values of U.S. empire in contemporary life.<sup>7</sup>

In chapter three titled “Militarized Filipino Motherhood and the Language of Mothering,” I analyze constructions of masculinity and femininity among first-generation Filipino women in my sample who variously articulate militarization discourse from multiple epistemological perspectives as U.S. Navy mothers, and in some cases, as grandmothers in San Diego, California. I examine how their notions of marriage, child-rearing, mothering, and spirituality are imagined, staged, produced, and transferred inter-generationally within transpacific families. Specifically, I look at how the language of mothering rearticulates masculinized expectations of “providing” beyond the reproductive domesticated space of “home.” I examine how U.S. empire militarizes

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<sup>6</sup> Higate, Paul R. *Military Masculinities: Identity and the State* (Westport, CT: Praeger) 2003. See also Theo Gonzalves, “‘We hold a neatly folded hope’: Filipino Veterans of World War II on Citizenship and Political Obligation” in *Amerasia Journal* (Vol. 21 No.3) Winter 1995/1996: pp.155-174.

<sup>7</sup> See also the following texts analyzing various forms of Filipino masculinity, stated explicitly or implicitly, in my assessment of these works. Augusto F. Espiritu *Five Faces of Exile: The Nation and Filipino American Intellectuals* (Stanford: Stanford University Press) 2005. Allan Issac, *American Tropics: Articulating Filipino America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press) 2006. Linda Espana-Maram, *Creating Masculinity in Los Angeles’s Little Manila: Working-Class Filipinos and Popular Culture, 1920s-1950s* (New York: Columbia University Press) 2006. Martin F. Manalansan IV, *Global Divas: Filipino Gay Men in the Diaspora* (Durham and London: Duke University Press) 2003. Jane A. Margold, “Narratives of Masculinity and Transnational Migration: Filipino Workers in the Middle East” in *Bewitching Women, Pious Men: Gender and Body Politics in Southeast Asia* by Aihwa Ong and Michael G. Peletz, eds. (Berkeley: University of California Press) 1995: pp. 274-298. Mae M. Ngai *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press) 2004.

women differently through the discursive relationship between racialized motherhood and U.S. militarism; then how notions of militarized motherhood are conceived of differently within the “simultaneity of U.S. empire” in the Pacific Rim.<sup>8</sup> At the end of the chapter, I look at the specific case of Filipino Navy spouses, and how the language of mothering shapes everyday practices of engendering *demilitarized* Filipino lives.<sup>9</sup>

In chapter four titled “Militarized Filipino Youth and the Language of Respect,” I examine constructions of militarized childhood among 1.5 and second generation Filipino Americans in San Diego. Specifically, I analyze the perception of rewards and regrets of masculine and feminine self-identification as members of militarized families within a transpacific context from the imperial center.<sup>10</sup> I argue that Filipino military children in my sample are expected to “provide” for their families as well—that is, by learning how to “consolidate” and “consume” notions of national belonging (i.e. social citizenship) in school, at work, among friends, in public settings, and the like, in and through an unfinished engagement with U.S. militarism and imperialism. By co-constructing family life from a distinctly masculine framework, they strive to ensure their own (and their families’) well-being by meeting societal expectations as rational citizen-subjects in the imperial center.

In all, my dissertation establishes the significance of the Filipino case in critically examining the relationship between U.S. militarism and domesticity in everyday life, and

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<sup>8</sup> Vernadette Gonzales. “Transnational Feminism, Competing Domesticities: Circuits of Ethnicity, Indigeneity, and Postcolonialism.”

<sup>9</sup> The following influenced my early thinking on mothering. See also Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo and Ernestine Avila, “I’m Here, but I’m There”: The Meanings of Latina Transnational Motherhood” in *Gender and U.S. immigration: Contemporary Trends* (Berkeley: University of California Press) 2003: pp.317-340.

<sup>10</sup> For a fascinating analysis of Philippines-based intergenerational relations in transnational families, especially of children left behind in the Philippines by one or both parents working abroad, see also Rhacel Salazar Parrenas, *Children of Global Migration: Transnational Families and Gendered Woes* (Stanford: Stanford University Press) 2005.



is among the first studies of Filipino Navy Families that examines constructions of masculinity and femininity from an intersectional perspective within a transpacific context. Arguably, focused critical attention to how Filipino families are engendered in the imperial center out of a protracted history of U.S. imperialism and militarism in the Philippines sheds light on whether and how the discursive and practical imperatives of U.S. empire are, in fact, sustained by Filipino subjects themselves. According to E. San Juan Jr. “Filipinos cannot concentrate solely on what is happening within the physical borders of this nation-state; this border has tentacles extending to the Philippines, even though the bases are gone (U.S. access to Philippine soil, however, is guaranteed anytime now by virtue of the Visiting Forces Agreement [Paulson 1999]).”<sup>11</sup> I content that the “tentacles” San Juan imagines in this statement are, in fact, made “palpable” through constructions of Filipino masculinity and femininity in the imperial center.

Multigenerational Filipino men, women, and children as U.S. Navy families are the figurative “tentacles” that desire affective and effective connections to the Philippines and “reach out” for it as subjects *specifically militarized* masculine and feminine—at times, with reluctant consequences, as evidenced in my research.

Historical amnesia and self-erasure about the U.S. colonization of the Philippines have disallowed a critical understanding of the global domestication of gendered, sexualized, and racialized Filipino bodies—whom along with African, Mexican, and Native American bodies—were deemed the “white man’s burden.”<sup>12</sup> Unique to the Filipino case is how they were domesticated in their native country by the U.S. through

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<sup>11</sup> See E. San Juan Jr., *After Postcolonialism: Remapping Philippines-United States Confrontations* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield) 2000: p. 12.

<sup>12</sup> Espiritu, p. 13.

the everyday violence of colonial tutelage and brutal military force, not to mention elite “native” collaborators who supported the colonial administration and desired privileges themselves. The relationship between the U.S. and the Philippines began when the U.S. bought the Philippines from its previous colonial ruler, Spain, in 1898 through the Treaty of Paris, which ended the Spanish American War and placed the Philippines, Guam, Puerto Rico, and Cuba under American control. U.S. colonization of the Philippines was framed as benign and exceptional compared with European and Asian counterparts (such as the British, French, Dutch, and Japanese) seeking to secure empires throughout the world, and specifically the Pacific Rim. U.S. colonization was approached as “good housekeeping” meant to forge a benevolent affiliation between the U.S. and the Philippines, akin to a parent/ child bond.<sup>13</sup> This discursive ploy invokes a domesticated space intended to establish a moral economy in the Philippines, based on the “proper” domestication of democracy, hygiene, and education through everyday discourse and practice, until some preordained time when Filipinos were deemed capable of managing their own “national household.”<sup>14</sup> U.S. military officers served as teachers initially, but eventually, white women from the U.S. were sent to the Philippines as teachers, nurses, and wives of colonial and military officials, as the quintessential authorities on domestic life; however, they were also “doubly positioned” to guard the sexual desires of white men against purported “racial corruption” embodied by Filipino women.<sup>15</sup> Indeed,

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<sup>13</sup> Vicente Rafael, “Colonial Domesticity: White Women and United States rule in the Philippines” *American Literature*, Vol. 67, No. 4. (Dec., 1995), pp. 639-666. See also Vicente Rafael, *White Love and Other Events in Filipino History* (Durham & London: Duke University Press) 2000.

<sup>14</sup> Rafael, p. 641-642.

<sup>15</sup> Rafael, p. 643.

Western notions of “proper” sexuality, masculinity, and femininity have carried powerful, lasting ramifications in the domesticated Philippines.

U.S. militarism in the Philippines further entrenched such domesticated notions of masculinity and femininity in everyday life. The militarization of the Philippines led to the establishment of primary base installations such as Clark Air Base and Subic Bay Naval Base, along with other recruiting stations located throughout the Philippines.<sup>16</sup> For Filipino men, their legal status as U.S. colonial subjects and “U.S. Nationals” (which didn’t change until “independence” was granted in 1946), facilitated their recruitment in the U.S. Navy throughout the twentieth century as *feminized* labor within a *masculinist* industry.<sup>17</sup> Even with so-called “independence” from colonial rule, the 1947 Military Bases Agreement between the U.S. and the Philippines facilitated the *continued* use of the Philippines, the land and its people, as *feminized* U.S. military resources.<sup>18</sup>

Given the Filipino case, immigration history to the United States can be reframed. The narrow focus on economic motivators doesn’t consider the role of U.S. institutions and policies in facilitating immigration outright. In short, Filipinos came to the U.S. because the U.S. went to the Philippines first. Moreover, U.S. military garrisons in the Philippines would hold different meanings for other subjects of U.S. empire in the Pacific Rim. Among southeast Asian refugee communities like the Vietnamese, for example,

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<sup>16</sup> “Authorizing the Insular Force, President William KcKinley” (Executive Order No. 40, Sec. 1569, April 8, 1901) from the Naval Historical Center, Washington D.C.

<sup>17</sup> Higate, Paul R. *Military Masculinities: Identity and the State* (Westport, CT: Praeger) 2003.

<sup>18</sup> See also Neferti Tadiar, “Sexual Economies in the Asia-Pacific Community” in *What is in a Rim: Critical Perspectives on the Pacific Region Idea* by Arif Dirlik, ed. (Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield) 1998.

U.S. military bases in the Philippines served as first asylum refugee camps during the 1970s, where Western expectations of masculinity and femininity were taught through everyday domestic rituals as “proper” preparation for relocation to the United States as a consequence of war in Vietnam.<sup>19</sup> While seemingly “benevolent” or well-intended, such domesticated expectations of masculinity and femininity inflict both blatant and subtle violence in everyday life for subjects of U.S. imperialism, notwithstanding homeland devastation and forcible dislocation through U.S. militarism in the Pacific Rim.

Momentum to militarize San Diego began in 1906, a few years following the U.S. colonization of the Philippines and other Pacific nations (like Guam and Hawaii.) In the wake of U.S.-Japan rivalry for imperial interests in the Pacific Rim the idea emerged to build a Pacific Fleet in San Diego that would protect California from fear of “Yellow Peril.”<sup>20</sup> An elite cohort of celebrity officers and socialites familiar locally—such as Congressman William Kettner, Navy Admiral George Dewey, Marine Colonel Joseph Pendleton, and John D. Spreckles--brokered deals alongside the Chamber of Commerce to secure the military as San Diego’s ideal industry by donating public lands, waterfront property, and choice interior property (in all, about 53 square miles).<sup>21</sup> These men used parade fanfare, banquets, exclusive golf links, and all-male retreats to lure federal officials to support building a military industrial complex in San Diego (and to secure

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<sup>19</sup> Personal correspondence with Thanh Thuy Vo Dang on the discourse of anticommunism in Vietnamese American communities in San Diego. Vo Dang learned through her own ethnographic research with first generation Vietnamese women and men that they were explicitly taught western notions of masculinity and femininity in asylum camps in the Philippines during the 1970s by U.S. authorities (i.e. social workers and other officials), such as the “proper” way to cook steamed rice, discipline children, etc., based on gendered expectations of traditional Western roles. One of the participants in Vo Dang’s study remembers complaints by those in the asylum camps about how distasteful and poorly cooked the rice was.

<sup>20</sup> Mike Davis, *Under the Perfect Sun: The San Diego Tourists Never See* (New York: The New Press) 2003: p.43.

<sup>21</sup> Davis, p. 46.

political, economic and social favors for themselves), while their spouses were also glamorously wined and dined as guests of honor at elite women's clubs and charity balls. Thus, white privilege is firmly embedded in notions of "proper" masculinity and femininity in the history of San Diego's militarization.

### Blended Methodology

Given this brief overview about how and why a relationship between U.S. militarism and domesticity was established *in the first place* in the Philippines and in San Diego, I will briefly review the blended methodological process I developed to conduct research on Filipino Navy families in San Diego. This multigenerational study is primarily based on original recorded interview data with approximately twenty Filipino Navy families residing in San Diego over a nine-month period between 2004 and 2005, of which three members of each family (male enlistee, spouse, and adult child) were interviewed, for a total of sixty participants whose affiliation with the U.S. Navy spans approximately fifty years.

With the aid of a local San Diego community newspaper "The Filipino Press," and a few community contacts (including the San Diego chapter of the Filipino American National Historical Society), I learned of an annual reunion picnic for "Filipino Navy veterans who enlisted in the Philippines in 1946 and beyond that took place at the 32nd St. Naval Air Station in National City. This event drew a multi-generational crowd of approximately a hundred people dressed in colorful Aloha attire (the picnic theme), with several attendees donning recognizable midnight-blue military caps with golden yellow lettering on front honoring a former duty station. The families traveled from various

neighborhoods in San Diego County: Bonita, Chula Vista, Clairemont, Mira Mesa, National City, Otay Mesa, Paradise Hills, and Rancho Penasquitos. I attended with my own father who was visiting from out-of-town, and also a navy veteran with an interest in meeting other retirees. Though he was initially quiet, the picnic folk enjoyed starting conversations with him about their lives in the U.S. military, which undoubtedly helped my credibility in setting up interview appointments. Half of the families in my sample were from this event. The men I interviewed from this setting joined the U.S. military in the Philippines between the early 1940s (during World War II) through the late 1950s.

In addition to consulting community-based media and attending a one-time community event, I also utilized snowball sampling through regular ethnographic participation in the largest Roman Catholic Church in the diocese of San Diego, Good Shepherd Parish, located in Mira Mesa, a neighborhood of the city of San Diego. Mira Mesa is popularly considered a working/ middle class suburban neighborhood located adjacent to Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, and reputedly friendly to local military families. This parish ranks among the top three in the state of California in terms of size, and is the largest in San Diego, with about 6000 registered families, in addition to a sizeable non-registered community. The largest registered community is Filipino, with a conservative estimate of 67% of all registered families.<sup>22</sup> As with other sizable ethnic communities in the parish, participants commonly travel from across the San Diego region to organize and participate in culturally- and linguistically- specific functions.<sup>23</sup> I

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<sup>22</sup> Not coincidentally, given the history of U.S. militarism and war in Vietnam, Vietnamese represent the next sizeable ethnic community at Good Shepherd Roman Catholic parish in Mira Mesa.

<sup>23</sup> For a fascinating example of how multitudes of predominantly first generation Filipino Roman Catholics in San Diego utilize the specific Mira Mesa church location for region-wide social collectivity, see Gen Silverio, "People Claim to be Healed During Fr. Suarez's Healing Mass in San Diego" in *San Diego Asian*

sought out regular interaction with participants involved in the everyday mundane work in the parish, the mere attendees; not necessarily the *visible* leaders. My relationship with the parish began in 2000, and included the occasional organizing of various multi-generational activities, from high school gatherings to fiestas. The church site offered a unique way of developing rapport and trust with first-generation Filipino women (average age: 55), for whom activities and gatherings regularly took place in private homes off the church site, within and outside Mira Mesa's neighborhood boundaries. In this way, I was also able to meet entire families. Most of the men I interviewed by way of church affiliation (and not from the aforementioned reunion picnic) joined in the early 1960s up to the early 1970s, when recruitment took a dramatic downward turn.<sup>24</sup>

Though I generated a list of about 90 interview questions I was interested in, I approached the interview research with a willingness to be *guided* by the participants' main concerns, and to understand how they cope with and resolve them, if at all. Sociologists Glaser and Strauss underscore the generation of theory from empirical data through "grounded theory."<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, I analyzed historical archival material from the U.S. Department of the Navy's *Naval Historical Center* in Washington D.C. which I visited in 2003. The participants also offered use of personal photos, yearbooks, and official documents of military service.

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*Journal* (May 23-29, 2008) p. 1, 8, 24-15. The priest mentioned in the article (Fr. Fernando Suarez) is not related to me. See also [www.fatherfernando.com](http://www.fatherfernando.com). This was one of two events; the first took place at St. Michael's in Paradise Hills, another regional locale also known locally for its large working class Pacific Rim military communities.

<sup>24</sup> Martial Law in the Philippines coincided with this downturn; but an elaboration of this shift, beyond strict policy or political economic perspectives, is beyond the scope of this study and my cohort of interview participants.

<sup>25</sup> Barney Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory; Strategies for Qualitative Research* (Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co) 1967.

In all, my blended methodological approach took into serious consideration how home, family, and the domestic sphere was, and is, never “protected” and “private” within a militarized milieu. However, my aim was to critically rethink the distinctively *masculinized* framework for Filipino family formation within ostensibly patriarchal settings, such as the U.S. Navy and the Roman Catholic church, because of how these figured so prominently in the ways the participants in my study lived daily with work and family commitments, as well as found outlets for pleasure and leisure in them. Indeed, for military communities, “family” is atypically figured from the normative, due to lengthy separations and “imposed” bachelorhood overseen by U.S. military authorities; but, for military communities once subjected to official U.S. imperial rule, the configuration of “family” is further imbued with complex gendered expectations within a transpacific context. I believe my blended methodological approach allowed then for extensive, qualitative, “grounded,” affective moments in the everyday lives of real people to illustrate the idiosyncratic ways of meaning-making by Filipino Navy families in the imperial center. Vicente Diaz notes that everyday meanings “can be remade...in the interest of tapping sources of authority, or even deflecting their reach.”<sup>26</sup> As such, even more compelling “everyday meanings” about the dynamic relationship between militarism and domesticity in everyday life have yet to be respectfully explored from the epistemological perspectives of those seemingly invested in, or divested from, this relationship.

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<sup>26</sup> Vicente M. Diaz, “ ‘Pappy’s House’: ‘Pop’ Culture and the Revaluation of Filipino American ‘Sixty-Cents’ in Guam” in *East Main Street: Asian American Popular Culture* by Shilpa Dave, LeiLani Nishime, and Tasha G. Oren, eds. (New York: New York University Press) 2005: p.103.



Furthermore, through my blended methodological approach I heed the call for critical Auto/Ethnography, which I believe is one way to reconcile the insider/ outsider conundrum faced by Asian American scholar-researchers.<sup>27</sup> According to Susan S. Hanson, Auto/Ethnography “emerges at the interstices of autobiography and ethnography...[to] lay bare the dynamics of self-other engagement.”<sup>28</sup> By “foregrounding the discourse that she seeks to disrupt,” the scholar-researcher establishes her narrative authority as text and as ethnographic convention, rather than through the violent subjugation of the Other and/or the Native Self (as the case would be) in the production of knowledge.<sup>29</sup> Research on gendered expectations of masculinity and femininity involves inherently affective meanings created, sustained, and reworked (at times, precariously) by everyday people; and in the case of Filipino Navy families, such meanings are further circumscribed within and through the violent historicities of U.S. colonialism, imperialism, and militarism in the Philippines. As Linda Tuiwai Smith states, “The struggle to assert and claim humanity has been a consistent thread of anti-colonial discourses on colonialism and oppression.”<sup>30</sup> Thus, this dissertation is my bold attempt to speak and write with and through multidimensional sources of violence as a

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<sup>27</sup> For an elaboration of the insider-outsider conundrum, see Martin F. Manalansan IV. *Cultural Compass: Ethnographic Explorations of Asian America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press) 2000.

<sup>28</sup> Susan S. Hanson, “Critical Auto/Ethnography: A Constructive Approach to Research in the Composition Classroom” in *Ethnography Unbound: From Theory Shock to Critical Praxis* by Stephen Gilbert Brown and Sidney I. Dobrin, eds. (New York: State University of New York Press) 2004: pp.183-200. See also Arthur P. Bochner and Carolyn Ellis, eds. *Ethnographically Speaking: Autoethnography, Literature, and Aesthetics* (Walnut Creek: Alta Mira Press) 2002. See also Lorraine Delia Kenny, “Doing my Homework: The Autoethnography of a White Teenage Girl” in *Racing Research, Researching Race: Methodological Dilemmas in Critical Race Studies* by France Winddance Twine and Jonathan W. Warren, eds. (New York: New York University Press) 2000. See also Eleanor Ty and Christl Verduyn, eds. *Asian Canadian Writing Beyond Autoethnography* (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press) 2008.

<sup>29</sup> Hanson, p. 188. See also Andrea Smith, *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press) 2005.

<sup>30</sup> Linda Tuiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (Dunedin: University of Otago Press) 1999.

second generation Filipino woman born and raised on U.S. federal property as a child of a Filipino Navy enlistee, where “family” has indeed served as a complicated source of empowerment and strife within a militarized milieu.<sup>31</sup> I illustrate by way of my own example the contextual specificities of “multidimensional violence” throughout the dissertation as part of my ethnographic work on multigenerational Filipino Navy families in San Diego, making explicit my own critical discursive engagement with the relationship between U.S. militarism and domesticity.

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<sup>31</sup> For an analysis of the often violent and constitutive experience of home as a site of contradictory demands and conditions, see also Chandan Reddy “*Home, Houses, Nonidentity: Paris is Burning*” in *Burning Down the House: Recycling Domesticity* by Rosemary Marangoly George (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press) 1998: pp.355-379.

## Chapter 2

### Militarized Filipino Masculinity and the Language of Citizenship

This chapter focuses on the co-construction of masculinity and manhood among Filipino Navy men and their families in San Diego, California since the mid 1940s.<sup>32</sup> I examine the conditions of labor for Filipino Navy men, how the work available to them is made to be undignified to reflect their devaluation as workers, and to institutionalize their non-man status in relationship to white hegemonic masculinity. In particular, I illustrate how Filipino men *nevertheless* find meaning in such work to secure a sense of Filipino masculinity and manhood through the roles of “family provider” and fatherhood. Moreover, I examine the contingency of these roles, and how they rely not just on Filipino Navy men, but on the expectations of their spouses (or former spouses, in some cases), children, and to an extent, transnational family networks. I conclude with a discussion of Filipino masculinity in relationship to the U.S. nation, and how the U.S. Navy makes available to them the rhetorical language of citizenship in terms of “patriotic duty,” regardless of legal and social citizenship, and its various meanings for Filipino Navy men and their families.

Neferti Tadiar described in “*Sexual Economies in the Asia-Pacific Community*,” that sexuality and ideals of masculinity and femininity undergird large-scale international

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<sup>32</sup> In this study, I define Filipino Navy men as male citizens of the Philippines who enlisted in the U.S. Navy in the Philippines between the 1940s and the early 1970s. Filipino Navy families is generally defined here as familial networks of kin, as recognized by the participants themselves. Most of the participants identified as “Filipino” men and women. One non-Filipino spouse interviewed in this study regarded her family “Filipino.”

relations, especially between the Philippines and the United States.<sup>33</sup> In light of Tadiar's analysis, I illustrate how Filipino manhood is constructed on an ideal of heteronormative masculinity in the U.S. Navy. Roderick Ferguson explains in "The Nightmares of the Heteronormative" how heteronormative masculinity is a construct premised on the Weberian notion of rationality, which has historically formed the basis of legal citizenship and rights in the United States—an ideology of inclusion made possible through the exclusion of subjects deemed irrational, such as women, homosexuals, and non-white groups (with a focus on African Americans).<sup>34</sup> In particular, Ferguson notes how the legal institution of marriage functions in society to regulate sexual expression and identify rational citizen-subjects, as well as to conform them to the institutional and ideological makeup of liberal capitalist societies.<sup>35</sup> Thus, building upon Ferguson's analysis, I investigate how heteronormative masculinity is co-constructed among Filipino Navy men and their families; the function of heterosexuality and marriage in constituting and producing militarized and gendered Filipino citizen-subjects out of imperial domination; and the role of the patriarchal economy and military in the production of intimate, reciprocal, and contradictory relations out of conditions of imperial plunder and subdued labor.<sup>36</sup> The feminization of work made available to Filipino stewards in the U.S. Navy institutionalized the devaluation of their masculinity. The demasculinization

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<sup>33</sup> Tadiar, Neferti, "Sexual economies in the Asia-Pacific Community," in *What Is In A Rim? : Critical Perspectives on the Pacific Region Idea* by Arif Dirlik, ed. (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998).

<sup>34</sup> Ferguson, Roderick. "The Nightmares of the Heteronormative," in *Cultural Values*, vol. 4 no. 4 (October 2000), p. 419-444.

<sup>35</sup> See Ferguson, 2000. See also Nayan Shah, "Adjudicating Intimacies on U.S. Frontiers" in *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* by Ann Laura Stoler, ed. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006). For a critical discussion of the Asian American family trope, see also Robert G. Lee, *Orientalists: Asian Americans in Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999).

<sup>36</sup> McClintock, Ann. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*. (New York: Routledge, 1995).

of colonized men was indeed integral to the consolidation of white hegemonic U.S. imperial authority in the Philippines.<sup>37</sup>

Yet, Filipino masculinity is a necessary and tenuous co-construction among Filipino Navy families as well, and not exclusively a male-gendered or male-gendering project. In the field of Asian American Studies, David Eng in *Racial Castration* underscores that Asian American male subjectivity is constituted and sustained by the psychic valences and material dimensions of gender, sexuality and sexual difference as constitutive of contemporary racial formation.<sup>38</sup> I contend that heteronormative Filipino masculinity and manhood are constituted through the co-constructions of heteronormative womanhood and childhood as well. All of these roles are imagined and lived within a transnational domestic sphere inescapably militarized and domesticated within the contexts of U.S. military culture and U.S. imperialism. The inversion of masculine and feminine roles on U.S. ship decks, in admiral quarters, and in mess halls—the militarized spaces where Filipino men have historically performed feminized domestic work as navy stewards and other less esteemed labor—heightened efforts among Filipino Navy families to establish heteronormative gender relations among kin, even as these families effectively stretched the normative boundaries of Filipino manhood, womanhood and childhood.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Stoler, Ann L. “Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender, Race, and Morality in Colonial Asia,” in *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge: Feminist Anthropology in the Postmodern Era* by Micaela di Leonardo, ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

<sup>38</sup> Eng, David. *Racial Castration: Managing Masculinity in Asian America*. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001).

<sup>39</sup> Kibria, Nazli. *Family Tighrope: the Changing Lives of Vietnamese Americans* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

Arguably, Filipino Navy families invest the notion of Filipino manhood with expectations of heteronormative masculinity in order that these historically colonized and militarized communities may *nearly* fulfill painfully idealized expectations of normative gender roles—roles which are not only promoted in U.S. military culture and society, but also rewarded. Yet, the everyday lives of Filipino Navy families also reveal the limits of the normative nuclear family trope idealized by the military, political pundits, the media, and in some cases, *even among themselves*.<sup>40</sup> Based on David Eng and Alice Hom's analysis in *Q & A: Queer in Asian America*, I *queer* the construction of Filipino navy families as a "political practice based on transgressions of the normal or normativity rather than a straight/ gay binary of heterosexual/ homosexual identity."<sup>41</sup> In other words, the construction of Filipino U.S. Navy families may be considered a *transgression* of normativity; created out of the unauthorized, yet made-to-be-normalized circumstances of U.S. imperial dependency and demise. Indeed, given the historical specificities of U.S. domination in the Philippines, Filipino masculinity is constituted on *different* terms than other U.S. military servicemen.

### The Militarization of San Diego

San Diego serves as a relevant site to study Filipino Navy families, due to the history of naval recruitment in the Philippines, the expansive military industrial complex in San Diego, and the large population of Filipinos in the area. Statistics from the year 2000 indicate that there were 121,147 Filipinos residents in San Diego County.

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<sup>40</sup> Coontz, Stephanie. *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap*. (New York: Basic Books, 1992).

<sup>41</sup> Eng, David, & Alice Hom, eds. *Q & A: Queer in Asian America*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998).

<sup>42</sup>Although Filipinos comprised only 4 percent of the county's general population, they constitute more than 50 percent of the Asian American population.<sup>43</sup> As a historical "Navy town," San Diego is a prominent area of settlement for many Filipino Navy men and their families. For the majority of Filipino Navy men, San Diego was their first U.S. destination—the former home of the Naval Training Center where many received their basic training.<sup>44</sup>

The military industrial complex in San Diego has provided training for the U.S. Pacific Fleet since the early twentieth century. According to Mike Davis in *Under the Perfect Sun: the San Diego Tourists Never See*, geopolitical tensions in the Pacific (especially the rise in U.S.-Japan rivalry between 1906 and 1913) contributed to the creation of a Pacific Fleet base in San Diego by Progressives concerned about protecting California from the "yellow peril."<sup>45</sup> Thus, the recruitment of Filipino men from the Philippines for the U.S. Pacific Fleet may present a curious paradox to purported fears of Asian encroachment; arguably, their "inclusion" in the U.S. Navy is based on their domesticated role in the U.S. military.

Despite some restructuring and downsizing of domestic military bases in recent years, the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps in San Diego remain ubiquitous to the economic and cultural landscape of San Diego.<sup>46</sup> As Davis explains, "the Navy was an

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<sup>42</sup> Espiritu, Yen. *Homebound: Filipino American Lives Across Cultures, Communities, and Countries*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

<sup>43</sup> See Espiritu, 2003.

<sup>44</sup> See Espiritu, 2003.

<sup>45</sup> Davis, Mike, Kelly Mayhew, and Jim Miller. *Under the Perfect Sun: The San Diego Tourists Never See*, (New York: New York Press, 2003): p. 43-44.

<sup>46</sup> Examples include: the presence of several military vessels, like the USS Midway museum, in the San Diego harbor; military hospitals and base shopping facilities frequented by veterans and their families; the business partnerships between the U.S. military and San Diego-based civilian contractors; the extensive media coverage of jubilant family reunions following military deployments; the annual Miramar Air Show,

ideal industry: to most eyes its handsome warships and soaring carrier planes beautified rather than disfigured the environment. Each cruiser or carrier, moreover, added to the economy the purchasing power of a small- or medium-sized factory.”<sup>47</sup> Over 10% of the total land in the San Diego Metropolitan area, about 52.5 square miles, has been used by the U.S. Navy over the years, indicating the kind of economic and political influence the defense industry has on the region.<sup>48</sup> The influence of the military industrial complex also engenders a climate of conservative republicanism in San Diego, stemming from early twentieth century white-supremacist attitudes that cater to the needs of military and political elite.<sup>49</sup> Ordinary enlisted men, including Filipino enlistees, have faced the challenges of affordable housing and low-wages.<sup>50</sup> Among non-white enlisted men generally, racial discrimination would affect their treatment and acceptance in the San Diego social milieu, especially when not in uniform.

#### Racialized Domestics in the U.S. Navy

Race played an integral role in the modernization of the U.S. Navy. The U.S. military was among the earliest institutions of the United States that relied on a racially integrated labor force. African Americans began enlisting in large numbers following the Civil War, and were allowed to serve in several ratings—at least initially.<sup>51</sup> However, the Jim Crow era of “separate but equal” policies at the turn of the twentieth century

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which draws thousands of Southern California civilian residents to the MCAS Miramar military base; holiday parades honoring servicemen and women, which may involve exposing the public to military vehicles (such as tanks); and even the daily roar of military planes and helicopters traveling overhead.

<sup>47</sup> *Under the Perfect Sun*, *ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>48</sup> Showley, Roger. *San Diego: Perfecting Paradise*. (Heritage Media Corporation, 1999).

<sup>49</sup> *Under the Perfect Sun*, *ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>50</sup> *Under the Perfect Sun*, *ibid.*, p.48.

<sup>51</sup> Harrod, Frederick, S. *Manning the New Navy: The Development of a Modern Naval Enlisted Force, 1899-1940*. (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1978): p. 57.



effectively led to segregated messing and berthing.<sup>52</sup> Eventually, the ratings available to African Americans were restricted to the less desirable engine-room ratings and the steward branch due, in part, to fear that African Americans may advance to military positions of authority ahead of whites.<sup>53</sup> Other racial and ethnic groups (including American Indian, Chamorro, Chinese, Filipino, Hawaiian, Japanese, Puerto Rican and Samoan) were inducted into the Navy prior to World War II, in relatively fewer numbers than African Americans (see chapters by Bevacqua; Camacho and Monnig).<sup>54</sup> Concern about the legal citizenship status of these groups, and the ability to enforce racially restrictive policies, limited their recruitment; yet, more than half of these groups were colonized subjects of the United States, without any legal recourse to dispute the Navy's policies. Furthermore, their status as non-citizens justified their automatic exclusion from ratings requiring access to information deemed "classified," and ensured their institutionalization as non-classified feminized labor. Thus, the work made available to non-white men in the U.S. Navy, including Filipino enlistees, *institutionalized* the devaluation of their masculinity by safeguarding white supremacy and heteronormative masculinity from work made less dignified.

Among Filipino men in particular, their legal status as U.S. colonial subjects, and as "U.S. Nationals," facilitated their recruitment in the Navy, and in time, they exceeded the number of African American stewards.<sup>55</sup> U.S. militarization and colonization of the Philippines led to the establishment of primary base installations such as Clark Air Base

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<sup>52</sup> *Manning the New Navy*, *ibid.*, p. 57. See also Richard E. Miller's *The Messman Chronicles: African Americans in the U.S. Navy 1932 -1943* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2004).

<sup>53</sup> *Manning the New Navy*, *ibid.*, p.58-59.

<sup>54</sup> *Manning the New Navy*, *ibid.*, p. 183-184.

<sup>55</sup> See also Richard E. Miller's *The Messman Chronicles: African Americans in the U.S. Navy 1932 -1943* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2004).

and Subic Bay Naval Base, along with other military stations located throughout the Philippines, such as Sangley Point in Cavite, and Camp John Hayes in Baguio. These recruiting stations served as institutional mechanisms facilitating the recruitment of Filipino men into the U.S. armed forces.<sup>56</sup> Growing dissatisfaction with black mess attendants led to the racialization of Filipino men as superior servants, not unlike their Chinese and Japanese predecessors, based on Orientalist presumptions of Filipino temperament as agreeable, of less intimidating stature, and suitable to stoop labor (i.e. cleaning floors, washing clothes, cooking, etc.).<sup>57</sup> Yen Espiritu argues that Filipino men were subject to practices of differential inclusion, and were integrated into the U.S. Navy, and the nation, only and precisely because of their subordinate standing.<sup>58</sup> In other words, as official policy, the U.S. Navy enlisted Filipino men in the Philippines only as subordinate domestic workers whose feminized labor was absolutely integral to the everyday functioning of the U.S. Navy. Their subordinate standing was intended to guard against any non-white enlisted man from advancing ahead of white men in all ranks and rates. Thus, white privilege (like access to promotions) and masculinity (through work perceived as more dignified, like positions of military authority) have been institutionalized and protected in the U.S. Navy throughout much of the twentieth century.

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<sup>56</sup> Ma, L. Eve Ammentrout, ed. *Farms, Firms, and Runways: Perspectives on U.S. Military Bases in the Western Pacific*. (Chicago: Imprint Publications, 2001): p. 124-185.

<sup>57</sup> *Manning the New Navy*, *ibid.*, p. 60-61. See also Gary Okihiro, "When and Where I Enter," in *Asian American Studies: A Reader*, eds. Jean Yu-wen Shen Wu and Min Song. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2000).

<sup>58</sup> See Espiritu, 2003. See also Catherine C. Choy. *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History*. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003).

Fluctuations in the enlistment of Filipino men reflected shifts in geopolitical relations in the Pacific. Indeed, practices of differential inclusion are evidenced in the timely recruitment of Chamorro men in 1937 as Navy stewards, who moderated uncertain relations with the Philippines up to World War II, after which the colonial status of the Philippines (and the ability to provide “superior servants”) became clear. The Tydings – McDuffie Act of 1934 set in motion the processes for Philippine independence from U.S. colonial rule, and was formalized in 1947; however, only upon meeting contingencies set in the Military Bases Agreement, which guaranteed the U.S. extraterritorial rights in the Philippines, the operations of U.S. military bases and the recruitment of Filipino men as stewards in the U.S. Navy continued there. Needless to say, this begs the question of whether or not the Philippines *truly* was ever liberated from U.S. colonial rule.<sup>59</sup>

#### Devalued Filipino Masculinity

Several of the study participants, however, found unofficial ways to maneuver through the ratings system, and describe how asserting themselves as Filipino men demanded “resourcefulness” that they alone were uniquely positioned to execute in order to bring more dignity to their work.<sup>60</sup> Mr. Camatcho, who enlisted in 1946, described how he was able to change an undesirable relocation order. He felt that his reputation as a trusted personal steward to an admiral with powerful influence could be harnessed, with an unsettling mix of male flattery and self-effacement:

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<sup>59</sup> See Harrod, 1978. On July 1, 1937, Guam was assigned a monthly quota of ten mess attendants, third class, and later increased the number to fifteen (p.61).

<sup>60</sup> See Harrod, 1978.

All I do is call [the admiral] up at the Pentagon, where I was also working at the time...I tell him my orders...and where I *prefer* to go...and he said he will look into it, and it happened.<sup>61</sup>

Mr. Camatcho's face brightened with a wide, knowing smile as he expressed his self-perceived knack for finding a way to manage the military's arbitrary assignments for stewards. In this unusual case, his assignment was changed because of a paternalistic relationship with a white admiral whose power Mr. Camatcho knew how to access temporarily for his own personal advantage. He, too, had gained powerful insight as a personal steward to the admiral, and knew intimately how and when the admiral ate, slept, dressed, and spent his in-between hours. Such feminized labor Mr. Camatcho described as "easy enough," but more significant, was the insight he gained from access to such power from *inside* the ship's hull, at its *most* vulnerable, with the distinguishing insignia of military authority laying on a nearby table. Mr. de la Rosa, who enlisted in 1961, explains, "Some stewards were treated badly but the admiral helped me a lot, even when I did something wrong."<sup>62</sup> Mr. de la Rosa relied on the benign intervention and rescue of the admiral, who patiently guided him on domestic etiquette (like learning proper table settings, and preparing meals on time) even when Mr. de la Rosa "messed up" and didn't get it *right* the first time. He added, "If they are good to you, then you do good things not only for them, but the next one (admiral) you work for."<sup>63</sup> While cordial relationships were not uncommon, they were certainly not the norm. However, Mr. de la Rosa revealed how controlling the quality output of his work—however domestic—was a way to reaffirm his personal dignity as a Filipino man by his *own* authority. These

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<sup>61</sup> Mr. Camatcho, interview by the author, tape recording, July 2004.

<sup>62</sup> Mr. de la Rosa, interview by the author, tape recording, January 2004.

<sup>63</sup> Mr. de la Rosa, interview by the author, tape recording, January 2004.

examples illustrate the complex trajectory of U.S. empire and militarism in everyday life: how some Filipino Navy men believed they could maneuver, if not steer, militarized circumstances the best ways they knew how, on their terms, even when “proper” masculine authority and feminized labor would remain institutionalized as respectively white and non-white.

A range of less popular ratings and duty stations that Filipino Navy men were permitted to enter into upon initial enlistment as a steward, such as engine-room boiler tenders, storekeepers, or disbursing clerks, were work considered necessary—even *vital* to daily operations—but clearly devalued. Mr. Castillo, who enlisted in 1960, worked in a deafening engine room as a boiler tender, without protective gear (which wasn’t required then), and he suffered moderate hearing loss as a result. As well, Mr. Magbuhat, who enlisted in 1956 and passed away during the course of this research, worked as a boiler tender and handled steaming hot water absolutely vital to the ship’s ability to sail the seas—but without protective gear, too.

In one poignant example, Mr. Fedalizo, who enlisted in 1945, had additional domestic duties besides his primary responsibilities as a steward. He worked as a member of a decontamination unit, cleaning radioactive residue from bomber airplanes that resulted from atomic bomb tests off Bikini Atoll, Marshall Islands, in the mid-1950s, in the Pacific.<sup>64</sup> In recalling his painstaking work in Bikini Atoll, Mr. Fedalizo remembers the violence of American wartime nuclearism in Japan as well :

What we do, was when the airplane landed, we go over there on the landing strip and decontaminate that plane--because when the bomb explodes, it forms a mushroom cloud, and the airplanes go through that

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<sup>64</sup> Bikini Atoll and Midway Island are militarized U.S. territories in the Pacific Ocean.

cloud. Naturally, they are contaminated with radiation, and so, when they land, those planes have to be decontaminated in order to be able to be used again. So that was our job....we all go in there, and more or less wash up the planes... 15 or 20 times, because after you finish one washing, you have to measure...the amount of radiation... And [in Japan] the thing that made an impression on me so much was that there's a silhouette...everything was black, but this space—this area of cement—was an outline of a body...Maybe the person got hit by the bomb and fell right there, and while the radiation was working, it burned the body of that person—man or woman—and shielded the concrete so it left that impression.<sup>65</sup>

Silence spaced his words upon unexpectedly describing to me the buried memories of the black silhouettes of the dead he saw in Nagasaki City, Japan, following the second atomic bomb devastation that punctuated the final phase of World War II. In that moment, I hoped that my own respectful silence and soft gaze conveyed the compassion I felt he was seeking from me. Even as this anecdote illustrated a physical “casualty” of war, Mr. Fedalizo expressed the psychic valence of indignity that shadowed him daily; that is, of knowing he had served an institution that condoned indiscriminate violence against innocent civilians. What was his culpability in the needless deaths of civilian men, women, and children? At what cost are the quotidian demands of Filipino masculinity and manhood met? Mr. Fedalizo chose to highlight in the seconds following the moments when relief from degraded labor might offer an all-too-brief respite, such as cook-outs on the beach with fellow servicemen in Bikini Atoll and “nights on the town” with Filipino and African American enlisted men in downtown San Diego. Still unresolved, however, is the complicated notion of “casualties of war,” and the indelible traces of the ideological and cultural violence of U.S. imperial rule, which inhabit mind and body due to the latent violence of the “benevolent” war that resulted in the colonization of the

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<sup>65</sup> Mr. Fedalizo, interview by the author, tape recording, July 2004.

Philippines and the recruitment of Filipino men into the U.S. Navy *in the first place*.

Vicente Diaz described how memories of the Japanese occupation of Guam, and the stories told him by his parents who survived the war in the Philippines haunt him still, “to this day the war rages, even when I wake up with my heart racing and my body and bed drenched.”<sup>66</sup> The violence of war is indirectly experienced through collective memory in these examples, and is certainly anything but subtle.<sup>67</sup>

Mr. Fedalizo and other participants assumed perilous positions in the U.S. imperial military and, perhaps unwittingly, participated in the direct decimation of their Pacific home. The Pacific was exploited for such reckless military experimentation, as the geopolitical context of the Cold War era ushered in an unprecedented arms race between the U.S. (the purported leader of Democracy and the “free world”) and the former Soviet Republic (deemed Communist foe). The bold demonstration of sovereign domain by the U.S. military to perform such deadly oceanic exercises without regard to ramifications on the vitality of the Pacific, and for indigenous peoples’ ways of life, further burdened the region by such “nuclear colonialism” imposed by the industrialized world (as Teaiwa’s chapter also describes).<sup>68</sup> Certainly implicated are the colonial subjects, whose inclusion in the imperial military would validate the violence.

The U.S. Navy officially opened the ratings system and modified enlistment test procedures that were scrutinized by the early 1970s. Recruitment from the Philippines

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<sup>66</sup> Diaz, Vicente. “Deliberating Liberation Day”: Identity, History, Memory, and War in Guam,” in *Perilous Memories*, edited by T. Fujitani, Geoffrey M. White, and Lisa Yoneyama. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001): p. 155.

<sup>67</sup> Gordon, Avery F. *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

<sup>68</sup> Other countries participated in the bombing of the Pacific. See also Bengt Danielsson and Marie-Thérèse Danielsson, *Poisoned Reign: French Nuclear Colonialism in the Pacific* (New York: Penguin Books, 1986).

exclusively for stewards was modified in 1971 by State Department agreement with the Philippine government to allow Filipinos to enter any enlisted rating they were considered qualified for by means of education, prior experience, and security qualifications—including small numbers of enlisted Filipino women. However, the Bureau of Naval Personnel (1976) would emphasize how, “the actual needs of the unit to which they are attached will influence the actual rating that they can pursue.” The steward rating was discontinued in late 1974 and was replaced by the Mess Management Specialist rating, which covered most of the responsibilities of the former rating except in the area of providing routine housekeeping/ cleaning services for officers.

#### Re-authorized Filipino Manhood

Despite changes in official U.S. military policy, the following example illustrates its limits in everyday life through, what I term, the militarized re-authorization of Filipino masculinity. Mr. Ancho recalled these words exchanged with his former commanding officer, which he met unexpectedly on a family vacation in Oahu in the early 1980s. Mr. Ancho was retired from military service for twenty years by this time, casually called his former admiral who lived there (he obtained the phone number through the local phone book), and was invited to the former admiral’s lavish home. After exchanging small talk about retirement, Mr. Ancho was struck by how his former admiral addressed him by his name, and said:

Ancho: Sir, throughout my years in the service, you never called me by my name...you called me ‘boy’...

Admiral: Well, you’re a man, now, Ancho...you served in the



U.S. military.<sup>69</sup>

After twenty years of preparing the admiral numerous meals (including the admiral's favorite, *Chop Suey*), Mr. Ancho was bestowed by military authority as finally being a *real* man, identifiable by given name, instead of as a "boy." He laughed out-loud with a mix of disbelief and humor in recalling this conversation. I respected his cues and listened attentively, trying to maintain my own composure. Apparently, the admiral was so taken by reminiscing on their days as admiral and personal steward, that he offered Mr. Ancho and his wife jobs on the spot as domestic house servants, complete with personal quarters and a car. Interestingly, Mr. Ancho considered the offer quite appealing as "free-room-and-board-in-Hawai'i-with-a-free-car," and lamented his wife's firm response that she and the children had their own lives in San Diego. The admiral's paternalistic *re-authorization* of Mr. Ancho's manhood presupposed that Mr. Ancho should sacrifice his masculinity and personhood first, by daily performing feminized domestic labor for white officers (and their families) who cared less about and refused to do for themselves. Indeed, this example illustrates how Filipino men were considered "boys" *still*, as domesticated natives, and *not* real men. Moreover, Mr. Ancho's response revealed a curious and complicated relationship of masculine affection and attachment that he imagined between them *as men*, which I found unsettling. For rate and duty station do not *make the man*.

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<sup>69</sup> Mr. Ancho, interview by the author, tape recording, September 2003.

## Militarized Filipino Fatherhood

What *does* appear, though, to “make the man” is fatherhood. The ability of Filipino enlistees as fathers and husbands to provide for their own families was not only desirable, but eventually, rewarded by the military as honorable and respectable. Through the Philippines Enlistment Program, bachelorhood was an institutionalized requirement of Filipino enlistees, one that made unlawful the making and supporting of families of their own. An expressed requirement for Filipino enlistment was certification of their dependency status, to verify that “applicants be single and have no one solely or partially dependent upon them for support,” including a spouse, other dependents, and even parents.<sup>70</sup> Several of the participants chuckled when I reminded them of the “bachelorhood” requirement, and explained off-handedly how difficult that was for the Navy to enforce. How could they *not* meet expectations of them *as Filipino men* to support their loved ones left behind in the Philippines? In fact, one participant was married when he joined the Navy, and later sought permission from the military to be properly “remarried” (so to speak) in order to legalize the arrangement.<sup>71</sup> On the downside, several participants met with marital tension in the U.S. trying to fulfill transpacific expectations of Filipino masculinity to provide for loved ones in the Philippines.

In a poignant example, Mr. Fedalizo shared this memory of how fatherhood was rewarded under the watchful eyes of the U.S. military:

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<sup>70</sup> Briggs. E.S., Rear Admiral. *Navy Recruiting Manual (Enlisted): COMNAVCRUITCOM Instruction 1130.8B (CRUITMAN-ENL)* (Arlington: Navy Recruiting Command). This photocopy of the Navy Recruiting Manual was provided by librarians at the Naval Historical Center in Washington D.C. in July 2003.

<sup>71</sup> Mr. Villa, interview by the author, tape recording, February 2004

[That was] the very first time in my life I've ever seen that happen—a full captain of the United States Navy handed *me* a cup of coffee. He says, “congratulations...” [and] hands me a radiogram. It said, “Baby Bernadette born March 18. Mother and daughter doing fine.” Captain said congratulations again, “sit down and drink your coffee, and after you finish your coffee, go down and get me a box of cigars.”<sup>72</sup>

Though it was an early Sunday morning, and the ship's store was closed, Mr.

Fedalizo was advised to wake the storekeeper and reward the Captain for sharing the good news. He laughed in dismissing the inconvenience, simply happy to hear any word about his family in San Diego. In this example, Mr. Fedalizo's new role as a father not only authorized this “special audience” with the admiral, but rewarded his paternal role as a new father. Indeed, under the Captain's watch are the colonial prerogatives of proper masculinity and domestication of the native fulfilled. For Mr. Fedalizo, however, the Captain's response was at the least rude, and at best, the only way perhaps he could express his compliments; either way, it didn't change how creating and raising a family somehow would mean, for Mr. Fedalizo, meeting expectations of being his *own* man.

Still, militarized Filipino fatherhood meant not always providing particularly well for your own family, which created on-going tensions for several participants. Mr. Fedalizo described how military life created hardships for enlisted families (like his) to make ends meet:

When we just moved into this house, we extended ourselves financially. What I used to do is, I send her my paychecks...But the problem is, the check *does not* travel if you're not in port! [So]...there's a Jack-in-the-Box over here. She tells me she used to

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<sup>72</sup> Mr. Fedalizo, interview by the author, tape recording, July 2004.

get 11 hamburgers for \$1... sometimes they eat hamburger 8 days a week—twice on Sunday! If they don't buy hamburgers, she would feed the kids pancakes...She used to tell the kids *how to do*, [since]we don't have too much money. They got along, [but] those were the difficult times for me.<sup>73</sup>

Mr. Fedalizo recalled these memories to me with pride for his late wife's resourcefulness and leadership, since his own masculinized expectations of being an effective provider was precarious without her support. As Mr. de la Rosa echoed confidently, "They underestimated the steward, but I was proud because that [job] is the one that fed my family."<sup>74</sup> Given the humble family backgrounds of the participants (many came from families with poor to modest means), and the feminized degraded labor made available to them as stewards, it's no wonder that the ability to feed their own families *at all* was so highly regarded as a small way to reconstitute Filipino masculinity on their *own* terms.

Thus, the notion of *family* has served as motivation among these participants to reinvent, if not to subvert, institutionalized efforts to devalue their labor and personhood. Historically, U.S. immigration policies and labor recruitment practices in the Philippines have recruited a gendered labor force of color, and effectively outlawed the formation of Filipino families on the U.S. continent, perceived as they were as distractions to worker efficiency and exploitability. As Rhacel Parrenas argued, Filipino male migrants in the 1920s and 1930s were largely recruited as manual laborers for California's agribusiness and were "subjected and disciplined through the maximization of their bodies as machines."<sup>75</sup> That is, Filipino men were only considered working bodies, and not

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<sup>73</sup> Mr. Fedalizo, interview by the author, tape recording, July 2004.

<sup>74</sup> Mr. de la Rosa, interview by the author, tape recording, January 2004.

<sup>75</sup> Parrenas, Rhacel. " 'White Trash' Meets the 'Little Brown Monkeys': The Taxi Dance Hall as a Site of Interracial and Gender Alliances between White Working Class Women and Filipino Immigrant Men in the 1920s and 30s," in *Amerasia Journal*, vol. 24 (UCLA Asian American Studies Center, 1998): p. 115-134.

reproductive or desirable bodies. Philip Vera Cruz, a prominent labor organizer with the United Farm Workers Union, described in his biography how, “this cruel situation denied us the right to live a normal, respectable life. As men without families in the U.S., it was hard then, and even now, to just get together among ourselves as though we were a family.”<sup>76</sup> Nevertheless, non-normative formations of family among Filipino and Asian groups flourished during this early period of “bachelor societies” in California.<sup>77</sup>

Filipino fatherhood is characterized by a desire (if not the ability) *to provide for*, and may be decidedly disassociated from the unauthorized conquest of the Philippines and the differential inclusion of Filipino men into the U.S. Navy. Furthermore, Filipino manhood is framed in terms of “duty” obligations on both sides of the Pacific for families caught in the imperial crossfire. Yet Mr. Villa aptly stated, “You can buy anything you want for your family, but the Americans don’t give you the due respect.”<sup>78</sup> In other words, even as the consumption of consumer goods would provide immediate gratification, such status markers would not fundamentally alter the status quo. In the Philippines, however, Mr. Fune, who enlisted in 1945, explained how possessing U.S. consumer goods conferred much sought-after respect, “we look up to [the Navy people] because, my God, they have a nice house they can afford...and a Coleman lantern...that thing is so bright when you pass by their house...we were used to candles or the kerosene lamp.”<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Scharlin, Craig and Lilia V. Villanueva. *Philip Vera Cruz: A Personal History of Filipino Immigrants and the Farmworkers Movement*. (UCLA Labor Center, Institute of Industrial Relations & UCLA Asian American Studies Center, 1992).

<sup>77</sup> Shah, Nayan. *Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco’s Chinatown*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

<sup>78</sup> Mr. Villa, interview by the author, tape recording, February 2004.

<sup>79</sup> Mr. Fune, interview by the author, tape recording, July 2004.

The lack of desirable opportunities for sustainable livelihoods in the Philippines—ravaged by U.S. militarization, foreign capitalist interests, environmental degradation, and political corruption—engendered a desire for “made-*it*-in-the U.S.A.” legitimacy and status in order to fulfill *familiar* and *familial* conceptions of heteronormative masculinity. These were gained (and commonly shared among family residing abroad via *balikbayan* parcel services) through the conspicuous consumption of familiar U.S. name-brand goods, such as Lee brand jeans, Spam luncheon meat, Colgate toothpaste, Cover-girl make-up, Hershey’s milk chocolates, and other common U.S. household items, like multi-vitamins. Yet such mundane consumerism, the bane of the elite and the mainstay of the poor and working class, merely gestures at their subjective meanings.<sup>80</sup> Some participants were haunted by an inability to reconcile the relative privileges of living in the U.S. against the despair of the beloved who remain in the Philippines. Other participants quite simply desired the imagined status afforded them and their families by U.S.-made products and high-end luxury goods.

Yet, the effort to provide for the family is wholly contingent. It reflects the contingency and limitation of their positions in the U.S. Navy, as well as the family labor necessary for the “provider role” to be actualized. Indeed, Filipino masculinity is characterized by the ability of these men to provide for their own, and for extended families; but also, the ability to co-provide with spouses, and at times, *not at all*. In fact, the management of household finances was a source of conflict among a few participants. For example, Mrs. Magbuhat held the “family purse” in her early years of marriage which concerned Mr. Magbuhat’s parents, who didn’t expect a simple, uneducated

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<sup>80</sup> Zelizer, Viviana. *The Social Meaning of Money*, (New York: Basic Books) 1994.

woman to manage their son's income. Providing financially for family in the Philippines helped to maintain familial connections in concrete ways; facilitating transnational marriages and attendant celebrations, for example, were difficult for many of the participants to manage on their own. For example, Mr. Cordivin's parents played a key role in shaping his role as a husband and father, despite how his everyday duties as a Navy steward kept him overseas for long periods of time. They arranged a marriage for him with a friend of the family's, and also helped care for his new wife and their children in the Philippines until Mr. Cordivin was ready to send for them.<sup>81</sup> Mrs. Cordivin explained, "I stayed with my parents, until he came back, and then we move to Cavite and have our own house. He's a good man. He's a good provider."<sup>82</sup> An arranged marriage allowed Mr. and Mrs. Cordivin to fulfill expectations of Filipino manhood and womanhood, even if military duties separated them in their early years of marriage. The Villa family, for example, lived apart for eight years; but Mrs. Villa's recalled that living with her family in the Philippines provided her with support in raising their children—support which was missed when they migrated to the United States.<sup>83</sup>

Several participants used military leave to return to the Philippines to reunite with school classmates or village peers, to marry, and to start families of their own before returning abroad.<sup>84</sup> Mr. Fune explained this phenomenon with a simple question, "Can you imagine a sailor with a middle school education [marrying] a professional?"<sup>85</sup> Mr.

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<sup>81</sup> Mr. and Mrs. Cordivin, interview by the author, tape recording, July 2004.

<sup>82</sup> Mr. and Mrs. Cordivin, interview by the author, tape recording, July 2004.

<sup>83</sup> Mr. Villa, interview by the author, tape recording, February 2004.

<sup>84</sup> For a contemporary analysis of gendered expectations of marriage through the lens of masculinity, see also Hung Cam Thai, *For Better or For Worse: Vietnamese International Marriages in the New Global Economy* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008).

<sup>85</sup> Mr. Fune, interview by the author, tape recording, July 2004.

Fune described the prestige that affiliation with the U.S. Navy afforded uneducated Filipino sailors who were highly regarded among professional women in the Philippines for the prospect of accompanying them to the United States. Mr. Magbuhat echoed this sentiment about the enhanced perception of Filipino U.S. servicemen in the Philippines when he said, “everyone looked down at the Navy in the U.S., but you are looked as something in the Philippines.”<sup>86</sup> These perspectives suggest that some participants found through marriages celebrated with kin in the Philippines the re-authorization of their masculinity, despite the feminized work required of them in the U.S. Navy. Thus, physical distance from family in the Philippines (and elsewhere), a difficult aspect of the military and migration experience, did not necessarily render familial ties less influential.<sup>87</sup> These ties were taut with the desire to construct an idealized masculinity *on all sides* of the Pacific, outlined by imperial uniforms that, Mr. Fedalizo exclaims, “were about four inches too long,” and even when tailored, arguably *never fit quite right*.

### The Language of Citizenship and Patriotic Duty

The cycles of economic expansion and contraction that have impacted immigration flows throughout U.S. history are reflected in the ways in which U.S. Navy Filipino enlistees were intermittently offered legal citizenship. Lengthy legal haggling about granting citizenship rights to all members of the U.S. armed forces reveal how citizenship as a legal and political category challenged long-standing legal investments in maintaining white male privileges in all areas of life and property, despite liberal claims

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<sup>86</sup> Mr. Magbuhat, interview by the author, tape recording, December 2003.

<sup>87</sup> Manalansan, Martin. *Global Divas*. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003).



of universal inclusion *for all*. The legal investment in guarding whiteness is also revealed in broader Asian immigration history, for Asians were legally forbidden as “aliens ineligible for citizenship” from owning land and from participating in the primary labor force and in the court cases that upheld these laws.<sup>88</sup> Filipinos, as the only colonial “nationals” of the U.S. empire in the U.S. armed forces, would occupy a long-standing ambivalent and curious position, as reflected in this brief legal history.

Yet despite this, the U.S. Navy made available to Filipino enlistees the *language* of citizenship and masculinity in terms of *patriotic* patriarchal duty regardless of legal and social citizenship. From the offset, Mr. Fune, who enlisted in 1945, described his attraction for the U.S. military:

We want to be Americanized. In the Philippines, you go to the movies in Manila and [they] are all American films. Golly, I wish I can drive a car like that. Someday, I will be driving a car like that. We really embrace the Western culture. It's happening in Manila right now...we are completely Americanized. We're completely 'pro-Western' now.<sup>89</sup>

Feminized work as stewards was made tolerable for the status of working in the U.S. Navy, and *possible* inclusion in the nation, including the implicit gender power associated with the U.S. military as a masculine paragon (model) of white privilege.<sup>90</sup> In this case, the promise of Filipino masculinity and manhood was imagined through the rewards of an “American” manhood, symbolized as the freedom associated with driving a fast, American-made muscle car. Yet, in describing his experiences of fatherhood, Mr. Fune reflects on the limits of his masculinized role:

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<sup>88</sup> *Homebound*, *ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>89</sup> Mr. Fune, interview by the author, tape recording, July 2004.

<sup>90</sup> Lipsitz, George. *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998).

As I am looking back, my kids can't speak Tagalog at all...I should have insisted to teach them myself...They completely forgot that they're Filipino...all my girls are all married to American...If I put fish and vegetables there they say "yuck!" My kids completely forgot the language, everything.<sup>91</sup>

Mr. Fune revealed in this statement a melancholy sentiment echoed by other participants. That is, reconstituting Filipino manhood and masculinity is *never completely accomplished*, despite any trappings and rewards of being loyal to the U.S. Navy and living in the United States. Children, in particular, serve to remind them of the mix of joy and sorrow that accompany unmet expectations of raising young Filipino men and women in their adopted homeland. In fact, several participants revealed a stunning desire to show me tangible evidence of belonging *still* and "making it" as Americans. Mr. Fune's home displayed a "signed" mass-produced portrait of President George W. Bush, with a dedication of gratitude for his patriotism and financial campaign contributions. Mr. Ancho drew my attention to a similar mass-produced framed portrait of former President Bill Clinton and Hillary Clinton that sits prominently in the family room, congratulating the Ancho's on their 50<sup>th</sup> Golden Wedding Anniversary.<sup>92</sup> As well, Mr. de la Rosa proudly showed me an official portrait taken with former President Nixon, alongside a sizable group of Filipino stewards.<sup>93</sup> Inderpal Grewal states, "America was important to so many across the world because its power enabled the American nation-state to disseminate the promise of democratic citizenship and belonging through consumer practices as well as disciplinary technologies."<sup>94</sup> Thus, these examples show how the

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<sup>91</sup> Mr. Fune, interview by the author, tape recording, July 2004.

<sup>92</sup> Mr. Ancho, interview by the author, tape recording, September 2003.

<sup>93</sup> Mr. de la Rosa, interview by the author, tape recording, January 2004.

<sup>94</sup> Inderpal Grewal, *Transnational America: Feminisms, Diaspora* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005): p.2.

domestic space is always overseen, authorized, and enabled *everyday* by U.S. authority—regardless of how and whether these Filipino men identify, cope with, and resolve their expectations of themselves as men through the language of citizenship.<sup>95</sup>

In closing, Filipino masculinity is domesticated, indeed *made legible*, through militarized authorization, reproduced in and through liberal humanist military institutions, discourses, and practices where the condition of possibility of human self-possession as Filipino Navy men is doubly compounded by the logic of U.S. imperialism in the Philippines. As Lisa Lowe explains, such violence is “not only carried out in the humanist languages of liberty, equality, reason, progress, and human rights—almost without exception, they must be translated into the political and juridical spaces of this tradition.”<sup>96</sup> Thus, their devotion to “providing,” “family,” and “fatherhood” illustrate Filipino Navy men’s interpretations of “humanist logic” in the imperial center, which as the basis of Enlightenment tradition in U.S. history, implicates absolutely *all* U.S. inhabitants to deal with the limitations and constraints posed through such “tradition” in contemporary life.<sup>97</sup> As such, I contend that Filipino masculinity and manhood is co-constructed by Filipino Navy families in San Diego in dynamic, quotidian ways to cope

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<sup>95</sup> For further discussion of the meanings of citizenship among Filipino veterans of Philippine and U.S. military units, see also Theodore Gonzalves, “‘We hold a neatly folded hope’: Filipino Veterans of World War II on Citizenship and Political Obligation” in *Amerasia Journal* Vol. 21, No. 3 (Winter 1995/ 1996): 155-174.

<sup>96</sup> Lisa Lowe, “The Intimacies of Four Continents” in *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* by Ann Laura Stoler, ed. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006): p. 208.

<sup>97</sup> For another perspective, see E. San Juan Jr., *After Postcolonialism: Remapping Philippines-United States Confrontations* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000): p.11. E. San Juan Jr. states here, “The narrative of the United States as a multiracial and multinational polity is still in the process of being fought through in everyday life, in the interstices of lived collective experience. In the racializing politics of that narrative, we are all implicated as protagonists (together with other people of color) interrogating the hegemonic definition of ‘American’ as centered in a patriarchal, white-supremacist discourse opposed to the actualization of a democratic, just, egalitarian order.”

with the idiosyncracies their historical trajectories entail from within the U.S. imperial center.

## CHAPTER 3

### Militarized Filipino Motherhood and the Language of Mothering

*Through their very migration, they inevitably redefine the institutions of Philippine motherhood and marriage and thereby their roles as social reproductive laborers. They do not, however, escape these roles.*<sup>98</sup>

Although my mother eventually came to the United States as the wife of a young Navy enlistee from the Philippines in 1972 with a college degree in elementary school teaching, she never worked as an elementary school teacher in the U.S. At various times, she worked for pay in a manufacturing assembly line, as a second-shift grocery store clerk, as a bank teller, and as a convenience store cashier. In fact, at several life junctures in her identities as mother and wife, she worked two paid jobs at a time to address the realities of earning a livelihood that might support her and her loved ones. Prized leisure time away to simply rest, to regularly go for walks in the neighborhood (the well-meaning doctor's health mandate), to talk on the phone with trustworthy *kumare*,<sup>99</sup> or to participate in her children's lives were *made negotiable* only by maintaining seniority at demanding and undervalued service-industry jobs that otherwise strictly managed her time, seven days a week. For most of her years in the United States, her life has been a function of necessity, exceeded by ever-so-brief joys of occasional, uncommodified activity.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Charlene Tung, "Caring Across Borders: Motherhood, Marriage, and Filipina Domestic Workers in California" in *Asian/Pacific Islander American Women: A Historical Anthology* by Shirley Hune and Gail M. Nomura, eds. (New York: New York University Press) 2003: pp. 312.

<sup>99</sup> *Kumare* is the Tagalog term for a child's godmother.

<sup>100</sup> Neferti Xina M. Tadiar, "Domestic Bodies of the Philippines" in *Filipinos in Global Migrations: At Home in the World?* By Filomeno V. Aguilar, Jr., ed. (Philippine Migration Research Network) 2002: p. 294.

The structural context of my mother's migration and precariously "settled" public life as a service-industry worker in the United States has been studied in various scholarly disciplines, for her profile is not necessarily unique. For example, "occupational downgrading" among Filipinos and other groups is well-documented, and may partially explain my mother's inability to be gainfully employed as an elementary school teacher in the United States.<sup>101</sup> As well, studies of U.S. empire highlight how mechanisms for the recruitment of specific labor needs are established in the Philippines, setting in motion migration processes between the two countries.<sup>102</sup> In fact, the previous chapter expands on existing work in this area; while U.S. militarism in the Philippines created mechanisms for the recruitment and enlistment of Filipino men into the U.S. Navy, these processes were based on racialized constructions of *feminized* Filipino masculinity which have served to institutionalize Filipino men as domestic laborers. In expanding upon such scholarly analyses in this chapter, I posit that gender and family migration studies consider more closely the relationship between U.S. militarism and domesticity, both in its discursive power to regulate universalizing tropes of marriage and family, and in its material effects in everyday life.<sup>103</sup>

In fact, notions of "marriage" and "family" are not fixed in everyday practice among Filipino Navy families. For example, upon obtaining legal citizenship after an initial commitment of military service, legal petitions could be filed for the migration of dependants (wives and children) from the Philippines to the United States; yet, not every military fiancé, navy spouse, or dependant child came to the U.S. from the Philippines

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<sup>101</sup> See Pacleb, 2003.

<sup>102</sup> See Espiritu, 2003.

<sup>103</sup> The U.S. trope of "family," and its political implications, is discussed in Robert G. Lee, *Orientalists: Asian Americans in Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press) 1999.

immediately. From awaiting legal paperwork to relying on various systems of support for child rearing, conscientious decisions to delay migration to the U.S. have been varied. Moreover, some decide never to leave, with or without the legal means to do so; and in other cases, dependants are never legally petitioned to reunite with husbands and fathers abroad despite expectations that they would be sent for.

In my mother's case, however, leaving the Philippines for the United States as a military dependant was a decision shaped by factors not often addressed in the scholarly literature on Filipino migration. Her family home in Metro Manila was the site of domestic violence and silenced sexual abuse. For deeply personal reasons, my mother's decision to leave the Philippines was pragmatic and necessary, with migration to the U.S. the furthest distance away she could travel—even if by way of the sometimes violent institution of marriage (the model in her family home), or the migration mechanisms established by an entrenched U.S. military empire in the Philippines. Not to mention, the chagrin of family members on either side of the Catholic Church aisle with various gendered expectations of my mother (and father): on one hand, as the only daughter of six children, my mother was expected to fulfill primary obligations to family in the Philippines (her sense of safety notwithstanding) and not move abroad by marrying a Filipino enlistee of the U.S. Navy, especially since such men were sometimes negatively stigmatized in the community as having “loose” morals. On the other hand, my father was the *payat*<sup>104</sup> third son of twelve children made to eat pounds of *saging*<sup>105</sup> daily and meet minimum weight requirements for recruitment into the U.S. Navy as the only child

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<sup>104</sup> Tagalog for “skinny.”

<sup>105</sup> Tagalog for “bananas.”

positioned to endure the process of recruitment, and possibly leave the *barrio* to financially support his primary family—and not a new wife. Thus, family, marriage, and migration as “opportunity” were constituted differently for each of my parents. Indeed, staying in the Philippines was not a desirable choice for my mother. As it were, the “opportunity” to pursue a “cheaper” college degree in anything else *but* her life’s dream (which was to be a nutritionist) was only offered as a shoddy alternative; for to have a *real* dream fulfilled in her family, with much-needed financial support, would only come with her willing acquiescence to more violence at home. Thus, my mother’s notions of family, marriage, opportunity, and dreams were constituted within a world of conditions, constraints, and consequences, not entirely of her making.<sup>106</sup> Scholars critical of U.S. empire have theorized the violence of historical imperialism as enduring hauntings and ghosts in the present.<sup>107</sup> My mother’s insistence to “make the best of things” illustrate these most clearly, I believe, in contemporary everyday life: her refusal to return to the Philippines, especially after her own mother passed away; her half-filled *balikbayan* boxes of toiletries, candies, and toys for nieces and nephews (purchased with steep employee discounts from the convenience store where she works) that are never, ever sent;<sup>108</sup> her insistence during my childhood that slumber parties, summer camps, and education abroad programs were not safe, no matter what other parents or authorities say; and her skepticism of my desire to “know my history,” while whole-heartedly supporting

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<sup>106</sup> Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press) 1997.

<sup>107</sup> In addition to Avery Gordon’s *Ghostly Matters*, see Ann Laura Stoler, ed. *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* (Durham and London: Duke University Press) 2006.

<sup>108</sup> Gina Opinaldo, “‘Extending Help’: *Balikbayan* Boxes, Obligation, and Identity Formation” (Master’s Thesis, U.C. San Diego) 2005.



my education and career decisions.<sup>109</sup> Indeed, my mother has negotiated and transferred haunting notions of time, distance, place, opportunity, and responsibility in her desire to live *differently*—and not at all fatally, ambivalently, or passively.<sup>110</sup>

In the opening epigraph, Charlene Tung suggests that marriage and motherhood are inescapable roles for first-generation Filipino women who migrate to the U.S. because their lives are already embroiled in preexisting care-giving commitments to children and family in the Philippines.<sup>111</sup> In my maternal family history, the roles of “wife” and “mother” have relied on varying contexts of obligatory “care-giving” and “escapability,” thus shaping my approach as a second-generation scholar of gender and migration from the Philippines.<sup>112</sup> Because the ideology of empire relies on state-sanctioned narratives of “escape” by “helpless” migrants through the “rescue” of imperial colonists, I conceptualize differently the range of first-generation Filipino women’s epistemological perspectives as U.S. Navy spouses on migration as “escape” or “opportunity” within the U.S. empire. I propose that constructions of life chances, choices, and options through marriage and motherhood are already delimited by the militarized political, economic, and social milieu imposed in and through U.S. imperialism in the Philippines. In other words, whether or not one marries a Filipino Navy enlistee and migrates to the U.S. by way of legal dependant status (or to the empire of U.S. military bases throughout the

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<sup>109</sup> Furthermore, perhaps leaving a second-choice career was an acceptable way to live according to her own will, revealing the limitations of existing migration literature on “occupational downgrading?”

<sup>110</sup> See Manalansan, 2003.

<sup>111</sup> See Tung, 2003.

<sup>112</sup> My grandmother, for example, was unable to “escape” care-giving commitments, even with the “opportunity” to migrate. My mother legally petitioned my grandmother to immigrate to the U.S. ten years later in 1982; but within a year’s time, my grandmother decided to return to the Philippines, never to return to the U.S. Presumably isolation, lack of familiarity with U.S. culture, and distance from family in the Philippines were some of the reasons to end indefinitely the possibility to live *differently* in the U.S. The effect of this on their relationship remains hidden for now, but in my eyes, has shaped how my mother views women’s abilities to decide their futures amidst constraints.

world),<sup>113</sup> the militarization of first-generation Filipino women's (and men's) life chances, choices, and options began in the Philippines—and indeed, cannot be “escaped.” Indeed, scholarly exploration of migration from the Philippines must contend with how the historicity of U.S. imperialism and militarism in the Philippines effectually militarized circumstances for Filipino men and women in the first place.

Charlene Tung makes a compelling case for how motherhood and marriage are redefined in terms of self-concept, personal growth, and financial power in households.<sup>114</sup> Interestingly, such masculinist terms of redefinition among the Filipino women in Tung's analysis (as “self-confident,” “self-sufficient,” “the breadwinner”) help to illustrate the theoretical premise of this chapter: that gendered expectations of masculinized and feminized roles have not only shaped notions of motherhood and marriage among Filipino women and men, but have extensively shaped their experiences of legal, social, and cultural citizenship in the United States. As illustrated in the previous chapter, Filipino masculinity and manhood are *made legible* by militarized authorization and liberal humanist logic, which the men in my study have found *approximate* expression in and through fatherhood and family life. In this chapter, I examine domestic desires to consolidate families and homes within the imperial center among the cohort of Navy spouse participants in my study, and how they help co-construct *legible* masculinity in and through motherhood and family life.

Beginning with my own mother as first-generation Navy spouse, to offer an opening context to my own analysis, I contend that the first-generation Filipino Navy

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<sup>113</sup> Chalmers Johnson. *The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic* (New York: Henry Holt and Company) 2004.

<sup>114</sup> See Tung, 2003. (p. 310-311)

spouses in my study have regrouped from layers of *domesticated* violence in the Philippines, and have constituted *demilitarized* lives in the U.S. through the language of mothering.<sup>115</sup> The language of mothering refers here to the discursive and pragmatic ways by which my participants manage militarized circumstances.<sup>116</sup> The language of mothering, however, is appropriated from existing terms of empire and not a “new” language, dialect, or privatized “Filipino” cultural genetic code.<sup>117</sup> Rather, I offer that this “language” does not privilege the spoken or written word (either a dialect from the Philippines or English), but invokes the verbal and nonverbal cues *made legible* through the militarized lives of first-generation Filipino women in their identities and roles as spouses and mothers as expressed and interpreted through Auto/Ethnography.

Conceptions of proper womanhood in the U.S. largely adhere to the cult of domesticity, which was integral to the domestication of the Philippines under official U.S. imperial rule.<sup>118</sup> In the following passage, Lisa Lowe explains the naturalization of Enlightenment terms as the language of values on which U.S. empire depends:

Marriage and the family were primary and necessary sites of this investment of will in civil institutions; the “intimacy” within the family was the property of the individual becoming “Free.” Property, marriage, and family were essential conditions for the possibility of moral action and the means through which the individual will was brought consciously into

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<sup>115</sup> That is, by justifying the “domesticated” violence of U.S. empire through the ideology of “benevolent assimilation,” which instigated the development of migration mechanisms between the two countries in the first place. Thus, how Filipino women have figured into this scheme of domesticated violence. Furthermore, these terms have been variously constructed throughout Asian American history as “legible” expressions of “rationality” (by way of laws restricting marriage, land and home ownership, etc.) which have served over time to consolidate white male privilege.

<sup>116</sup> That these are often *limiting* roles, and not just conventional ones, is hopefully understood here.

<sup>117</sup> See Rosaldo, 1993.

<sup>118</sup> Vicente L. Rafael “Colonial Domesticity: White Women and United States Rule in the Philippines” *American Literature*, Vol. 67, no.4. (Dec., 1995), pp. 639-666.

identity with the universal will, expressing the realization of true “freedom” rather than mere duty or servitude.<sup>119</sup>

Given the significance of these universalizing tropes (“marriage,” “family,” “property”) in shaping the political, legal, social, and cultural milieu, I contend that Filipino Navy spouses indeed grasp how “duty” and “servitude” are made hyper-visible given their (and their husbands’) differential locations within a militarized context.<sup>120</sup> While “intimate” relationships with military authorities were institutionalized through the enlistment of Filipino men for feminized domestic “duties” and “services” for the “war front,” Filipino Navy spouses were charged with assuming masculinized roles on the “home front” to ensure that their husbands’ “duties” and “services” could be fulfilled.<sup>121</sup> That is, by exclusively raising non-normative, separated families within the imperial center: managing militarized domiciles as “property” (as in the use of temporary military housing, or other form of housing supported with military allocations); maintaining marital fidelity, despite long periods apart; and assuming primary child-rearing responsibilities. What makes the situation of Filipino Navy spouses unlike that of other military spouses who might identify with such expectations on the “home front,” is precisely the policy of domestication in the Philippines that delimited how Filipino men and women are militarized as “feminized” subjects of U.S empire to begin with, in fulfilling domestic roles for the U.S. Navy. Thus, the militarized domestication of

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<sup>119</sup> Lisa Lowe “The Intimacies of Four Continents” in *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* by Ann Laura Stoler, ed. (Durham and London: Duke University Press) 2006: p. 201.

<sup>120</sup> See Espiritu, 2003. See also Nayan Shah “Adjudicating Intimacies” in *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* by Ann Laura Stoler, ed. (Durham and London: Duke University Press) 2006.

<sup>121</sup> See Avery Gordon *Keeping Good Time: Reflections on Knowledge, Power, and People* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers) 2004: pp.12-17.

Filipino Navy families illustrates how masculinity operates as a pivot around which first- and second-generation communities engage gendered expectations in the imperial center as racialized subjects.

The “home front” is arguably the real “front end” of the “war front” for Filipino Navy families, where constructions of Filipino masculinity and femininity depend on reworking a distinctly *masculine* family framework within the imperial center. Given the Hegelian discourse on “interiority of person” and the domestic sphere of the family as progressive benchmarks in achieving an ethical life,<sup>122</sup> I posit that Filipino Navy spouses understand uneasily how life and death matters (such as where one might sleep, eat, rest, give and receive care, dream, hope, and feel safety) are constantly overseen by U.S. military authorities. To meet various demands and needs within a militarized milieu, a language to live, dream, hope, and feel must be *made legible* to all those invested in their paid and unpaid work; hence, the “language of mothering” serves as a strategic means to demilitarize their everyday options as Filipino Navy spouses.

In this chapter, I illustrate how constructions of masculinity and femininity among first-generation Filipino women variously articulate demilitarization discourse from multiple epistemological perspectives as U.S. Navy mothers, and in some cases, as grandmothers in San Diego, California. I examine how their notions of marriage, child-rearing, mothering, and spirituality are imagined, staged, produced, and transferred inter-generationally within transpacific families. Specifically, I look at how the language of mothering has conceived masculinized expectations of “providing” (as illustrated in the previous chapter) beyond the reproductive domesticated space of “home.” First, I

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<sup>122</sup> See Lowe, 2006.

examine how U.S. empire militarizes women differently through the discursive relationship between racialized motherhood and U.S. militarism. Next, I examine how notions of militarized motherhood are conceived of differently within the “simultaneity of U.S. empire” in the Pacific Rim.<sup>123</sup> Lastly, I look at the specific case of Filipino Navy spouses, and how the language of mothering shapes everyday practices of engendering demilitarized Filipino lives.

### Authorized Motherhood and U.S. Militarism

Militarism and empire rely on a domestic relationship that has been subject to essentialist interpretation: mothering. The role of motherhood is authorized as national, even patriotic activity, because the “mothering” activities of childbirth and child-rearing are deemed necessary to raise future soldiers according to proper patriarchal expectations of femininity (i.e. to marry and bear children) and masculinity (i.e. to soldier).<sup>124</sup>

Alongside the empire of U.S. bases throughout the world then, the militarization of the womb has coincided with its function as a “recruiting station.”<sup>125</sup> Furthermore, infant mortality and child welfare have concerned states with imperial histories, to the extent that the health and morality of mothers ensure economic and military security through effective mothering.<sup>126</sup> Thus, dominant constructions of militarized mothering involves heterosexual privilege, reduces women to mothers, and makes motherhood the sole legitimate space in which women can participate in public affairs.

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<sup>123</sup> Vernadette Gonzales. “Transnational Feminism, Competing Domesticities: Circuits of Ethnicity, Indigeneity, and Postcolonialism.” (Conference talk, UC San Diego, March 6, 2008)

<sup>124</sup> Sons are presumably born. The experience of women soldiers is beyond the scope of this study. One of the women I interviewed joined the U.S. Navy in the mid 1970s.

<sup>125</sup> See Enloe, 2000.

<sup>126</sup> Anna Davin. “Imperialism and Motherhood” in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* by Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, eds. (Berkeley: University of California Press) 1997.

Militarism and motherhood is framed as universalizing tropes (“property,” “family,” and “marriage”), without consideration of how empire and racialization are mutually constitutive processes. Anne McClintock argues, “as domestic space became racialized, colonial space became domesticated.”<sup>127</sup> In other words, patriarchal rationalist discourse absolutely depends on the consolidation of state and military power through gendered expectations of white masculinity and femininity vis-à-vis the cult of domesticity. Hence, dominant constructions of motherhood and mothering reproduce white racialized civility and the values of imperial domination (to “domesticate”) as naturalized, universal processes of empire. In the following passage, Anna Davin offers a helpful assessment of the formation of motherhood ideology in Britain during the Eugenics period, which coincides with the genesis of the cult of domesticity in Britain and the consolidation of U.S. imperial power in the Philippines:

In the context, then, of racism and imperialism at one level and of class exploitation and sex prejudice at another, we come back to mothers. The mothers’ role in the creation of a healthier workforce, as of a virile army and navy, was crucial. In the fixing of the workforce, the development of a new kind of family, with head and housewife and pride in possessions, bound to one place and one job by a new level of emotional and financial investment in an increasingly substantial “home” was also to play a central part.<sup>128</sup>

Davin focuses here on the quotidian aspects of empire-building to illustrate how the ideology of motherhood and mothering was premised on “improving the racial stock” of Britain through desirable breeding, heredity, hygiene, and rearing. Hence, militarized motherhood is inextricably linked to historical assumptions of white purity and

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<sup>127</sup> Anne McClintock. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge) 1995.

<sup>128</sup> See Davin, 1997. (p. 138).

superiority within the context of British imperialism. Yet, militarized motherhood is not uniformly experienced, despite the values of white bourgeois society. Linda Forcey, for example, describes how mothering among white women diverges on U.S. militarism, because quotidian concerns are met uneasily, if at all: “[women] have been lulled into viewing the military as a benevolent institution to take care of their sons in a society that cannot seem to offer anything else, not even a job, much less an affordable education, or a sense of community and comraderie, and a sense of self.”<sup>129</sup> While the unmet demands of everyday living shape how the relationship between U.S. militarism and motherhood coheres among some women, there still remain varying levels of culpability for militarized regimes.

Military authority is arguably fragile without the domestic consent of mothers. According to Cynthia Enloe, “No matter which personnel strategy officials choose to employ, they must win over and then sustain at least the passive cooperation of women who are the mothers of these men. The militarization of mothers—and of the very idea of motherhood—has been crucial for any successful manpower formula.”<sup>130</sup> Patriarchal constructions of motherhood and mothering are absolutely integral to sustaining militarism and empire precisely because gendered expectations of femininity and masculinity constitute *key* daily social interactions, identities, and social institutions of empire (such as schools, grocery stores, banks, community groups, churches, etc.). How, then, does maternal consciousness of militarized authority affect how women “mother” according to patriarchal gendered expectations of masculinity and femininity?

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<sup>129</sup> Linda R. Forcey. *Mothers of Sons: Toward an Understanding of Responsibility*. (New York: Praeger) 1987: p. 120

<sup>130</sup> See Enloe, 2000. (p. 237)



Not all women are authorized to “mother,” particularly from the vantage point of nonwhite subjects of imperial domestication and military violence. In the case of the Philippines, as the only formal colony of the United States, constructing colonial domesticity in the tropics relied on establishing an authoritative, virile white masculinity through the deployment of an imperial domestic femininity. Specifically, Vicente Rafael describes that, “in providing a semblance of domesticity, white women were charged with the ‘patriotic’ duty of upholding middle-class morality and respectability amid a colonized people. Colonial officials considered the presence of white women to have a prophylactic effect vis-à-vis the threat of miscegenation and the moral degeneracy it was thought to cause.”<sup>131</sup> The imperialist ethos relied on notions of motherhood to guard white racial purity and moral superiority against *masculinized* impropriety by white men, and the “undisciplined” men *and* women of the Philippines deemed *feminized* in relation to the paternalism of the colonial state. As such, Rafael points to the centrality of a “language of domesticity in doubly positioning white women in the tropics... as both captive to and empowered by the structures of empire...and the everyday violence of colonial rule.”<sup>132</sup> Rafael’s analysis begs the question of how the imperial “language of domesticity” is transferred and translated within the imperial center, particularly by formerly domesticated subjects. Moreover, how does the language of mothering among first-generation Filipino Navy spouses reinforce or challenge gendered expectations of masculinity and femininity, given the triangulated historicity of imperialism, militarism, and motherhood within a racialized context?

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<sup>131</sup> Vicente Rafael. “Colonial Domesticity: White Women and United States Rule in the Philippines” in *American Literature*, Vol. 67, No. 4 (Dec., 1995), p.642.

<sup>132</sup> See Rafael, 1995 (p. 640-641). See also Vicente Rafael, *White Love and Other Events in Filipino History* (Durham and London: Duke University Press) 2000: p. 48.

Given that motherhood and mothering through the cult of domesticity are authorized as important roles for white women in consolidating empires (British and U.S.), how nonwhite motherhood and mothering are situated merits further investigation. According to Evelyn Nakano Glenn, “mothers of all races and classes have been subjected to patriarchal control, but they have experienced that control differently.”<sup>133</sup> Various studies point to white patriarchal notions of motherhood and mothering in the U.S. as racialized constructions, but with little to no analyses of U.S. militarism, domesticity, and empire.<sup>134</sup> Most useful in building such analyses though is Glenn’s notion of mothering as “socially constructed through men’s and women’s actions within historically specific relationships and circumstances.”<sup>135</sup> Neither motherhood nor mothering is “exclusive” to women; yet, each pivots around the bodies and values signifying white bourgeois domesticity. How, then, does nonwhite motherhood and mothering reinforce and challenge notions of *militarized* white bourgeois domesticity within the context of racialized U.S. empire-building in contemporary times?

### Locating Filipino Mothering in the U.S. Empire

Various studies have critically examined contemporary U.S. militarism and empire-building in various Asian and Pacific nations, of which I refer to a select few

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<sup>133</sup> Evelyn Nakano Glenn, Grace Chang, and Linda R. Forcey. *Mothering: Ideology, Experience, and Agency* (New York: Routledge) 1994.

<sup>134</sup> The following is a partial list of influential reading that shaped my notions of racialized motherhood: Elaine Kaplan, *Not Our Kind of Girl: Unraveling the Myths of Black Teenage Motherhood* (Berkeley: University of California Press) 1997. Ruby Tapia “Conceiving Images: Racialized Visions of the Maternal” (Ph.D. dissertation, UC San Diego, 2002) Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo *Domestica: Immigrant Workers Cleaning and Caring in the Shadows of Affluence* (Berkeley: University of California Press) 2001. Joanne Meyerowitz, ed. *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press) 1994. Elaine Tyler May *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (?:**Basic Books**) 1988.

<sup>135</sup> See Glenn, 1994 (p. 3.)

here. Vernadette Gonzales refers to the “simultaneity of empire” in the Pacific Rim to describe parallel histories of racialized U.S. empire-building in contemporary diasporic Asian and Pacific communities in Hawaii, notwithstanding long-time indigenous community concerns about national sovereignty.<sup>136</sup> Specifically, Gonzales illustrates how Asian, Pacific, and indigenous communities are simultaneously placed within extremely militarized positions throughout the U.S. empire by way of a gendered analysis of the political economy of Hawaiian quilt production and distribution by Filipino and Korean women. Of particular interest in Gonzales’ ethnographic work is the case study of “Rosa’s Quilts,” a business based in the Philippines that is owned and operated by a Filipino American woman. In this case study, the role of motherhood among the sewer-quilters (mostly Filipino women) is significant in creating “safe employment options” within the special economic “free port” zone near the former Clark Air Base (notice the value placed on women’s safety is reflected in the phrasing).<sup>137</sup> Gonzales’ research illustrates how non-militarized options are created in contemporary everyday life by and for Filipino women—even as the ghosts of U.S. militarism continue to haunt the local Philippine economy.<sup>138</sup>

Dean Saranillio offers a compelling perspective on the “simultaneity of empire” in his analysis of Filipinos in Hawai’i. Saranillio critically argues that Filipinos’ support of American colonialism through patriotic identification with the U.S. nation-state “does

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<sup>136</sup> Vernadette Gonzales. “Transnational Feminism, Competing Domesticities: Circuits of Ethnicity, Indigeneity, and Postcolonialism” (conference talk, UC San Diego, March 2008)

<sup>137</sup> For an analysis of gender, and class in factory work, see also Aihwa Ong, *Spirits of Resistance and Capitalist Discipline: Factory Women in Malaysia* (New York: State University of New York Press) 1987.

<sup>138</sup> See also Ellen-Rae Cachola, Lizelle Festejo, Annie Fukushima, Gwyn Kirk, and Sabia Perez, “Gender and U.S. Bases in Asia-Pacific,” (Washington, DC: Foreign Policy in Focus, March 14, 2008).

not disrupt colonial power structures oppressing Native Hawaiians.”<sup>139</sup> In extending Saranillio’s analysis further, I contend that such “disruption” fails to occur because “colonial power structures” are experienced unevenly within Filipino military communities, after taking into account how multi-layered constructions of masculinity and femininity are variously imagined, staged, reproduced, and transferred. Moreover, Saranillio’s analysis of “patriotic identification” may refer to the estranged relationships of Filipino men to the imperial state, who strive to constitute gendered identities through performances of masculinity *made legible*, and variable, by generation and class.<sup>140</sup> Both Gonzales and Saranillio illustrate how global capitalism (by way of commodity production, distribution, and consumption), militarism, and empire situate Filipino women and men in vexed relationships with various Asian, Pacific, and indigenous peoples—let alone with each other, and other racialized groups.<sup>141</sup>

One way of imagining the racialized triangulation of global capitalism, militarism, and imperialism is to consider what Dylan Rodriguez argues as “genocidal conquest”; the “materiality of U.S. white supremacy” produced through the “essential relation of death and violence in its political coherence” (a so-called “living apocalypse” which normalizes

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<sup>139</sup> Candace Fujikane, “Foregrounding Native Nationalisms: A Critique of Antinationalist Sentiment in Asian American Studies,” in *Asian Americans After Critical Mass* by Kent Ono, ed. (? : Blackwell Publishing) 2005: p. 76. See also Antonio T. Tiongson, Jr., Edgardo V. Gutierrez, and Ricardo V. Gutierrez. *Positively No Filipinos Allowed: Building Communities and Discourse* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press) 2006.

<sup>140</sup> Fujikane, p. 76. Dean Itsuji Saranillio “Colonial Amnesia: Rethinking Filipino ‘American’ Settler Empowerment in the U.S. Colony of Hawai’i” in *Positively No Filipinos Allowed: Building Communities and Discourse* by Antonio T. Tiongson, Jr., Edgardo V. Gutierrez, and Ricardo V. Gutierrez. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press) 2006.

<sup>141</sup> Jody Blanco, “Patterns of Reform, Repetition, and Return” in *Positively No Filipinos Allowed: Building Communities and Discourse* by Antonio T. Tiongson, Jr., Edgardo V. Gutierrez, and Ricardo V. Gutierrez. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press) 2006. Blanco discusses Filipinoness or “haecceity” as a resonance of double consciousness on the colonial Filipino condition and the interrelated histories of other dominant and subaltern groups.

death and violence) which enables the “perpetual militarized conquest” of the Filipino condition.<sup>142</sup> Rodriguez’s analysis begs the question of how the “Filipino condition” so-described in his work is imagined, staged, reproduced, and transferred by Filipinos themselves, who may embody varied histories of death and violence? That is, how are the gendered conditions of “genocidal conquest” constituted in contemporary life, and how do everyday Filipino women and men engage them directly? Arguably, the “Filipino condition” is precisely one in which “escape” cannot be achieved completely—theoretically or otherwise. Moreover, the “perpetual militarized conquest” of Filipino women and men is not absolute; arguably, demilitarized choices are negotiated everyday.

Yen Espiritu has pioneered work on militarized mothering by Filipino women within the imperial center.<sup>143</sup> Given the context of migration, Espiritu argues that a traditional family system is actively maintained in order to assert cultural “authenticity” and “moral distinctiveness” for the Filipino community in San Diego.<sup>144</sup> For example, severe restrictions are often times imposed on young Filipino women’s lives by their first-generation parents, in order to fulfill gendered expectations of female chastity and patriarchal femininity. Espiritu shows that parents impose strict limitations to their autonomy, mobility, and personal decision-making, in order “to exert its moral superiority over the dominant Western culture and to reaffirm its self-worth in the face of economic, social, political, and legal subordination.”<sup>145</sup> Moral superiority is established against the specific racialization of white women (“American”) as sexually promiscuous

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<sup>142</sup> Dylan Rodriguez, conference talk, UC San Diego, April 30, 2008.

<sup>143</sup> See Espiritu, 2003. See Pacleb, 2003. Also see Riz Oades *Beyond the Mask: Untold Stories of U.S. Navy Filipinos* (National City: KCS Publishing) 2004.

<sup>144</sup> Espiritu, 2003, p. 156.

<sup>145</sup> Espiritu, 2003, p. 178.

and morally deviant. This case, then, shows how notions about patriarchal femininity are imagined and transferred by the Filipino community in San Diego, for the purposes of staging moral claims of belonging in the local milieu regardless of how and why Filipinos find themselves in the imperial center. Arleen de Vera supports Espiritu's analysis of how Filipino women are subject to patriarchal surveillance, policing, and control based on constructions of "traditional" femininity in her examination of Rizal Day Queen Contests in California during the 1930s. De Vera argues that idealized construction of "virtuous" Filipina femininity has been integral to staging "nationalist fantasies of a unified community" and to "inspire Filipino men to remain on the straight path."<sup>146</sup> Indeed, de Vera's analysis suggests that constructions of heteronormative femininity and masculinity are mutually constitutive; imposed from within the Filipino community, and staged for American audiences and for themselves. Both Espiritu and de Vera show how "family" and "community" can, in fact, cast "unity" in ways that might belie conflict within and without.

As the aforementioned cases show, heteronormative values have indeed circulated in and through moments of social collectivity in U.S. Filipino communities, circumscribing how national identity within the imperial center is imagined. Thus, setting the stage for further exploration into how expectations of masculinity and femininity function and fluctuate in contemporary Filipino communities. Vicente M. Diaz notes how his observation of "the peculiar notion of patriarchy-derived-from-matriarchy" in his own

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<sup>146</sup> Arleen de Vera, "Rizal Day Queen Contests, Filipino Nationalism, and Femininity" in *Asian American Youth: Culture, Identity, and Ethnicity*, by Jennifer Lee and Min Zhou, eds. (New York: Routledge) 2004: p. 68, 75.

family is met with paternal rebuke on “the inferiority of [his] American education.”<sup>147</sup> Though Diaz does not elaborate on his father’s rebuke here (or what his mother thought), his generative argument is undeniable: gendered relationships of authority within Filipino families confront expectations of masculinity and femininity. Diaz invites analysis of “figures and terms of imperial authority, whose structures consist as much in the gaze of authority as in the festive and, at times, irreverent and subversive play of meaning remaking by diverse peoples subject to that authority.”<sup>148</sup> Thus, I contend that motherhood and mothering, as emergent of sustained U.S. imperial domestication in the Philippines, beg reexamination in the imperial center from the epistemological perspectives of first-generation Filipino women (and men) for whom the language of U.S. militarism authorizes the practices of everyday life in empire.

In all, given the historical role of universalizing tropes (“marriage,” “family,” etc.) in racializing and domesticating the imperialist ethos on the bodies of Filipino men and women in the U.S., expectations of masculinity and femininity are vital to analyzing the “Filipino condition.” I join these fellow scholars in heeding Vicente Rafael’s call to critically analyze “differentially articulated locations of Filipino-ness,” by examining how demilitarization discourse and activity can, indeed, inhabit everyday “domesticated” spaces in surprising ways.<sup>149</sup> Chandra Mohanty asserts that, “women are workers, mothers, or consumers in the global economy, but we are also all those things simultaneously...the concern here is with whose agency is being colonized and who is

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<sup>147</sup> Vicente M. Diaz, “‘Pappy’s House’: ‘Pop’ Culture and the Revaluation of a Filipino American ‘Sixty-Cents’ in Guam,” in *East Main Street: Asian American Popular Culture*, Shilpa Dave, LeiLani Nichime, and Tasha G. Oren, eds. (New York: NYU Press) 2005: p. 102

<sup>148</sup> Diaz, p. 110.

<sup>149</sup> Rafael, Vicente. “‘Your Grief Is Our Gossip’: Overseas Filipinos and Other Spectral Presence,” *CSST Working Paper 111, University of Michigan, October, 1996*.

privileged.”<sup>150</sup> Because first-generation Filipino women are placed within extremely militarized, if antagonistic, positions of relative privilege in the U.S. empire as military spouses vis-à-vis their husbands, and other Asian, Pacific, and indigenous peoples, the ways in which an as-yet demilitarized “Filipino condition” is expressed in everyday life is, in fact, one step towards critical examination of the “simultaneity of empire” in contemporary times. Arguably, the attendant values of empire are reproduced quite unevenly.

“This is the life?”: Vignette of a Militarized Filipino Domicile

As we sit in the living room of a tri-level home in suburban San Diego, bordered on one side by toys and on the other by a large 3’x3’ portrait of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Mrs. Alcala recalls her mother’s haunting words just prior to leaving for the United States: “where the husband is, that is where your home is, you’re no longer my daughter...he is my son.”<sup>151</sup> The statement takes me by surprise, and I feel a combination of heartbreak and alarm, which I hope doesn’t offend her. What did her mother mean by this? Mrs. Alcala elaborates, “I felt upset about this statement, so many doubts going with him [to a] different place... the first time to be with him alone, no one to run to. And that time there was no orientation to be Navy wife and what to expect. My husband didn’t tell me anything, and I didn’t know he had no idea.”<sup>152</sup> Although Ms. Alcala doesn’t respond specifically to her mother’s statement, and understandably proceeds to describe her own troubled feelings about the transitions ahead of her, I wonder about her mother’s

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<sup>150</sup> Chandra Mohanty in *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* (Durham and London: Duke University Press) 2003: p.248.

<sup>151</sup> Mrs. Alcala, interview with the author, tape recording, July 2004

<sup>152</sup> Mrs. Alcala, interview with the author, tape recording, July 2004



unknowable intentions. Is she condoning marriage as a patriarchal arrangement where women enter into a dependent role? Is she mourning the loss of her daughter's independence? Is she acknowledging the pain of indefinite separation between mother and daughter? Is this seemingly blunt statement a way to prepare her daughter to "let go" of familiar life in the Philippines, and accept the uncertainty of life in the United States? Apparently, Mrs. Alcala understands her mother's statement to mean that as a new bride, she needs to cohere such haunting expectations, or seeming lack thereof between her and her new husband, on her own. Upon finally taking off by plane from Clark Air Force Base for the United States in 1961 (after a typhoon leaves her stranded there overnight), she remembers asking herself, "this is the life?"

The first days in the United States reveal the foreboding challenges of assuming a new domesticated role in the imperial center as a military spouse. For Mr. Alcala, navigating the military commissary for the first time reveal how unaccustomed she is to domestic etiquette like handling merchandise directly from store shelves (she is used to sellers "back home" who select and package goods directly for customers); moreover, not knowing *what* to buy would further reveal her unease with quotidian domestic tasks. Ms. Alcala described:

I was looking for things that I used to see back home, and I can't see it. I look for lard, and I can't find it. All I could find is butter. And he's not telling me anything. No pots and pans. I had to look for something to cook with. I can't find a clay pot...I got two pounds of coffee grounds and opened that, put the coffee aside, and made that as my pot. Big tin can, and no knife. I got his pocket blade, and used that to cut the chicken. Nobody is telling me...the chicken turned black...This happened for a

week, and after that, I learned...I told myself if I see anyone that come from back home, I'll try and help.<sup>153</sup>

To lessen any tinge of embarrassment in sharing this memory with me, I share with her my own mother's first shopping excursion in the military commissary, how she mistakes the plastic-wrapped bakery trays of perfectly rounded mounds of uncooked dinner roles for *siopao*. Given that I was a new wife and mother myself at the time of the interview, and notably struggling with the roles, I feel that sharing some of my own personal stakes and second-hand memories ease the awkwardness of such seemingly mundane and sublime everyday matters. Indeed, I sought to reassure her that attention to Filipino women's unrecognized, unpaid domestic labor (like grocery shopping) is valuable and worthwhile to me as a researcher and ethnographer.

Neither Mrs. nor Mr. Alcala knew how to sort out the demands of domesticated life in the United States in their early years of marriage. As they illustrated through the course of the interview, these demands are negotiated over time, in and through a militarized milieu wherein basic supplies for daily living in the imperial center are delimited and procured through the U.S. military establishment. Mr. Alcala enlisted as a steward in the early 1950s, completed steward training in Louisiana, and worked as a steward for an admiral and his wife in Rhode Island. Given his training for and experience in feminized domestic labor in the military, it seems likely that he knows basic domestic work (like how to prepare meals), and could've eased Mrs. Alcala's transition. Interestingly, the silence during our interview around this particular fact, would authorize the passion with which Mrs. Alcala describes to me how she "survived"

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<sup>153</sup> Mrs. Alcala, interview with the author, tape recording, July 2004

those challenging times as a matter of assuming an assertive, if more masculinized, approach to living in the imperial center. Thus, expectations of femininity and masculinity converge unevenly on this military couple from the U.S. military establishment, U.S. society, U.S. imperial history in the Philippines, and extended family relations—all of which assume no part or role in the militarized conditions of everyday living for Filipino military families in the imperial center. In another interview, Mrs. Ancho acknowledges a similar dilemma with her spouse, “he cook all day, so he don’t want to cook at home,” while Mr. Ancho boasts that the *chop suey* he used to prepare for the admiral was the admiral’s favorite dish.<sup>154</sup>

Though it would be highly presumptuous to assert that neither one of these men prepared meals at home (Mr. Alcala prepared an afternoon snack for us during the interview), in both cases, they endure feminized labor conditions in the military that may have created expectations of heightened masculinized authority at home. This appears evident in choosing *not* to be helpful to their wives. These Filipino men face the dubious task of extending the imperialist ethos in their own families. Either way, patriarchal authority and militarized oversight cannot be deflected or subverted. Furthermore, the fact that Filipino enlistees are often times “not there” due to the nature of military life (given overseas deployment) contrasts with Mrs. Alcala’s earlier recollection that, “where the husband is, that is where your home is.” As such, how do Filipino military spouses deal with multiple expressions of masculinized authority within militarized domesticities?

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<sup>154</sup> Mr. & Mrs. Ancho, interview with the author, tape recording, September 2003.

The participants manage and invent modes of discretion to actively deal with militarized authority in various ways. Some of the participants find silence to be a cautionary means of managing delicate familial relationships. King-Kok Cheung challenges “blanket endorsements of speech and reductive perspectives on silence” in her call to differentiate “modalities of silence,” which Cheung explains as, “imposed by the family in an attempt to maintain dignity or secrecy, by the ethnic community in adherence to cultural etiquette, or by the dominant culture in an effort to prevent any voicing or minority experiences.”<sup>155</sup> For example, Mrs. Alcala explains:

I am not a very outspoken person at the time...no matter how much I like to ask him, I held back. I was not used to him—this the first time to be together...the only time I came to know him was when we were married, and that’s the hardest part.... I never complained to my mom. Why should I tell [my family] when they cannot help me?<sup>156</sup>

Not knowing her husband well, Mrs. Alcala illustrates how choosing silence produces less oppressive coping options for her, given that long-time sources of support were in the Philippines. Contrarily, she describes the limitations of speech which made silence a viable option in her case, “I thought that being a college graduate I could speak good English, but I didn’t understand when Americans talk!”<sup>157</sup> Soon after she says this, she draws my attention to the large 3x3 portrait of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, situated prominently in the foyer, where she explains that it can be viewed by the entire family, in and through the movements of daily life. She asserts, “You need to ask for guidance. We are pretty lucky that God was gracious...I never stopped praying for the best things for

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<sup>155</sup> King-Kok Cheung, *Articulate Silences: Hisaye Yamamoto, Maxine Hong Kingston, Joy Kogawa*. (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press) 1993: p.3.

<sup>156</sup> Mrs. Alcala, interview with the author, tape recording, July 2004.

<sup>157</sup> Mrs. Alcala, interview with the author, tape recording, July 2004.

our family.”<sup>158</sup> I am struck at the seemingly anachronistic way in which she invites me into her spiritual life at this juncture of the interview, and find this leading me in a direction I hadn’t foreseen in my preliminary research on gendered expectations of masculinity and femininity among Filipino Navy families. What role did the Roman Catholic Church have in shaping such expectations?

In this vignette, Mr. and Mrs. Alcala expand the “modalities of silence” in negotiating expectations of masculinity and femininity from several spectral sources: the U.S. military; domesticated tropes of liberal universality; extended family in the Philippines; and even the Roman Catholic Church. Several questions, however, remain: is God gracious to some family members, particularly those who ascribe to patriarchal constructions of sexuality, and not to others? Is adherence to religious authority consistent with, or in conflict with, military authority? How is social collectivity imagined and practiced outside the contested “private” domesticated arena? These questions, and more, frame the possibilities and limits of gendered demilitarization discourse and activity in the following section.

### Masculinized Filipino Mothering

The gendered criteria of social and legal citizenship within the U.S. empire is a sexualized subjection; that is, sexual citizenship which stresses patriarchal marriage and motherhood.<sup>159</sup> In other words, un/belonging in the U.S. is not only marked by legal citizenship, but also, the extent to which one ascribes to respectable heteronormative

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<sup>158</sup> Mrs. Alcala, interview with the author, tape recording, July 2004

<sup>159</sup> Mae Ngai. *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press) 2004.

expectations of intimacy.<sup>160</sup> Martin F. Manalansan stresses how “family, class, and religion intersect with sexual desire, social conflicts, and corporeality.”<sup>161</sup> Thus, the notion of patriarchy as a social system fundamentally premised on heterosexuality (i.e. men as head of family/ household, with “domestic” authority over women, children, community, and society) has inherent limitations. It does not account for racialized families invested in a distinctly masculine family framework, as my research argues, where mothering is socially constructed by men’s and women’s actions.

By way of illustration, Mr. Franco shares one fond memory of an otherwise sad goodbye to his oldest son, in anticipation of a six-month deployment abroad with the U.S. Navy in the early 1970s. He said to his son Steve, “You’re the man of the house now.” Indeed, Mrs. Franco confirms that the then eight-year old boy readily assumed his *authorized* role: after school, he cooked dinner for himself and his younger brother while she was away at work (making sure to leave an extra helping of dinner for her), and routinely checked that the front door and windows were securely locked before the three of them went to bed in the evenings. In this case, constructions of masculinity (to be “the man”) isn’t intended to reinforce oppressive notions of patriarchal authority; rather, as Nazli Kibria argues in her work on Southeast Asian families, patriarchal family order can function to preserve maternal authority and power deemed threatened by U.S. society.<sup>162</sup> Mr. and Mrs. Franco, in this case, shore up maternal authority over family matters in and through a masculinist family framework precisely because of militarized circumstances

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<sup>160</sup> Nayan Shah. “Adjudicating Intimacies” in *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* by Ann Laura Stoler, ed. (Durham and London: Duke University Press) 2006.

<sup>161</sup> Martin F. Manalansan. *Global Divas: Filipino Gay Men in the Diaspora* (Durham and London: Duke University Press) 2003: p. 99.

<sup>162</sup> Nazli Kibria. *Family Tighrope: The Changing Lives of Vietnamese Americans* (Princeton: Princeton University Press) 1993.

necessitating Mr. Franco's lengthy absence away from his spouse and children. This example shows how constructions of motherhood and mothering within Filipino Navy family households are contingent upon sustained engagement in "masculine" activities by all members of the family.<sup>163</sup> Judith Halberstam critically examines the normative ordering of female masculinities in the United States, and suggests that even heterosexual female masculinities are not equally valued or deemed acceptable.<sup>164</sup> Participants like the Franco family show how gendered expectations of masculinity and mothering are, in fact, co-constructed by women, children, and men, within Filipino Navy families.

#### Mothering (De)militarized Filipino Families

To further expand how demilitarization discourse and activity are imagined in and through the language of mothering, I have organized my analysis into three broad categories: *Maternal Authority Revisited*; *Dependant(s) on Militarized Money*; and the *Divine Kumare*. These categories of analyses help frame my argument that the language of mothering offers militarized first-generation Filipino Navy spouses in my study (including their Navy husbands and children) the most effective, improvised, and cooperative means of critical engagement with militarized authority *as entire families*.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Only one of the women in my sample enlisted in the U.S. Navy in the Philippines in the mid-1970s. Thanh Thuy Vo Dang argues that motherhood and combat are not mutually exclusive in "Complicating the Binary Construction of Vietnamese Womanhood: A Historiography of the 'Long-Haired Warriors,'" *unpublished paper* (December 2001).

<sup>164</sup> Judith Halberstam in *Female Masculinity* de-essentializes masculinity as somehow intrinsic to heterosexual manhood and power; instead, Halberstam draws attention to "gender variations" and "gender nonconformity," and the subordination of alternative nonheterosexual masculinities. (As opposed to Susan Jefford's *The Remasculinization of America*, wherein masculinity is analyzed as biologically intrinsic to men.)

<sup>165</sup> Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila, p. 336. See also Xiaolan Bao "Politicizing Motherhood: Chinese Garment Workers' Campaign for Daycare Centers in New York City, 1977-1982" in *Asian/ Pacific Islander*

*Maternal Authority Revisited*

One participant describes how mothering served as a language to change undesirable military relocation orders for her husband. Mrs. Barlolong states firmly in our interview that a phone call she made to her husband's detailer ultimately enabled the family to stay in San Diego, "I just called him up, since my English and manner was better [than my husband's], and I said to him that we can't leave the area for the kids... I made my case, and it worked."<sup>166</sup> Though the exception and not the general rule among my participants, Mrs. Barlolong minces no words about the necessary role she assumed to ensure that the military doesn't encroach upon family life.<sup>167</sup> The extent to which her actions might've served to *diminish* her husband's masculinity (by serving as an intermediary with military authority) is unclear, as Mr. Barlolong revels in his wife's ability to produce such a beneficial outcome (i.e. avoid relocating on behalf of the children) for the entire family. I observe by their playful bantering and laughter that the couple appreciated the concerted effort between them to protect their family from military authority.

Another way participants ensured that encroachment by military authority is averted, is by advising children not to join the military or marry into the military. One

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*American Women: A Historical Anthology*. Shirley Hune and Gail M. Nomura eds. (New York: New York University Press) 2003. For consideration of "familialism" versus "mothering," Deborah Gerson " 'Is Family Devotion Now Subversive?': Familialism against McCarthyism" in *Not June Cleaver: Women and gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960* by Joanne Meyerowitz, ed. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press) 1994. In this article, Gerson argues that mothers do not seek specific goods or services for themselves and children but an end to forms of political repression that they understand as dividing their families.

<sup>166</sup> Mrs. Barlolong, interview by the author, tape recording, December 2003.

<sup>167</sup> In an interview with Mrs. De la Rosa (January 2004), making "friends" with military superiors and their wives was helpful to her family's quality of life.



participant describes succinctly this as “he [your father] joined so you don’t have to.”

Mrs. Fune explains:

I advise my children not to marry a [sic] military personnel, because of my experience. It’s really hard to be left alone, esp. when your husband is always overseas...it’s a tough job...you have to handle everything. Takes a lot of patience, love, and number one faith in God. I learned a lot of things the hard way.<sup>168</sup>

In this case, creating demilitarized life options for her children meant advising them *as a mother* not to build up any military ties that might impact their future livelihood. Still, some participants made decisions that ran counter to parents’ advice of severing ties with the military by entering into military marriages and enlisting in the armed forces anyway (as will be illustrated in the next chapter).

#### *Dependant(s) on Militarized Monies*

Linda Maram describes how Filipino constructions of masculine and feminine authority concerning family finances is understood as male “breadwinner” and female “safe-keeper.”<sup>169</sup> In my sample, the language of mothering mediates gendered expectations of masculine and feminine roles in family financial management. Expectations to provide financially for transpacific families illustrate the contingencies and demands to “co-provide” with spouses. Extended families are dependent on militarized earnings, and not just immediate “dependants.” In one example, Mr. Sayarot, who joined the U.S. Navy in 1945 in the Philippines, conveyed in a firm voice how familial obligations in the Philippines were handled openly and directly, especially between his parents and his new wife:

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<sup>168</sup> Mrs. Fune, interview by the author, tape recording, July 2004.

<sup>169</sup> Linda Espana-Maram. *Creating Masculinity in Los Angeles’s Little Manila* (New York: Columbia University Press) 2006: p. 168.

I already say to my parents, right now you can take advantage of me because I'm still single. You have your BAQ, you have some money coming from me every month [Basic Allowance Quarters]... but when I get married, it's going to be everything's cut off. Either you like me or not, it's going to be cut off... 13 years I have BAQ for my mother.<sup>170</sup>

In a poignant moment while he was still speaking, Mrs. Sayarot interjected dryly, "Oh incidentally, that was seven more years *after* we got married." Obligations of financial support were a particularly impassioned topic for the Sayarot's throughout our conversation. Marital tension about transnational expectations to fulfill financial obligations to an extended family was deemed a *moral* issue about whose family was authorized to live and thrive: the immediate family, or extended families in the Philippines. In another example, Mr. Franco used his military pension and wages from a second career as a postal worker to maintain a family home in the Philippines for his parents. Mrs. Franco describes succinctly how, "I gave him a choice; either you take care of your kids and this old house, or you go..."<sup>171</sup>

Yet military income for enlisted participants offers relatively low earnings for daily needs, let alone for leisurely activity.<sup>172</sup> One participant conveyed that her mother's and father's schedules were difficult to coordinate for a formal interview; however, she volunteered that life at home without her dad (who was on military deployment frequently) may be summarized by her mother's familiar mantra, "*basta* keep busy," or "*just* keep busy."<sup>173</sup> When I asked what the mantra meant, she believed that it implied the

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<sup>170</sup> Mr. and Mrs. Sayarot, interview with the author, tape recording, January 2004.

<sup>171</sup> Mr. and Mrs. Franco, interview with the author, tape recording, July 2004.

<sup>172</sup> Deployment earnings slightly more, but require familial separation and heightened maternal responsibilities for households.

<sup>173</sup> In heeding some of the participants' subtle call to understand their spiritual motivation for mothering, I came across an interesting reference to "busyness" at a Roman Catholic Mass I attended during my

busyness of raising five kids alone, on a stretched-thin budget, where each child assumed household and family responsibilities beyond their years. Despite feeling melancholy at recalling those hard times, she unexpectedly giggled and mentioned fondly her mother's fashionable style—of wearing military-issue black combat boots from the uniform shop on the local base (“and wears to this day!” she happily exclaimed.) She reflects on her mother's frequent travels and travails to nearby Tijuana (indeed, in combat boots), and specifically the dog races held there, for public gambling. She wondered about the ways her mother scaled such complex *interior* terrain over the years—of financial desperation, crushing loneliness, despair for leisure, and shattered dreams—articulated *not* through a formal interview for my study (or through informal family conversation with her, for that matter), but through her mother's piercing silences, nonverbal gestures, and hesitations.

Indeed, even the most well-intended ethnographic work cannot, and will not ever convey adequately, the *interiorized* world of meaning among individuals or entire societies.<sup>174</sup> The incongruity of a spouse voluntarily clad in military-issue combat boots raises several questions about the militarization of this particular Filipino woman's life within a critical theoretical discussion posed by Laura Kang on the shifting terms and conditions of rendering Filipino women legible, visible, and intelligible at all, in relation

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research with some of my participants in attendance. The reference is from the New American Bible, and describes how those who are living in idleness are urged to do their work quietly and earn their own living. This reference on “busyness” stumped me, as I wondered about the effect of this message on the community. I include the passage here, but regrettably, was unable to ask individual participants about its meaning for them. The passage (2 Thes: 3:7-13) reads: “You know how you ought to imitate us. We did not live lives of disorder when we were among you, nor depend on anyone for food. Rather, we worked day and night, laboring to the point of exhaustion so as not to impose on any of you. Not that we had no claim on you, but that we might present ourselves as an example for you to imitate...We hear that some of you are unruly, not keeping busy but acting like busy-bodies. We enjoin all such, and we urge them strongly in the Lord Jesus Christ, to earn the food they eat by working quietly. You must never grow weary of doing what is right, brothers.”

<sup>174</sup> Kamala Visweswaran's *Fictions of Feminist Ethnography* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press) 1994.

to prevailing demarcations of disciplinary division and epistemological authority.<sup>175</sup> That is to say, how “natural” is the idealized pursuit of epistemological knowledge on Filipino women within intellectual-institutional sites of knowledge production, and for whom does this pursuit benefit? Does this military spouse and mother imagine citizenship and belonging as attainable in wearing official US military combat boots, or does she challenge the notion of belonging, by obtaining such symbols of empire (official military regalia) *anyway*? Is it possible that she uses the combat boots to “step into” an already militarized public arena to articulate the silences around her own ambiguous position as a Filipino woman and military spouse in the United States? How does gambling as leisurely activity trouble the notion of social citizenship, and the largely invisible struggles of working class families to thrive within the imperial metropole? To what extent do expectations that military spouses be virtuous and maintain “respectable” domiciles while their soldier-husbands are away on sacrificial duties to the U.S. nation, fulfill and/or disavow constructions of patriarchal notions of motherhood? Simply put, what are her expectations and disappointments? How is her perception of her *own* life, her own busyness, imagined?

The language of mothering isn’t expressed with verbal cues in this case, but in the silence guarding unmet expectations of masculinity (to earn adequate livelihoods as a family) and even “proper” feminine decorum. Arguably, the language of mothering “for the family” may explain the desire for “unconventional” leisure, and potentially income-

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<sup>175</sup>Laura Kang. *Compositional Subjects: Enfiguring Asian/ American Women* (Durham and London: Duke University Press) 2002: p. 12.

producing activity. Linda Espana-Maram argues convincingly for the need to rethink the role of leisure in working class Filipino communities:

By flaunting “improper” behavior, Filipino workers carved niches of autonomy where they fought against restrictions on space, expanded the opportunities for alternative expressions, and, in the process, established an identity of their own. By looking at *what* they chose to do with their free time and *where* they chose to do it, we can better understand the solidarity they displayed in mass social movements, despite some internal conflicts along class and regional lines.<sup>176</sup>

In light of Espana-Maram’s analysis that Filipinos “pieced together an understanding of their collective identity by what they chose to do in their everyday life routines, including leisure activities,” I turn now to an arena where many of my participants chose to spend their free time: at the local Roman Catholic Church.<sup>177</sup>

### *Divine Kumare*

When Father Phien ended Tuesday morning’s Mass, I expected him to walk back up the center aisle, as I gathered my raincoat and purse for the wet weather outside. But to my surprise, he turned immediately around to kneel before the altar (his back towards the assembly), motioning all to do the same. The recently renovated sanctuary (where the altar was centrally located) at Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Mira Mesa has a reproduction of the St. Damian crucifix hung prominently on the back wall, notable for its vibrant biblical imagery that provided a backdrop for the cross. Promptly all in attendance, about 200 by rough estimate, a gathering of older parishioners, mostly Filipino along with some Vietnamese, Latino, and white parishioners), kneeled reverently

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<sup>176</sup> Espana-Maram, p. 8.

<sup>177</sup> Espana-Maram, p. 3.

before a two-dimensional image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, draped in royal blue velvet and tassels. They began a hopeful, yet melancholy novena.

Today we face so many difficulties...we know we cannot heal every ill or solve every problem. But with God's grace, we intend to do what we can. May we be true witnesses to the world that love for one another really matters. May our daily actions proclaim how fully our lives are modeled after yours, Mother of Perpetual Help.<sup>178</sup>

As I headed for the exit, I was drawn to these resounding words so very *unfamiliar* to me. This was certainly *not* my first-generation Filipino mother's Catholic Church given my mother's ambivalence towards the Catholic Church.<sup>179</sup> Robert Orsi explains how "religions are as ambiguous and ambivalent as the bonds that constitute them, and their effects cannot be generally anticipated but known in practice and experience."<sup>180</sup> I didn't grow up with an awareness of novenas, the rosary, or any other form of Catholic prayer, besides those mentioned in Sunday masses at military chapels or elementary school catechism in the U.S. South where I grew up (in Virginia and South Carolina). A bit embarrassed though at having arisen to leave so soon, I quietly slipped into the adjacent Blessed Sacrament chapel, and knelt down respectfully (aware of other parishioners in the room) to listen to the novena through the loud speaker. Despite the inaudible murmur of the large crowd through the walls, I could clearly hear Father Phien's voice projected through the loud speakers, his strong Vietnamese accent offering a lyrical cadence to the novena.

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<sup>178</sup> Cited from the Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help in the Roman Catholic Church.

<sup>179</sup> Rachel A.R. Bundang "This Is Not Your Mother's Catholic Church: When Filipino Catholic Spirituality Meets American Culture" in *Pinay Power: Theorizing the Filipina/American Experience* by Melinda L. de Jesus, ed. (New York: Routledge) 2005.

<sup>180</sup> Robert Orsi. *The Madonna of 115<sup>th</sup> Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press) 1985: p. 211.

From the first moment of her existence the Holy Spirit filled Mary with his love. By his power, she became the Virgin-Mother of God. Through the same Holy Spirit, she became the perfect wife, the perfect mother. Let us imitate her generosity, her openness to the Holy Spirit...<sup>181</sup>

I walked away that morning wondering about the roles this novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help and the Roman Catholic Church play in how first-generation Filipino women and men extend the language of mothering to cope with militarized circumstances? On one hand, the institutional church reinforces the values of patriarchy with “traditional” expectations of sexuality, masculinity, and femininity, as in the case of this novena. On the other hand, however, expressions of community life through organized activities and individual interviews reveal how the institutional church is actually kept at a meaningful distance from the everyday lives of many first- (and second-) generation participants. What is significant for some of the participants in my research are the experiences of leisure and community made publically legible in the local landscape—*not* directly mediated by military resources and personnel (although this church is located in the neighborhood adjacent to a military base), but located in the broader San Diego community. While mostly retired first-generation U.S. military veterans assume many visible leadership positions in the church community (i.e. the Knights of Columbus), these roles are not under any military authority per se, other than the “community authority” that oversees everyday life in the parish (if at all divine authority, or even the authority of church officials.) “Community authority” emerges then with even more intensity and regulatory influence on everyday expectations of masculinity and femininity. Sheba M. George argues that doing gender is not an

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<sup>181</sup> Cited from the Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help in the Roman Catholic Church.

individual performance but an interactional process requiring some Keralite immigrant women who work as nurses in the U.S. to overcompensate for their status as breadwinners by assuming more feminized, dependent roles in their marriages; moreover, Keralite immigrant men assume positions of leadership in Christian churches to overcompensate for their loss of status in relationship to their wives.<sup>182</sup>

By way of the *Divine Kumare* in the Roman Catholic Church in Mira Mesa (a phrase I've coined that refers to the Virgin Mary as confidante for first-generation women and men) the language of mothering is infused with its due authorization to alter how first generation Filipino women and men meet basic needs—such as navigating the U.S. job market with limited English skills, learning how to create opportunities for paid work at home, learning to drive, and acquiring new marketable skills—as ostensibly *family-based* activities.<sup>183</sup> Neferti Tadiar argues that “the subjective activity of women,” as expressed in diaries, letters, phone calls, and arguably, prayers and prayer-gatherings, is valuable in how it is not yet “objectified...and which therefore bears an immanent transformative power.”<sup>184</sup> Robert Orsi analyzes popular Catholicism among Italians American women in Harlem that, “at the center of both the devotion and the annual celebration were the many hopes and fears, conflicts, expectations and disappointments, and ambivalences in the lives of the people of the community...dense and complex context...personal, familial, communal, political, cosmic...”<sup>185</sup> Ms. Sayarot explains how

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<sup>182</sup> George, Sheba M. *When Women Come First: Gender and Class in Transnational Migration* (Berkeley: University of California Press 2005).

<sup>183</sup> Aihwa Ong in *Spirits of Resistance* argues that spirit possession as an invented cultural practice is one way in which study of Malaysian factory women stop production on the work floor.

<sup>184</sup> See Tadiar, 2002. (p.286)

<sup>185</sup> See Orsi, 1985.



she manages the challenges of caring for three grandchildren, while her son (their father) who has sole custody of the children, is on deployment with the military.

I think...[family relationships] can be strained every now and then...to fix that, just look up there, and then everything goes fine...what I'm doing now is how to be a family, how to get closer to God because God takes care of all of us, and God loves us. We are all his children. And right now [the middle grandchild] is reading me a book because he cannot read well on Mary the Queen of Angels.<sup>186</sup>

Religious identities indeed play an important role in how some of the first-generation women in my research navigate a militarized, domesticated public sphere. David Yoo explains that “given the pivotal opening that religion provides into the lives of Asian Americans, it is puzzling that religion has been largely omitted from narratives of American history and Asian American Studies. As a consequence, we do not understand an essential aspect of how people structure their worlds.”<sup>187</sup> I contend that co-constructed expectations of masculinity among Filipino Navy families are socially performed through religious interaction.

To conclude, *demilitarized* choices are negotiated everyday with uncertain trajectories in an already militarized world. In the case of militarized widows and widowers, the connection to militarized resources remains acute: reliance on military pensions, free or discounted burial services, access to health care, and more. Informal conversations with the family of one widower reveal their disapproval of their father's actions to reconstitute Filipino masculinity through unsanctioned extra-marital relationships with a much-younger married woman in the Philippines. Furthermore,

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<sup>186</sup> Ms. Sayarot, interview with the author, tape recording, January 2004.

<sup>187</sup> Yoo, David. *New Spiritual Homes: Religion and Asian Americans* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press 1999).

informal conversations with a military widow reveal how the language of mothering “for, and by, the whole family” has created expectations that she attend to some of her deceased husband’s financial obligations with extended family in the Philippines. One area for further examination is the integration of extended relatives into domestic households in the U.S., and how their inclusion shapes mothering authority.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> In my sample, first-generation women did not rely as heavily on the help of extended relatives (like their own parents) in the imperial center, unlike the 1.5 and second generation cohort featured in the next chapter who were able to rely on their first-generation parents.

## CHAPTER 4

### Militarized Filipino Youth and the Language of Respect

*The upbringing one receives from Filipino parents is quite respectable enough—but couple that with a Navy father, and there is a reverence instilled in you that cannot be obtained otherwise.*<sup>189</sup>

In the opening epigraph, the San Diego State college student correlates “respect” with “reverence” to describe her deep admiration for her Navy father and his ability to excel “further and faster than most of his peers” in his military career, while at the same time, earning the respect of his peers by helping them to navigate their military careers as well. Though she states that, “I learned that I can adapt” to the demands of her father’s military career ambitions (especially when the family relocates in her teenage years), the student admits to dealing as best she could with culture shock and separation anxiety from relatives and friends in San Diego. That, in all, the “opportunities” afforded to her family by the U.S. Navy taught her how to “adapt” honorably, be courageously self-reliant, and be even more committed to a spiritual journey.<sup>190</sup> These values, located in universal tropes of the “possessive individual” and religious discourse, also affirm the

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<sup>189</sup> Joanne Lim, “A Navy Brat Speaks Out: My Dad, the Master Chief, my Hero” in *Asian Journal* (March 28-April 3, 2008) p. 6. This article is located in Riz A. Oades’ regular column “Voices and Images.”

<sup>190</sup> In the article, Lim reflects on her move at 16 years old from San Diego to Tennessee: “And for me personally, moving to Millington [Tennessee] became a spiritual journey. I was taken away from everything I knew and loved, but I realized later that that’s what God wanted. God wanted me to be isolated from the social ties and generic norms I was used to, so I could come closer to Him...Overall, I am very happy that my dad is in the Navy, and that he is a successful Filipino in the Navy. My dad has certainly portrayed the Navy’s core values of honor, courage, and commitment, and he has definitely passed on those values to me.” Diane Wolf speculates that religion plays a significant role in understanding the emotional world “restricting and constraining women’s mobility and choices” of second-generation Filipino youth, and suggests the need for more research in this area. See Diane Wolf “There’s No Place Like ‘Home’: Emotional Transnationalism and the Struggles of Second-Generation Filipinos” in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* by Peggy Levitt and Mary C. Waters, eds. (New York: Russell Sage Foundation) 2002: pp. 255-294.

imperatives of unequivocal devotion and loyalty to U.S. militarism; that is, to the everyday military men, women, and families at the proverbial center of the military's machinery.<sup>191</sup> This student avows by a public tribute the expectations of a properly militarized subject through devotion to her Navy father and expectations of family loyalty. In other words, militarism and familialism are mutually constitutive aspects of her identity and lineage.

In this chapter, I further explore the relationship between U.S. militarism and domesticity in everyday life through the adult lives of “1.5” and second-generation Filipino children who either migrated to or were born in the U.S. because their parents availed of U.S. Navy mechanisms established in the Philippines between the 1940s and the 1970s. I argue that Filipino military children in my sample are expected to “provide” for their families as well (note the masculinist phrasing)—that is, by learning how to “consolidate” and “consume” notions of national belonging (i.e. social citizenship) in school, at work, among friends, in public settings, and the like, in and through an unfinished engagement with U.S. militarism and imperialism. The entire family's well-being is co-constructed by all members on a distinctly masculine framework of family formation, one that seeks to affirm the masculinity of Filipino Navy men as husbands and fathers. Lisa Sun-Hee Park examines how second generation children of Asian immigrant entrepreneurs invest in the rituals of consuming and accumulating material goods to symbolize for themselves, their families, and larger society the desire to be “normal” despite intrusions to family life (i.e. “family” time for leisure, parenting, successful

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<sup>191</sup> For a keen elaboration of possessive individualism, see Grace Kyungwon Hong's *The Rupture of American Capital: Women of Color Feminism and the Culture of Immigrant Labor* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press) 2006.

“boundary” work between business and family obligations as self-employed immigrant entrepreneurs, etc.).<sup>192</sup> Park states that, “Their social role as a mythical model minority requires that they continuously exhibit their patriotism or their deservingness of social citizenship through consumptive displays.”<sup>193</sup> Given Park’s analysis, 1.5 and second generation Filipino military children are seemingly situated already within patriotism’s embrace as daughters and sons of U.S. military personnel, and “deserving” of social citizenship. Yet, the demands for Filipino Navy children to “provide” for and secure the military family’s sense of national belonging remain tenuous at best, and suggests the precariousness of social citizenship even for Filipino Navy families. For example, Yen Espiritu argues that intergenerational mobility through wealth accumulation is sought after and fought over (i.e. through college and career choices) to establish a “[Filipino] family’s worth, belonging, and acceptance in U.S. society” based on data collected in San Diego that includes many Filipino Navy families.<sup>194</sup>

Thus, I illustrate as “regrets” and “rewards” how militarized notions of masculinity and femininity shape uneasily the experiences of social citizenship for Filipino Navy families. Intergenerational Filipino families in the U.S. seek to *thrive*, and not just minimally survive, their life circumstances (like many); yet, the paid and unpaid labor necessary of Filipino Navy families to do so is constantly overseen by U.S.

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<sup>192</sup> Lisa Sun-Hee Park *Consuming Citizenship: Children of Asian Immigrant Entrepreneurs* (Stanford: Stanford University Press) 2005: p.44

<sup>193</sup> Park, p. 12.

<sup>194</sup> Yen Espiritu “Emotions, Sex, and Money: the Lives of Filipino Children of Immigrants” (unpublished paper)

militarized authority.<sup>195</sup> In and through gendered everyday practical matters—such as where to shop for inexpensive household goods or how to cope with family separation—is militarized authority guised in universalizing discourse that valorizes the “sacrifice,” “obedience,” and “discipline” of military families in the domestic arena.<sup>196</sup> Moreover, these so-called “universal values” (arguably, akin to “honor,” “courage,” and “commitment” mentioned in the opening epigraph) constitute the logic of imperial conquest and *domestication*; and in the case of the Philippines, justified the brutal violence and genteel domestication of native people deemed incapable of self-government due to an apparent lack of self-possession. Thus, the trajectories of imperial *domestication* through militarized discipline produces inherently contradictory circumstances for Filipino Navy families in the imperial center. While first-generation Filipino Navy men and their spouses sort through overlapping masculinized and feminized expectations constituted historically (through U.S. imperial conquest), institutionally (through the U.S. military, U.S. education system, and U.S. system of government in the Philippines *and* in the imperial center), and locally (through paternal/maternal families, marriages, friends, etc.), their children would embody their stakes in U.S. militarism to thrive.<sup>197</sup> That is, Filipino Navy children signify the entire family’s success as properly militarized subjects to society, their communities, and themselves. In

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<sup>195</sup> For a detailed description of intergenerational family labor in Filipino Navy families in San Diego, see Jocelyn Pacleb “Gender, Family Labor, and the United States Navy: The Post-World War II San Diego Filipina/o American Immigrant Navy Community” Unpublished dissertation (UC Irvine, 2003).

<sup>196</sup> See [www.navy.com](http://www.navy.com) and [www.military.com](http://www.military.com). Not coincidentally, these are also lauded as religious values.

<sup>197</sup> Rhacel S. Parrenas “New Household Forms, Old Family Values: The Formation and Reproduction of the Filipino Transnational Family in Los Angeles” in *Contemporary Asian America: a Multidisciplinary Reader* by Min Zhou and James Gatewood eds. (New York: New York University Press) 2000. Although this essay doesn’t deal with Filipino military families per se, Parrenas’ analysis is quite helpful in understanding the broader structural, cultural, and ideological forces shaping the formation and reproduction of Filipino transnational households in the imperial center.

fact, failure to do so (to be effectively *demilitarized*) is not typically *desirable*, as any approximation of *demilitarization* among the children might signify the family's failure as well. As such, this chapter illustrates how constructions of Filipino masculinity and femininity shape the experiences of militarized childhood, and seeks to understand how these articulations of "Filipino-ness" in contemporary everyday life may suggest whether and how *demilitarized* lives, from childhood through adulthood, can be imagined and lived.<sup>198</sup>

### Filipino Childhood in the U.S.

Ethnographic literature on 1.5 and second generation Filipino youth in the U.S. converges on the significance of gender, generation, and class upbringing in shaping masculinized and feminized experiences of childhood through adulthood.<sup>199</sup> Not only are these factors important in critically assessing models of adaptation and success, but also more importantly, these factors frame my inquiry into how and why militarized choices can remain emotionally *appealing* for personal fulfillment and practical ambition into adulthood.<sup>200</sup> For example, Benegal Alsaybar makes a distinction that U.S.-born Filipino boys and Filipino boys born in the Philippines from varying economic means formed "gangs" in Los Angeles, California for community, protection, and leisure throughout

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<sup>198</sup> Yen Espiritu argues that "ethnic identity can change in both its importance and its context over the life course and intergenerationally." See "The Intersection of Race, Ethnicity, and Class: The Multiple Identities of Second-Generation Filipinos" in *The Second Generation: Ethnic Identity among Asian Americans* by Pyong Gap Min, ed. (Walnut Creek: Alta Mira Press) 2002: p. 19-52.

<sup>199</sup> This cohort of participants range in age from eighteen to early fifties, and reflect the breadth of 1.5 and second generation children of Navy families in San Diego.

<sup>200</sup> Lisa Sun-Hee Park "Continuing Significance of the Model Minority Myth: The Second Generation," in *Social Justice* (2008), v.35 n1. Special Issue on Asian Americans and Social Justice edited by Adalberto Aguirre and Shoon Lio. Diane Wolf "'There's No Place Like Home': Emotional Transnationalism and the Struggles of Second-Generation Filipinos" in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* by Peggy Levitt and Mary C. Waters, eds. (New York: Russell Sage Foundation) 2002.

much of the twentieth century.<sup>201</sup> This was due, in part, to periods of selective migration: on one hand, imposed Filipino bachelorhood on the west coast prior to the 1940s; and on the other hand, unseen “family instability” despite policy priorities for family reunification in the post-1965 period and beyond.<sup>202</sup> One way to extend this analysis further is to consider how the criminalization of Filipino gangs has coincided with the increased militarization of everyday life for similar cohorts of Filipino Navy families, and the varying possibilities and limitations for community and leisure between and among young Filipino men and women which may reinforce desires to “succeed.” Diane Wolf examines how “gendered priorities of control and safety” in post-1965 Filipino families have impacted Filipina college-level students, by paradoxically limiting their educational and career opportunities (their “successes”) as well as affecting their emotional health.<sup>203</sup> As stated in Wolf’s final analysis, qualitative research on the emotional life of Filipino youth over time, in a transnational context, is much-needed “even if it is based in one geographical place.”<sup>204</sup> Wolf’s analysis begs the question though of how constructions of Filipino masculinity and femininity create a context for affective family ties within a militarized milieu, and to what extent they are meaningful, effective, and perhaps, overly determined by familial expectations. Yen Espiritu examines Filipino youth through the lens of emotions, “as a way of looking for and at the gaps...in immigrant life,” and

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<sup>201</sup> See Bangele D. Alsaybar “Filipino American Youth Gangs, ‘Party Culture,’ and Ethnic Identity in Los Angeles” in *The Second Generation: Ethnic Identity among Asian Americans*, by Pyong Gap Min, ed. (Alta Mira Press, 2002), p.129-152.

<sup>202</sup> “Family instability” encompasses various factors: financial, marital, educational, and cultural. See Bangele D. Alsaybar “Filipino American Youth Gangs, ‘Party Culture,’ and Ethnic Identity in Los Angeles” in *The Second Generation: Ethnic Identity among Asian Americans*, by Pyong Gap Min, ed. (Alta Mira Press, 2002), p.129-152. See also Lakandiwa M. de Leon, “Filipinotown and the DJ Scene: Cultural Expression and Identity Affirmation of Filipino American Youth in Los Angeles” in *Asian American Youth: Culture, Identity, and Ethnicity* by Jennifer Lee and Min Zhou, eds. (Routledge, 2004), p.191-206.

<sup>203</sup> Wolf, p.270.

<sup>204</sup> Wolf, p. 284.



argues that money and sexuality manage the intimate meanings of “family” and “success” between Filipino immigrant parents and their children, with particular consequences for daughters.<sup>205</sup> In all, the ethnographic literature on Filipino youth has set the stage for further study on how constructions of masculinity and femininity are *irrepressibly* articulated in contemporary everyday life; yet, how do these further engender or undermine the patriarchal imperatives of a militarized state?

### Militarized Childhood in the Pacific Rim Empire

The “military brat” as colloquial expression and scholarly framework has inherent limitations for children of U.S. military personnel born in and through U.S. empire in the Pacific Rim.<sup>206</sup> Mary Wertsch states that her research on “military brats” does not include interviews with “Asian military brats,” or “children of mixed American-Asian marriages,” although she interviews black, Latino, and white “military brats.”<sup>207</sup> Arguably, the historical significance of U.S. empire in the Pacific Rim remains understudied, and with it, a broader examination of militarized childhood within and beyond U.S. national boundaries. For example, Amerasian children born during the U.S.-Vietnam War and left in Vietnam by their U.S. soldier-fathers is a glaring case of *unauthorized* military childhood; not to mention the *unauthorized* children born within

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<sup>205</sup> Yen Espiritu “Emotions, Sex, and Money: The Lives of Filipino Children of Immigrants.” (unpublished paper). See also Espiritu, 2003.

<sup>206</sup> Research on “military brats” elide the significance of race and empire, but treat the experiences of militarized childhood with illuminating detail. See *Military Brats and Other Global Nomads: Growing Up in Organization Families* by Morten G. Ender, ed. (2002) See *Military Families: Adaptation to Change* by Edna J. Hunter and D. Stephen Nice, eds. (1978)

<sup>207</sup> Mary Edwards Wertsch *Military Brats: Legacies of Childhood Inside the Fortress* (Harmony Books, 1991), p. xiv. Multidisciplinary research on “military brats” describe this as a term of “affectionate humor and identification” to denote children with one parent in the U.S. military. The term is also the military institution’s unofficial way of referring to children of enlisted military personnel as “a bothersome necessity.”

U.S. military sex economies in the Philippines and elsewhere.<sup>208</sup> Regarding military sex economies in the Philippines, Anne-Marie Hilsdon notes “U.S. military personnel did not, and foreign tourists do not, respect the boundaries of childhood.”<sup>209</sup> Indeed, not all U.S. military children are legitimately *authorized*. Moreover, only in and through violent sexualized encounters engendered by U.S. militarism and imperialism in the Pacific Rim are the lives of children rendered at all, if at the least, as expendable innocence.

Filipino military childhood in the imperial center is also relatively understudied.<sup>210</sup> Arguably, one of the risks involved in exploring this question among Filipino “Navy Brats” (as in the opening epigraph) is the inherent feeling of family betrayal evoked in critically examining the U.S. Navy, considered akin to the adage of “biting the hand that feeds you,” or in other words, “provides” for your well-being.<sup>211</sup> Not to mention, the unauthorized “Navy Brats” of Filipino Navy men born secretly or unknowingly abroad.<sup>212</sup> Research in several Pacific Rim communities offers insightful analysis of the role of “family” in producing expectations for familial loyalty in the

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<sup>208</sup> McKelvey, Robert S. *The Dust of Life: America's Children Abandoned in Vietnam*; Trin Yarborough, *Surviving Twice: Amerasian Children of the Vietnam War*; Anne-Marie Hilsdon, *Madonnas and Martyrs: Militarism and Violence in the Philippines*.

<sup>209</sup> Anne-Marie Hilsdon *Madonnas and Martyrs: Militarism and Violence in the Philippines* (Allen and Unwin, Australia), 1995. p.100-101

<sup>210</sup> As mentioned elsewhere, Yen Espiritu has pioneered research in this area. See also Pacleb, 2003.

<sup>211</sup> For another insightful ethnographic analysis of betrayal and money among Filipino communities in the imperial center, see Benito M. Vergara Jr. “Betrayal, Class Fantasies, and the Filipino Nation in Daly City” in *Cultural Compass* by Martin F. Manalansan IV., ed. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press) 2000: pp. 139-158.

<sup>212</sup> A few informal conversations with study participants revealed knowledge of and suspicions about children born out of wedlock to married Filipino Navy men. Other informal topics that emerged in conversation with research participants “off record” include: “loveless” marriages with third-party involvement; military men with heteronormative families who have sex with other men but do not consider themselves gay; men living among men (i.e. in military bachelor’s quarters) when the heteronormative family arrangement doesn’t work; and anti-miscegenation practices reinforced by white military superiors toward enlistees.

imperial center.<sup>213</sup> Antoinette Chafauros offers an illustration of this tension in contemporary Guam, that like the Philippines, has been historically subjected to U.S. imperialism, militarism, and Roman Catholic conversion under Spanish colonialism as overlapping sources of *authority*, but differing from the Philippines in its embattled status as a U.S. territory. According to Chafauros, multigenerational Chamorro women are not necessarily unified in the struggles against military build-up in Guam given moral and pragmatic concerns for family well-being, community obligations, island sustainability, and the heretofore erasure of indigenous women's labor in talks about laws, treaties, etc.<sup>214</sup> Furthermore, Chafauros notes that there are "many levels of culpability in masculinist industries" that continue to foreclose the epistemological perspectives of indigenous women in Guam.<sup>215</sup>

Chafauros' analysis helps to frame the theoretical premise of this chapter: how constructions of masculinity and femininity pervade the emotional worlds and civic engagements of militarized communities. I contend that Filipino masculinity and femininity are imagined and articulated in and through mutually entangled, emotion-

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<sup>213</sup> For a discussion of migration to the U.S. from the last independent kingdom in the South Pacific, see Cathy Small *Voyages: From Tongan Villages to American Suburbs*. For a discussion of refugees of war with the U.S. from an understudied Southeast Asian community, see Sucheng Chan "Scarred, yet Undefeated: Hmong and Cambodian Women and Girls in the United States" in *Asian/Pacific Islander American Women: A Historical Anthology* by Shirley Hune and Gail M. Nomura, eds. Chan's analysis concludes, "They have survived because they are strong, courageous, tenacious, and adaptable." (p.266) Beyond the scope of this study is an examination of how loyalty and betrayal are negotiated in the Japanese American community during World War II.

<sup>214</sup> Antoinette Chafauros, conference talk and panel on "The Ghost of Guam in the Machinery of American Sovereignty" ("Locating the Intersections of Ethnic, Indigenous, and Postcolonial Studies Conference," Department of Ethnic Studies, UC San Diego, March 6, 2008) See also Vivian Dames "Chamorro Women, Self-Determination, and the Politics of Abortion in Guam," in *Asian/Pacific Islander American Women: A Historical Anthology*, by Shirley Hune and Gail Nomura, eds. (NYU Press, 2003) p.365-375. In this article, Roman Catholic spirituality plays a significant role in how indigenous women articulate the politics of self-determination.

<sup>215</sup> Guam remains an unincorporated U.S. "territory" today, enveloped in a long-standing engagement with U.S. imperialism. Indigenous debates abound on contemporary efforts to achieve sovereignty.

laden discourse: on one hand, of *authorized* language (i.e. of liberal individual rights, Western feminisms, patriarchal militarism, and religious worldviews); and on the other hand, the *unauthorized* language of gender identity and national identity within historically-specific cultural contexts. Rationality and emotionality are not mutually exclusive, but are institutionalized as such in racial and gendered terms, based squarely in heteronormative masculine and feminine expectations. That is, on one hand, white, heterosexual men embody masculine rational *authority*, while on the other hand, white women, nonwhite men *and* nonwhite women are variously located as irrational (i.e. emotional) figures of femininity, in relation to how each shores up the militarized authority of the former.<sup>216</sup> The constructed duality between rationality and emotionality, in fact, exacerbates the militarization of U.S. society. For example, masculinized “stoicism” is lauded as an admirable expression of rationality among military personnel, despite underreported cases of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, alienation, despair, suicide, and other feminized “emotional” effects of war stress evidenced by military men, women, and families in local communities.<sup>217</sup> In effect, masculinized “stoicism” elides the real “emotional” costs to human life. The extent, then, to which *unauthorized* gender, national, racial, and sexual subjects invest in militarized “values” is problematic, and deserves further critical attention.

### Filipino Youth and the Language of Respect

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<sup>216</sup> Susan Faludi in *The Terror Dream: Fear and Fantasy in Post-9/11 America* (New York: Metropolitan Books) 2007.

<sup>217</sup> See Wertsch. See also Rotstein, Arthur H. “Marine who died after cross-state chase wrote of war stress” (Associated Press, Saturday, May 17, 2008). See also Dave Davies, “Interview with Army Chaplain Fr. John Bartmire” on *Fresh Air*, National Public Radio, (Wednesday, November 14, 2007).

The call of addressing militarism through demilitarization, and the “de-linking of masculinity and militarism” to “support the self-determination” of various peoples,<sup>218</sup> requires sustained critical attention to how constructions of masculinity and femininity create vexed imperatives for militarized families. The “language of respect” that organizes the emotional worlds of militarized Filipino youth, to “consolidate” and “consume” notions of national belonging (social citizenship) for the sake of family, is imbued with competing social, cultural, moral, economic, and political stakes. In fact, Filipino Navy communities may be variously invested in U.S. militarism precisely because of masculinized and feminized expectations of family loyalty.<sup>219</sup> Given the sensitive matter of family expectations, legal scholar Kenji Yoshino offers a compelling way to queer the legitimacy of state imperatives to reproduce universalizing norms of masculinity and femininity.<sup>220</sup> Yoshino proposes looking precisely at the intimate discourse within families—between mothers, fathers, children, and other real or imagined kin—as the interpersonal relationships which are constituted by and constitutive of gendered, sexualized, and racialized “state” discourses and practices. Thus, in examining the gendered circulation of emotional imperatives (at once political, moral, economic, social, and cultural) expected of Filipino youth through time and space, I seek to de-naturalize the monolithic entity of “the state,” and specifically locate U.S. militarism

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<sup>218</sup> Ellen-Rae Cachola, Lizelle Festejo, Annie Fukushima, Gwyn Kirk, and Sabina Perez, “Gender and U.S. Bases in Asia-Pacific” March 14, 2008 (Foreign Policy in Focus, [www.fpif.org](http://www.fpif.org)).

<sup>219</sup> Martin Manalansan III. argues for the persisting significance of transnational Filipino family ties despite geographical distance and lack of emotional intimacy. See *Global Divas*.

<sup>220</sup> Kenji Yoshino *Covering: The Hidden Assault on our Civil Rights* (Random House, 2006).

within contemporary families as a “system of institutions, investments, and values...much wider and more deeply entrenched than any specific war.”<sup>221</sup>

My own family has a vexed investment in U.S. militarism. In my childhood, our family relied on Military Airlift Command (MAC) flights to visit the Philippines in military cargo planes virtually cost-free to active-duty military personnel (because passenger seats were extremely limited, offered on a “space available” basis, not apportioned with windows, and potentially harmful to your ears without the required ear plugs, for the entire eighteen-hour flight). Yet, even at ten years old visiting the Philippines in 1983 for the first time, my sense of un/belonging as a Filipino child born and raised in the U.S. visiting her ancestral homeland was brought into stark relief. For example, though we lived in military housing which was temporary by rule (where the concern was always if and when we would live in our own, permanent house of choice not subject to military restrictions and locales), I fast realized how differently we lived from extended kin in the barrios of Metro Manila where my relatives’ homes were without the conveniences of plumbing and household sanitation services; the peculiar ways that uncles and aunts would apologize, yet revel in, this eye-opening experience for my younger brother and I whenever we “had to go” or expected a warm shower (though they were delighted we knew what a *tabo* was!).<sup>222</sup> I was deemed “Made in the USA” among relatives even before I arrived in the Philippines (and in random public settings in the Philippines for that matter), let alone when I greeted my family in colloquial “American” English (versus the textbook English taught in schools in the Philippines).

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<sup>221</sup> Ellen-Rae Cachola, Lizelle Festejo, Annie Fukushima, Gwyn Kirk, and Sabina Perez, “Gender and U.S. Bases in Asia-Pacific” March 14, 2008 (Foreign Policy in Focus, [www.fpif.org](http://www.fpif.org)).

<sup>222</sup> A *tabo* (confirm spelling) is used for various toileting and bathing purposes, such as scooping water from a bin or pail.

Furthermore, the trappings we brought with us magnified the distance between us: from the sneakers and clothes my younger brother and I wore that were purchased from the Navy Exchange, to the “Simon Says” and “Merlin” battery-operated games purchased at the military base “Toyland,” all of which (and more) were reluctantly relinquished to uncles, aunts, and cousins who, we were advised, couldn’t buy them there (and only with the promise of purchasing new ones for us upon return to the U.S.). I’ve only returned to the Philippines one other brief time with my family since that first visit (in 1989, when my maternal grandmother passed away) because the cost of returning there is no longer alleviated by (albeit) uncomfortable MAC travel through the U.S. military bases in the Philippines.<sup>223</sup> Needless to say, I still await an opportunity to return; in my mind, my cousins and I are eternally playful kids, just trying not to forget each other by writing short, unfulfilled promises to “K.I.T.” (“keep in touch”) because “you’re 2 Sweet + 2 Be = 4 Gotten” in a small, pale pink “My Melody” Sanrio autograph book with scalloped edges. The momento remains special to me to this day, not only because of the sense of childhood loss and hope preserved in our writings, but because my estranged maternal grandfather bought the autograph book for me during a purposely brief, first-and-last visit with him.<sup>224</sup>

I would be amiss, however, if I located my own militarized family history narrowly in economic, consumptive, and leisurely matters. In order to critically examine the “language of respect” and the gendered circulation of emotional imperatives among militarized Filipino youth whom I interviewed, I must be willing to share in-kind a

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<sup>223</sup> U.S. military bases at Clark and Subic Bay in the Philippines (along with other installations) were closed in 1992.

<sup>224</sup> My maternal grandfather passed away in 1999.

personal counterpoint to the scholarly treatment of gender and militarism, which is predominantly examined as sexual violence against women through the “host communities” or “camp towns” around U.S. bases in the Pacific Rim.<sup>225</sup> As a toddler, my own innocence was violently disrupted by a male relative also enlisted in the U.S. Navy who my parents supported and expected support from in return, especially when my father deployed abroad and my mother worked at a factory. The irony of my mother’s own familial history of violence that shaped her desire to leave the Philippines (as illustrated in the previous chapter) would nonetheless meet unspeakable violence for her own child in the United States. My mother told me (as a teen) that my father responded heroically to accost and rebuke the relative; but familial relationships are so much more complex than would appear, and it fades from my memory exactly when and how the violence ended. Still, my parents handled the situation, and their own emotion-laden responses and silences, the best ways that they could—through devotion to my and my brother’s education and happiness despite many unexpected hardships. I am a second-generation Filipino woman with a unique perspective of militarized childhood, and seek to demonstrate by way of offering my own autobiographic example, how emotions as a lens “to look for and at the gaps” in Filipino immigrant life, can point to the complexities, tensions, and uncertainties of militarized Filipino youth in the imperial center.<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> See Ann-Marie Hilsdon, *Madonnas and Martyrs: Militarism and Violence in the Philippines* (Australia: Allen and Unwin) 1995. For a more extensive analysis of gender and militarism, see also Cynthia Enloe, *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women’s Lives* (Berkeley: University of California Press) 2000. For a discussion of the significance of “camptowns” from the perspective of Korean military brides in the U.S. see also Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America* (New York and London: New York University Press) 2002.

<sup>226</sup> Yen Espiritu “Emotions, Sex, and Money: The Lives of Filipino Children of Immigrants” (unpublished paper) p. 4.



Certainly, my story is neither generalizable to all Filipino military children, nor is it intended to be; rather, I hope sharing it inspires a will in others to listen openly to and to articulate bravely other stories of militarized childhood, such as the ones provided in the next section. The following four narratives were selected from a limited sample of 1.5 and second generation participants to illustrate how constructions of masculinity and femininity among militarized Filipino youth in San Diego have beget both “rewards” and “regrets” in and through space and time, from childhood to adulthood.<sup>227</sup> The 1.5 and second generation cohort of Filipino Navy children in my sample are indeed a heterogeneous group that span at least thirty decades, making generalizations of this group unrealistic, if impossible. Thus, these narratives were carefully edited to show how each adult participant imagined his or her own childhood in multidimensional ways, based on memories and reflections far more compelling in the context of individual histories kept in-tact. While each narrative describes a significant relationship to at least one familial figure (i.e. mother, father, sibling, spouse, etc.) that makes militarization tolerable, each narrative also suggests differently how and why a “language of respect” for “family” both enables and troubles *demilitarized* articulations of “Filipino-ness.”

*Steve Franco: “A Military Career Would Not Be In My Future”*

*Steve Franco is a second-generation Filipino American, born and raised in San Diego, California. His narrative is helpful in showing how militarized childhood facilitated his sense of social citizenship in domestic matters (i.e. shopping, leisure*

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<sup>227</sup> My sample size was limited to due the range of ages and life stages of the 1.5 and second generation in my interview cohort of participants. In some cases, children were too young to be interviewed; in other cases, they were no longer living in the area.

*activity, affording remittances and goods to family abroad, etc.); however, his narrative also suggests the limits of militarization through his sympathies for military personnel and delayed personal ambitions. In this narrative, then, familial “success” is symbolized by the rewards of purchasing power to support family members in the U.S. and in the Philippines, and the prospect of educational opportunities. “Regrets” are symbolized variously as loss of family intimacy.*

By fourth or fifth grade, that’s when I realized we can get “on Base” with military ID cards—get to the Exchange or Commissary and no sales tax! Of course, when you’re a kid, and you have an allowance, you want to buy stuff! Oh, you’re a Navy kid! We weren’t typical; we didn’t move around that much. We were lucky. How am I going to finish school? Make new friends? I didn’t have to worry about that. I am closer to my mom than my dad though. My uncle from Los Angeles, and other military families and neighbors, helped out when my dad was on Westpac in the 1980s. We went to military picnics...

I resisted all the attempts to learn Tagalog when I was a kid, according to my folks. I can understand, but I can’t speak it fluently. I will always have that connection to the Philippines though. It’s home. There’s always a connection there since relatives still live there. When my mom was packing a *balikbayan* box for my grandfather, she asked if I had money to buy Ensure for my grandfather because he is really sick. Without even a thought, I pulled out my wallet and some cash and I said, “Here you go!” I mean, I know I’m Americanized, but this is my blood and...a way I can help. The way I think of it, I don’t speak Tagalog or have a “Filipino” way of thinking; but, at the same time, I call myself Filipino American...not American. Part of me is a little bothered by how

American I act; but you act the way you know how...it's weird. Whenever I go to Seafood City Market, part of me feels like I have a connection to the Philippines because I'm an American-born Filipino. I'm debating if I should take Tagalog courses now that I'm back in school.

I wanted to have my own place by the time I finished college, but I live at home. I began as a community college student and transferred to San Diego State. When I was in my first year at Miramar College a military recruiter called me over about whether I would be interesting in joining up, but I knew in my heart my answer would be no. I figured if he wanted to take the time, I would listen; so he showed me the training video. He saw the look on my face of boot camp, and the recruiter knew after that look I didn't want to join! My parents knew because of our experiences, and of other families and friends, that a military career would not be in my future.

I work as medical administrative support at Balboa Naval Hospital; basically, doing general customer service. One of my "aunts" recommended me for the job. I came in as a temp. I was with the temp. service for five long years, so when this position opened up, I went for it. I still want to stay with the hospital actually. I deal with new young enlistees in the military, and of course, established folks; but, we need more work in helping these young people out with psychological help when they come back from war because of the suicide cases. We have several social workers at the hospital, and I asked one of them how to get into a social work program to help these guys out. At the same time, I'm wondering where are the people showing them how to cope? Where are those leading by example? To deal, I just go out and refresh by walking...

*Nolasco Suarez: “Let Me See Your Emotions”*

*Nolasco Suarez is a 1.5 generation Filipino American who migrated to the U.S. at the age of sixteen in 1971, on the occasion of his father’s pending retirement from the U.S. Navy. He is the oldest of six children, and spent most of his childhood in the Philippines. His narrative is helpful in showing how militarized childhood in the Philippines afforded the rewards of social prestige and eventual migration to the U.S.; yet, the loss of familial intimacy magnifies unmet masculinized expectations of him to consolidate social citizenship for the family. He has spent most of his adulthood in San Diego.*

I was in the Philippines and I see some kids greeting their dads after work, and I wonder, what that feels like! I realized in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, my dad’s occupation is in the military, and had to be away for quite a while, so that’s why I learned how to deal with it. They never really tell me that; I just learned as I grow to listen when they talk—my mom and my grandma. If we’re lucky, maybe once a year we see him; sometimes, once every two years. No other kids like me, so it was hard. And then I would hear some people would say, “Oh, that’s the kid whose dad is in the Navy!” like it’s a big thing for them. It was a popular idea then; but at the same time, in the back of my mind, those kids that have their dads coming home from work, stuff like that...I guess as you grow up you realize that you miss that, you know? I was just like wondering what’s it feel like? And then you grow up and you realize, damn, I miss a lot.

I don’t really get to know him well, because every time I see him, you know, I grown up a little bit. All I can picture of him is being tall, and never really get to know how his temper is, how his emotion is. I can’t even remember how long he

stayed....maybe if we do spend time as a family, he would take us out, all the kids, including the youngest uncles (since my dad's younger brothers, ten in all, are around the same age as me and my brothers). We would go out to the beach with my grandma, my mom, some of my aunts on my dad's side. We did that only once, and it was special. But even now, I'm still, you know, trying to know him, you know?

I guess I'm seeing him through my mom's feelings towards him, you know what I mean? Because to tell you the truth, I never really know this man; but since my mom and me are always together, I try to relate my feelings towards my mom—how she's feeling towards him. If she's happy, then I'm happy. It's always mom. Always mom. Every time I want something, I always ask my mom. I never ever ask my dad for something, you know? She's like the bridge towards him, because I don't really know how to deal with him. I never really got to know him that well. I don't think we even spend that much time when he was visiting. He's got his friends, other relatives, and all that. I know him more than before—since my mom passed away, I try to be close to him, and talk to him and stuff like that. I'm trying to make him feel like it's ok, like he can talk to me. He doesn't really say much, especially to his kids. I don't know how it is with my other siblings...I didn't grow up with him.

As I grow up, I been asking myself, too, what's a dad supposed to do? My uncles they always really close to me. Maybe I was the first *apo* on my dad's side, the first grandkid. I got spoiled, so I felt close to them. But for role model, no. I was wild. I was lost, to tell you the truth. Boys still need a father-figure to look up to, because mother can only give so much, especially for a boy. There's a time that a boy needs a man to look up to, and at the same time to guide them. So, towards my son, I feel I'm over-doing it. I

didn't have my dad to tell me how school is. He wasn't there to ask me how was my school day, "Is everything ok?" You know, stuff like that. Sometimes your kid needs that. They may not know that they need to hear that, but as they grow up they would realize, "Wow, my dad used to ask me that every time I come home from school," stuff like that. That he cares. He might sound nosy, or stuff like that, but no. Maybe I over-do it, especially when it comes to hurt with stuff, like a girlfriend. I say, "are you ready to do it my way?" Let him learn it, experience it, everybody has to go through it; but I'm so overprotective over him not to get hurt. I try to tell him what I experience. Just everyone has to go through that. Have to learn and hopefully not make the same mistake. They say that if you're mistreated in your childhood, you're gonna mistreat your kids or your family or stuff like that...but not me...at least, I try to take my family first before everything else, but I'm not perfect.

When I go to high school here, I was 16 years old...prime of my life. And then...dropped in the middle of this island with different people, different nationality, different culture, and can hardly speak their language. For a teenager to experience that...I can't even say that to my dad. I remember he took me to school, and registered me. That was it. And then, from day one, I have to take two buses to get to school. Everything's new to you, and I'm scared to talk because my English not that good, because the people laugh at me; so everything was inside me. I go to school, I come home, and not once say, "how's your school?" or "how do you do?" especially for a kid like that from a different country.

I just try to fit in, and never really. I was third year high school when I left the Philippines...and they put me in 10<sup>th</sup> grade when I started over here. This was July 1971. They went by your age. It was a bad experience. It could have been good, a little better, if

there was some support; but I guess my mom couldn't give that because she's in the same boat. She didn't know what to expect either. I would get upset, mad, to be in charge because my dad was never there. We got here in the U.S., and he's pretty much working every time, and when he comes home, he never really talk to us anyway. I had to protect my brothers and sisters... At the time, I never even thought about that then; just when I became a father, I realize I can't do that to my son. I mean, end up...seems like nobody cares.

Finally, I'm just ditching school, hanging out; because I said to myself, I can go to school everyday and do my best, or completely mess around and no one will know the difference. Boom—it's like, here you go, you're on your own. If I did something wrong, my mom would say, "you know your dad's gonna get mad when he find out about this." So my mom would keep that a secret so my dad won't find out—to protect me. But you know what, sometimes I feel like tell him! I want to hear it! You know? I was here, and talk to me! Let me see your emotions! My mom didn't mean any bad things, just sometimes you have to do things in a hard way, you know what I mean? Tell him I did this! Maybe that's what I want to hear! Maybe that's why I keep doing it! You know what I mean? I want him to talk to me. I want him to approach me. Talk to me face-to-face. Man to man. Find out how it feels like, you know? Because even if I do something wrong—nothing! That's why I was doing it over and over again, messing up and stuff... and then my mom would hide it from him. She only tried to be peacemaker for the whole family, you know, because she knows that us five kids didn't grow up with my dad, and my dad isn't used to us. Can you imagine?

I try to see my dad's point of view, too. He's in the Navy for a long time, almost like he's single even though you're married. No responsibility. All you have to do is send checks every month. As if, the hell with it, here's the check, I do whatever I want. That's why sometimes I think that way, too. I try to understand his side: being single, then next thing you know you have five kids and a wife you have to put a roof over their heads, you know? Must be a shock! Wake up in the morning, next thing you know they running around need shoes, need clothes, have to go to school. What the hell happen? He only want to better his life and his future family, that why he join the U.S. Navy. Being in the US was great—money growing on trees. So for him to join the U.S. Navy, he meant good. But is it really worth it, to be away from your family? Would they understand it? Would that really better your life in the long run? Would you be a better person? Would your kid grow up to be a better person since you're not there to guide him? Lots of pluses and minuses, you know? I could complain about what I experience when I was a kid, but there's always people in the Philippines who will give up their left hand, right foot, or toes to be here right now. They'll do anything. So who am I to complain, you know what I mean, about my younger days? It's really difficult.

*Cynthia Alcala: "You Just Come Back To It"*

*Cynthia Alcala is a second-generation Filipino American women raised in San Diego, who is married to a second-generation Filipino American military serviceman. Her narrative is helpful in showing how militarized childhood shaped her empathies for her beloved's decision to join the military as a young adult, even though she herself did not necessarily desire military family life in adulthood. In other words, her role as a*



*military spouse is significant in co-constructing masculinity for her husband. The reward of providing a financially and emotionally secure life for their child is eclipsed by the demands of a military career.*

I was surrounded by Navy brats; now I am the only one who has a military ID. When you grow up, you don't want to be a Navy family, but you repeat the same thing. I remember my girlfriends in high school want military guys. Since their parents worked at the base, they would go with them and meet military guys. I was like, whatever! That was my thing! It's so funny because when my husband and I first started dating, four years into our relationship, we were both not into school. We were trying to figure out what to do—and he said, "I'm gonna join the Navy," and I was like, "OK...if that's what you want to do for our future, fine. I'll support you. I'm not gonna say no." Weird, OK! So, yes, you want to steer away from military life, but at the same time, you just come back to it.

I think the most challenging thing, if I had to choose, would be the deployment. I remember...our first real separation. You come back together, and you have to learn how to be together again, and get into so many fights. It makes it worse when there is a war. I watched the news everyday. If I go to childbirth classes, the women would see my husband is gone, and I am sobbing just because he's gone for a little bit. He came home though in time for our child's birth.

We been here three years now, and after that, we're up in the air. My husband's point of view is he wants our child to be in a stable environment so that's why if we can't get located anywhere near here in San Diego, he'll probably just get out of the military—which is ok, because at that time I'll have a good job. I can support us.

If there's one word I can give you, to relate to other people...we always say this to each other...sacrifice. That is like the key word to everything. You're always sacrificing something in your life, whether it's time, a relationship, money, a social life...it comes back to sacrifice. But I think it comes back to that moment, too. If he decides to stay in, of course I would support him, but to go back to Chicago or Virginia...we would have to decide as a family whether to go now while our child is still young...because once school starts, that's a big factor. I remember what it's like to leave all the friends I knew...

*Eleonor Castillo: "That Was the Norm for Us"*

*Eleonor Castillo has spent most of her formative years in San Diego. Her narrative is helpful in showing how militarism and familialism become inextricably linked in defining Filipino military childhood as "normative" despite various intrusions on family life; however, feminized expectations of gender roles reveal competing demands of "success" for young Filipino women and how social citizenship is to be achieved.*

My sister's husband is a Marine, and he was deployed to Iraq last year. So my parents understand, and they can really support the kids. They spend a lot of time here at the house. They support that. What's really amazing, though my brother-in-law as a Camp Pendleton Marine is being sent back, is that my sister has us and can really identify with my mom. The kids are experiencing war as young kids, so it's interesting how between the generations there's this incredible link. The military has played such a role in my family's history.

For holidays, we would go to the ship. We always remember Navy cookies because they were so huge! Bring back the Navy cookies! I always remember going back to the ship: when my dad would deploy, and come back, you'd go early in the morning to see him...but to me, that's how my family was. It didn't seem strange. Because when we were growing up, there were a lot of military families in our area; so for us, it was like everybody's dad was in the Navy! A lot of our Filipino friends and family had moms who were left. That was the norm for us. I do remember we moved a lot, but that seemed normal to us. And I think since we were four kids, we were each other's best friends. We were all so close in age. So even though we moved a lot, we always had each other. You never felt like you missed anything because our family was always together. You always had your family. My mom told us we have to stay together; if Dad moves, we're gonna move, because we have to stay together. We always had each other.

When my dad was away, we always looked forward to letters. We would tape each other and send those, too. My mom would tape us during Christmas. We always remembered when he came home from deployment he brought stuff. But I think the time away, especially when you're young, didn't affect us because my mom was here. She always ran the house. So it's not like things fell apart when my dad was deployed. So when I was younger, and we had each other, you didn't think about anything. I know as I was growing older, I was the second oldest, but my mom put me in charge. I was responsible for watching my brothers, making sure everything was in order. I was treated like the oldest child even though I wasn't. So I had to make sure everything was in order, especially when my mom worked part-time... She'd call from work and check if things were done. But for me it was just natural. It was more like I have to do this because

Dad's not home. I would have to check their homework and referee fighting. As we got older, and we got more independent, cultural values conflict with Western values; and as a teenager, those don't sometimes gel, and that would cause situations.

I think the hard part was when we were in high school because my parents raised us very traditional, which was you're gonna go to college and have a career, then you can worry about boys. So, when my dad would deploy, they were very strict with me and my sister. When I wanted to go out to go to dances, do things teenagers would do, it was really difficult. When my dad was back, I would be allowed to go; but really, we were never allowed to do social stuff in high school because you have to focus on school, and don't worry about boys. I remember there was a time when I had a boyfriend in high school, and I wanted to go out with my friends...and my dad was deployed, I came home late once, and my mom said, "wait until your dad gets home." I shuddered at that. I was always responsible to my mom, but when my dad came home, he would put his foot down! Again, being raised by a traditional Filipina it was not acceptable. It was like, no. You're going to study. You're going to get scholarships, go to college, get married, stuff like that.

What really sticks out was when we moved to Washington State. That was really hard because in our neighborhood there wasn't ethnic diversity. I remember moving in when I was in fifth grade and really feeling a lot of racism at that school, and in the neighborhood, which was odd since growing up in California...we were never picked on for being different. I remember we pulled in, and the kids next door called us "niggers" when we were kids. And I remember that because... you feel like you're the All-American family especially because your dad is in the Navy, and earned the rank of an

officer. That's when I really realized that, wow, Dad really made it in his profession, because all the other families were Caucasian in officers' housing which was different than enlisted. I didn't know that growing up in San Diego. So we went there and we were separated...where we lived, it was far from enlisted housing. Coming from California where everyone is so different and you interact with everybody...to moving there, and then it carried over to the elementary school... I remember that. There was only one other Filipino family. I remember for the first time, as a kid, to feel different. That year I really relied on my brothers and my sister because I got picked on a lot, and you were made to feel different, and you don't understand why as a kid. The only thing that got me through was that my family's there, and I was identified "gifted" in my class, so I was the smart one. That made a lot of kids leave me alone, because, "oh...you're smart."

But I think in terms of "pluses," you get to go to the Exchange and the Commissary! Get an ID card! I remember the day when I had to give up my ID card when I got to college, I felt like I'm not a Navy kid anymore. You just remember growing up: you got a driver's license and a Navy ID card. You got to go bowling, go swimming, and you felt like you're important because you got an ID card. To me it was just so normal. I thought that's how all Filipinos were. And then when I was in college and interned at Washington D.C. and met other Filipinos from different urban professional classes, I remember going, God they're different! Like, the way they look at the world and their children. I came from a military family, and it was different. I began to realize that I had a unique experience...And then, when you study Filipino history, and learn about immigration patterns, how our family was a significant part of military history and San Diego, you just begin to realize a greater Filipino American community

that's even bigger than you. I began to be conscious of the accomplishments of my parents.

## Conclusion

As these profiles reveal, 1.5 and second generation Filipino Navy children deal with competing notions of rewards and regrets throughout the life course. On one hand, “no sales tax” and “ID card privileges” beget the rewards of being “authorized patrons” of a militarized establishment seemingly *made exclusive* to them, and not to ordinary civilians. As children of military personnel they are “authorized patrons” of militarized consumer goods, and have access to militarized locales for work and leisure, with military discounts, especially with a military identification card for dependants. The comments on consumption from participants in this study were for discounts on everyday household goods purchased “on base” and not necessarily for high-ticket or couture items at civilian shopping malls.<sup>228</sup> Such militarized consumption “at a discount” is meaningful for working class military families who must deal resourcefully with “consolidating” and “consuming” social citizenship despite the various intrusions imposed on family life—one sutured to affirm a masculine framework of family formation.

This isn't to suggest, however, that some participants are *not* enticed by provocative displays of wealth, and may even aspire to, or feel deserving of, middle-class rewards facilitated by military affiliation. Military recruitment strategies play into fantasies of conspicuous consumption with fantastic displays of wealth that promise the

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<sup>228</sup> A Channel 8 news report on the Grand Reopening of MCAS Miramar's Marine Exchange (Sept/ Oct 2007) featured first-generation Filipino women shopping excitedly for couture Coach-brand purses who boasted on camera about how the deals were “Better than Macy's!” and without sales tax.

admiration of peers and personal fulfillment.<sup>229</sup> Chandra Mohanty points to the underside of “success” as “capitalist citizenship,” where social belonging is defined in capitalist/corporate terms, and not as social responsibility, public service, or justice;” however, I contend that militarized family experiences can engender more empathy and social responsibility for the everyday effects of militarization in everyday life—not just in the U.S. but in the Philippines as well.<sup>230</sup> Because the Filipino Navy children in my sample have lived through militarized circumstances, some have a sense of social responsibility to military personnel, other military families, and extended families left in the Philippines.

Still, notions of “family loyalty” can betray notions of success among multigenerational Filipino Navy families. For example, one interesting area of further research is whether and how the daughters of Filipino Navy families fulfill heteronormative imperatives to be more “womanly” (i.e. to marry and bear children) in light of restrictions placed on them throughout childhood (within families and larger society), and how “marrying out” or “marrying beneath” familial expectations alters the “language of respect” between generations. Alternately, how do sons fulfill heteronormative imperatives to be more “manly?” Indeed, there remain plenty of as-yet unspeakable stories of militarized childhood, and how masculine and feminine expectations are embedded in raising Filipino military children. In a foreboding moment during one interview, an older first generation man in my sample mutters, “*All* boys like

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<sup>229</sup> The Mira Mesa Street Fair in 2006 featured a “decked out” red hummer in U.S. Marines symbolism as well as other military vehicles and artillery for fair participants to tour or handle up-close.

<sup>230</sup> Chandra Mohanty, *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* (Durham and London: Duke University Press) 2003.

girls...” in response to an inquiry about same-sex relationships in the next generation of Filipino Americans.



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