

DECONSTRUCTING NORMS: AN EXAMINATION OF GENDERED LANGUAGE IN BOY ABUNDA'S WHY CAN'T WE HAVE A GAY PRESIDENT?

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Abstract

This study examines the speech content of Boy Abunda's Why Can't We Have a Gay President using the Model of Feminist Theory according to Jo Ann Arinder. To investigate traditional gender norms and expectations, the study looks at the language used by Boy Abunda in his speech, "Why Can't We Have a Gay President?" It also aims to identify the gender issues raised in the speech and how feminist theory could help with comprehension. Furthermore, to identify themes and subthemes regarding gender issues and the deconstruction of Boy Abunda, the research study employed a content analysis approach. The results provide insight into how Boy Abunda's presentation of gender issues and language disrupts traditional standards.

Keywords: *Feminist Theory; Gender Issues; Content Analysis*

INTRODUCTION

Gender is associated with power, and it is evident in private sectors, like in households to the public domain in the political field of making decisions. Due to the deeply rooted societal norms, expectations, and historical frameworks, the majority selectively favored men whom they portray as tough and dominant identity and treat unfairly those individuals who do not conform to traditional gender roles. Historically, political and societal power has been concentrated in the hands of men. This historical gender bias has left a lasting impact, with men dominating positions of power, leadership, and decision-making. As a result, women, transgender individuals, and other gender-diverse individuals have faced systemic discrimination and exclusion in politics. Gendered language is closely connected to power dynamics within society. According to studies, language can encode power and power is created through language. An important factor that hinders the emergence of an openly gay presidential candidate lies in the stark underrepresentation of LGBTQIA+ individuals in political leadership. When compared to their heterosexual counterparts, openly gay politicians experience significantly lower visibility, which can lead to reduced public exposure and support for a presidential candidate who identifies as LGBTQIA+. Boy Abunda's visibility as an openly gay public figure in the Philippines is crucial for representation. He serves as a role model for LGBTQIA+ individuals in a society where LGBTQIA+ rights have faced challenges, and many still face discrimination.

Boy Abunda's speech was the focus of this study. His speech at the 2016 TED Talk for Ateneo De Manila University, entitled, "Why Can't We Have a Gay President?" is a thought-provoking speech where Boy Abunda spoke about the ills experienced by the LGBTQ community, especially that of his association. Aspiring to make the present accessible to everyone, Boy Abunda explored the triumphs and challenges of the gay people in his pursuit of taking and proclaiming their places in the political world. Eugenio Romerica Abunda Jr. , popularly known as Boy Abunda, is a Filipino professor, television host, publicist , talent manager and speaker . He earned the title "Asia's King of Talk" due to his prolific career in the entertainment industry and after his defunct program, the Bottomline was hailed as the Best Talk Show for 2011 in the 16th Asian TV Awards. Boy Abunda is openly gay and has been an

influential advocate and speaker on LGBTQIA+ issues, as well as a prominent figure in Filipino showbiz.

This research, titled *"Deconstructing Norms: An Examination of Gendered Language in Boy Abunda's 'Why Can't We Have a Gay President?'"* embarks on an exploration of the significance of linguistic choices within the context of discussions concerning LGBTQIA+ individuals in positions of political leadership. This study aims to deconstruct and critically analyze the way gendered language is employed in the selected speech. It seeks to uncover the nuances and clear messages that shape how society views the possibility of LGBTQIA+ individuals holding high political positions. In a world where openly identifying as LGBTQIA+ and aspiring to political leadership is a topic of significant discussion, this analysis of gendered language becomes especially relevant and important. Abunda goes on to discuss how society often judges leaders based on their sexual orientation rather than their qualifications or abilities. He argues that this mindset perpetuates discrimination and undermines the principles of democracy and equal opportunity. By raising this issue, Abunda encourages readers to reflect on their own prejudices and consider what truly matters when selecting leaders. He also encourages the broader range of perspectives and experiences to shape policies. Boy Abunda's statement serves as a call to action for society to challenge its preconceived notions about LGBTQ+ individuals' ability to hold high office. By breaking down these barriers, we can move closer towards true equality where all individuals have an equal chance at becoming presidents based on merit rather than sexual orientation.

Gender is one of the most evident indications of social disparities in today's fast-paced world because it determines or influences how certain group members view one another. Whether a person is born male or female, the social conventions that uphold feminine and masculine manners and standard perceptions have a significant impact on them. One aspect of the gender dichotomy, which also encompasses a number of identities that affect the LGBTQIA+ community, is the binary framework used to describe gender. The positive effects of LGBTQIA+ presence on the majority, or those who categorize as straight, often leads to the creation of allies who go on to cheerlead for the rights of the minority. As LGBTQIA+ politicians are almost never in the majority, they rely on straight allies to enhance and guarantee the community's rights. Signal gets to the heart of what we know about personal contact. "When you have a close, meaningful relationship with members of another group, it's simply much harder to embrace negative stereotypes about members of that group, or to look the other way when their members are mistreated". In the study of Afrin N and Afrin A (2018), In all known societies, gender is a key construct, involving binary distinctions such as man–woman, male–female, masculine–feminine, and in all known societies language plays a crucial role in constructing and maintaining these distinctions. Women's and men's language usage has been found to vary in terms of grammar and pronunciation as well as in terms of conversational strategies such as hedging and turn-taking.

Furthermore, as highlighted in Jule's piece of literature (2018), language is often considered to be a neutral and passive phenomenon whose main function is to communicate or reflect whatever is happening in society. Nevertheless, language is not value free; language can be a source for good or a tool of oppression. It is not just a reflection of society, but is involved in the construction and perpetuation of social realities. Moreover, grappling with the wide variety of ways that language reflects society's attitude concerning gender is understanding gender and language. We can and do use language to change attitudes and develop society and, thus, we do change our private understandings of our own realities with the development of new words, phrases, diction, etc. Thinking about language and gender is related to feminist concerns of stopping any continued systematic inequalities that exist between genders. This does not equate with an arbitrary political goal, but to human rights. Even those who see differences between men and women with regards to the roles of leadership can't deny that

language is a key tool that can and is used to create a certain understanding of things. It is also stated here that, in any event, a key foundation in the field of gender and language use now is the understanding of power relations as a significant aspect to all social interactions.

This study, "Deconstructing Norms: An Examination of Gendered Language in Boy Abunda's "Why Can't We Have a Gay President?" employs a feminist theoretical framework to analyze the language used in Boy Abunda's thought-provoking speech in ted talk, with a particular focus on how it reflects and reinforces gender norms. Feminist theory helps us analyze how gender is portrayed and expressed by recognizing that language, in all its forms, is influenced by our society's power and gender dynamics. The use of language and the message it conveys can either contest or sustain prevailing conventions and disparities. By utilizing a feminist perspective, the researchers aim to shed light on how Abunda's narrative might subvert or perpetuate stereotypes, ultimately contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the role language plays in shaping our perceptions of gender and power.

The research has objectives that are aimed to be achieved at the end of the study. This study sought to answer the questions below:

1. How is Boy Abunda's language used in the speech 'Why Can't We Have a Gay President?' challenge traditional gender norms and expectations?
2. What are the gender issues present in the speech concerning gender, and how does feminist theory help us understand it?

METHODOLOGY

This section presents a detailed and clearer discussion of the research method to be used in this study. The discussion will specifically deal with the research design, research instrument, and method of analysis to be utilized.

Research Design

This study will use a qualitative descriptive research design to explain and analyze the issue of gendered language in Boy Abunda's speech, its implications, and its potential to disrupt existing societal norms surrounding gender and sexual orientation. This investigation will include extensive observations, transcriptions, and analysis of the events. According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldaa (2014), qualitative research is a type of research procedure that generates descriptive data in the form of words and not in the form of percentages or materials.

Research Material/Instrument

Data will be cited from the video of Boy Abunda's talk about Why Can't We Have a Gay President? The said video is uploaded to an online video-sharing platform, YouTube, particularly the channel TEDxTalks. According to Alnasser (2023), TED (Technology, Entertainment, and Design) offers a venue for individuals to persuade a larger audience with their ideas. TED lectures were originally presented by notable people from a specific region of the world, such as California or Vancouver.

The researchers will analyze the 17-minute and 10-second video of Boy Abunda's TEDxTALK, titled 'Why Can't We Have a Gay President?' as the primary research material for this study. This video will serve as the central source for examining the use of gendered language and its impact within the context of LGBTQ+ representation in politics.

Method of Analysis

With the 1961 edition of Webster's Dictionary of the English Language, the term "content analysis" was added to its vocabulary. This edition officially defines content analysis as the "analysis of the manifest and latent content of a body of communicated material (such as a book or film) through classification, tabulation, and evaluation of its key symbols and

themes, all to ascertain its meaning and probable effect." Content analysis aims to reveal underlying patterns and meanings to gain a better understanding of how information and messages are communicated in textual and visual formats. Content analysis is a unique method since it can be explained without directly asking people; instead, it provides a method that respects privacy while reflecting the complexity of societal and cultural narratives, making it an indispensable tool in a variety of academic and practical.

The study will use content analysis to thoroughly explore and analyze the documentary's content, with an emphasis on the usage of stereotypes, and implications about societal norms and LGBTQ+ representation in politics. The researchers will thoroughly examine Boy Abunda's speech to find instances of gender issues, stereotypes, or biases that may be embedded within the discourse. The study intends to explore the intricacies of language use by adopting a comprehensive coding scheme and looking into the specific words and phrases used by the speaker. This method will allow for a more in-depth examination of how these language factors contribute to the overall narrative and may shape perceptions of gender-related themes. This comprehensive analysis will give information on the prevalence and influence of gendered terminology, stereotypes, or biases, ultimately contributing to a more educated and critical examination of Boy Abunda's speech content.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involves three stages that will aid the purpose of summarizing the collected data and arranging these in a manner that responds to the research questions and objectives. According to Troot and Bloomer (1998) cited in Akunna (2012), data analysis typically involves the editing, classification, and interpretation of the collected data.

1. Data editing/Identification - The raw data will be further examined to detect errors and omissions and if there are, thus will be corrected.
2. Data Classification - The speech of Boy Abunda's TEDxTALK, titled 'Why Can't We Have a Gay President?' with a duration of 17 minutes and 10 seconds will be analyzed to determine how the language used by Boy Abunda in the speech 'Why Can't We Have a Gay President?' challenge traditional gender norms and expectations and what are the power dynamics present in the speech concerning gender. It will be classified according to the feminist theory of Arinder (n.d.) that begins by (1) identifying the ideologies and systems that oppress and discriminate against people, such as sex, gender, race, differences, ability, and others. (2) Then discrimination and exclusion will be recognized by these various causes or overlapping identities. (3) Power and Oppression will be acknowledged and disrupted, and (4) generate knowledge sources and adopt proactive steps to promote equality, understanding, and better change. After utilizing feminist theory, the researchers will employ a content analysis to generate themes and subthemes about the generated identities.
3. Data Interpretation - Then, the researchers will analyze the data including the process and methods on how the use of the language of Boy Abunda challenges traditional norms and expectations and what the power dynamics present in his speech concerning gender and how feminist theory helps us understand gender roles and biases in political context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study examines the gendered language in Boy Abunda's Why Can't We Have a Gay President, particularly how Boy Abunda's language is used in speech to challenge traditional gender norms and expectations, as well as the gender issues present in the speech concerning gender and how feminist theory helps us understand it.

To accomplish this objective, the study employs the Model of Feminist Theory According to Jo Ann Arinder in a content analysis. The subsequent section presents the data collected in response to research questions, along with sample extracts and explanations of various themes identified in the speech.

1. Refuting Preconceived Notions and Gender Prejudices

Mr. Boy Abunda started his speech with a background of his personal experience growing up as someone who is not under the binary framework. He discusses several instances where stereotyping and coercion based on preferences and tasks are imposed on their gender. This particular approach and idea underpin gender stereotyping or prejudice, which involves assuming and oversimplifying the actions, behaviors, choices, and perceptions of individuals to simply adhere to what the majority considers standard for a particular group and image to reinforce agreement and acceptance.

Extract 1

“As a child, as a young boy I was told many things. I was told to be a good boy and I was also told to love nanay and tatay and that I was told to love my country, the Philippines. I was also told to love and honor God above all. Ginawa ko po yan. I did all those. As a young boy I was also told to play basketball. I tried. I tried with all the bones in my body but I just didn't have the rhythm. I didn't have the timing of the alacrity of basketball players. I was a failure. As a young boy I was also told to like a young normal girl because young normal boys played basketball and like young normal girls. Again with bravery with a lot of prayers I tried to like a young normal girl. Again, I was a failure.”

The first extract pertains to his own sufferings and the pressure he experienced in following the preferences of others toward him to behave and act appropriately by his gender identity and the biological and physical attributes he possessed. He asserted that he also forced himself to be as robust and alert as basketball players should be, as the basketball game is something straight men should play and serve as something for which they have an innate talent or source of entertainment. Abunda claimed, however, that despite his trying to conform to what the people around him ought him to do, it is within him that he has no aptitude or enthusiasm for performing this activity. Moreover, in his story of his personal experience, he stated the ability and the natural phenomena where young men are attracted to young women, and he admitted that he failed in doing that as well because of his personal preferences; it is not on him to like someone naturally who is biologically opposite in his gender.

Extract 2

“but aren't gays supposed to be cowards? you you guys back off from fights, diba naririnig na ho natin ng madalas na kapag hindi ka lumaban dapat ah bakla ka, anybody who backs up from the fight is supposed to be gay.”

The extract presents a biased implication to people who are gays by making the attribute of being a coward a standard image of them. It was mentioned that gays are unable to handle difficult circumstances and will merely back down from conflicts or disturbances. Gay people are typically perceived as having a feminine disposition that heavily suggests that they are incapable of going above and beyond in terms of handling demanding responsibilities.

Extract 3

“Somebody told me, boy, I have so much respect for you. I love gays. You're just so funny. I can't imagine a world without gays. You're just the best comedian in the world, and you excel in the creative endeavors. You're the best hairstylist or the best

eyebrows stylist. You're the best fashion designers. I said excuse me, we can be many and we can do anything."

This notion adheres to how people see gays as people who have a naturally developed sense of humor and whose main talents revolve around either being comedians or experts in the world of creative endeavors, like being a hairstylist, eyebrow stylist, or fashion designer. The statement implies that gay people are just capable of performing tasks that are only light in terms of physical attributes and strength since gay people are simply vulnerable. They usually have the image that they cannot deal with activities that require a lot of energy and strength, and that they tend to only follow and perform activities as fashion designers, stylists, and comedians. Many people have the impression, particularly in the Philippines where gay employment options are limited, that gay people work primarily as entertainers or beautifiers. However, when a gay person holds a job that deviates from the preconceived standards that society imposes, people are initially shocked and denigrate them. All in all, this merely highlighted the ways in which homosexual people's expression of their skills, intelligence, and abilities is restricted due to the stereotyped conventional job description to which they are restricted.

Extract 4

"and then somebody said but, boy, I guess you're supposed to be half Men and half women and you're supposed to be trapped in somebody else's body. I said no we're not half half. We're whole, and we're not trapped in somebody else's Island. For you to know you have to be me, but since you cannot, let me tell you that we are not half, we're whole."

When people conceive of LGBT people, the belief that they are either people who are hidden or trapped from bodies that are half women and half men has always been present. The speaker, Mr. Abunda, highlights that being a part of a predefined binary spectrum does not imply that a gay person is divided by these. The established gender roles that society has imposed throughout history are mostly covered in this extract. Mr. Abunda discusses the concepts of division and completeness. He argues that although the categories serve to characterize the individuals, they do not change the fact that they are complete in their true sense.

Extract 5

"Diba naririnig ho natin sa oh ayan sama ka ng sama sa mga kababaihan, di magtatagal magiging bakla ka, oh ayang anak mo pinasama mo sa mga babae naging bakla tuloy."

According to the extract, a person's gender expression at a young age is influenced by the majority's preconceived notions about making friends and acquaintances. This remark especially addresses the idea that a young male who plays or associates excessively with young girls would possibly grow up to be gay since they will be influenced or modeling conduct that young girls partake in. This specific extract demonstrates how people infer someone's sexual orientation based on their environment and the people they interact with most frequently in their everyday life.

Extract 6

"Some parents actually allow the young lesbian daughters to be raped because they believe that rape can cure lesbianism. In 1973, homosexuality has been stricken out from the diagnostics and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. We are not an ailment, we're not a disease."

This methodology takes into account the extremely concerning and detrimental circumstances that LGBTQ+ individuals face and through the hands already with those people who should supposedly be those who support them and love them despite their

preferences, but unfortunately, they are the ones who put them in a situation that can deteriorate various aspects of their lives.

The terrible content of the section starts out with parents allowing their daughters to be sexually assaulted under the implausible theory that having intercourse with someone of a different gender might change someone's sexual orientation. Additionally, as being gay or lesbian is listed under the Statistical Manual of Disorders, it was explained in detail how being a non-binary person is regarded as having a mental illness. Abunda challenges this idea, arguing that being gay or a lesbian is not a disease and that those who identify as such do not need to be cured because, in the first place, their beliefs are personal. They shouldn't let anything or anyone tell them who they should be or what to do to get better.

Extract 7

“I said why can't we have a gay president? and my friend said because gays are supposed to be promiscuous, they salivate at the sight of flesh, the Predators, they prey on young boys, I said, excuse me, some gays are promiscuous, some women are promiscuous, some men are promiscuous. Promiscuity is not a gay monopoly, and then, even beauty queens drink, and then, somebody said, but isn't homosexuality a curse? I said no, we're a blessing.”

This passage presents the notion that gay people are promiscuous. This notion carries the harmful assumption that gays are inherently liberated and untamed. Accordingly, their wildness also includes the way they behave with young boys, which essentially serves as justification for their role as pedophiles and their ability to coerce boys into hanging out with them. It was also suggested that, particularly in the sarcastic statement of how beauty queens even drink, this refers to how a person can cope with activities or fields that go beyond standard or traditional preconceptions, regardless of background or title. According to the passage's overall meaning, one of the key reasons we can't have a gay president is emphasized in the challenges that gay people experience in leadership position as a result of discrimination and stereotypes held by the majority in their image, such as being promiscuous and predatory.

Extract 8

“and then somebody said isn't homosexuality a sin? don't you commit a sin when you express your homosexual lava, I said I'm sorry as far as I know I'm not a sin I'm a child of God and I was also created in the image of God. Why Can't we have a gay president?”

The idea suggests that accepting oneself as gay is a sin and goes against God's intention. The speaker counters that this does not prove they are a bad person; rather, it only shows them as individuals. Being spiritual means having divinity and purity in one's personality and character. It is a preference and does not fit the stereotypical definition of homosexuality. Furthermore, just because someone does not identify as straight does not imply that they do not have a strong spiritual trust in God. Essentially, a person's religious beliefs or aspects of their system do not completely influence their ability to run for office or obtain a position of leadership.

2. Instigating Transformative Change Through Social Reform

The speaker covered a wide range of situations in which they have had to fight for their rights and deal with prejudice against women and LGBTQ+ people. The entire idea is connected to the social reform movement, which is characterized by a coordinated and cooperative attempt to uphold rights, confront social norms, resolve problems, and bring about changes to societal norms that cause harm, inequality, and injustice to various people, groups, and their well-being.

Extract 1

"I said no, we're not cowards, we are courageous, we're brave like the Stonewall Riots in 1969 in New York. Transwomen, queer young people, a drag queens, LGBT people who fought valiantly, fearlessly the cruel brutal violent police of New York. We are courageous, we're brave, we're not cowards."

The excerpt supports and legitimizes the general public's preconceived notion that gay people are cowardly individuals who avoid difficult situations and riots. The speaker backs up his claim that homosexuals are daring and brave rather than cowardly by using an example. One instance given is the Stonewall Riots in New York City in 1969.

According to the Research Guides of the Library of Congress article "1969: The Stonewall Uprising," it is clear that the source claims that LGBT people are repressed and rebel against police officers. The police raid on the homosexual bar "Stonewall Inn" was the catalyst for this riot; it wasn't the first time such a raid had occurred, and LGBTQ+ people have a history of being brave enough to oppose the police's dominance. LGBTQ+ individuals are continuously protesting for their freedom of expression and access to many forms of participation in society. In New York, same-sex relationships remained illegal in the 1980s. The speaker, Mr. Abunda, made the strong claim that it is untrue that gay people are all cowards because they oppose the authority of those in positions of power who impose harmful rules in society. This is because of the specific instance in which LGBTQ+ people's convictions remain unwavering despite police and government brutality.

Extract 2

"Belgium had a gay Prime Minister, Ella Di Rupo, Iceland had a lesbian Prime Minister, Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir. My argument is if Iceland and Belgium had gay Prime Minister's, I asked you why can't we have a gay president? let's go to the black slavery movement, yes, there was a certain part in our history as human beings when blacks were treated like beasts, they were animals, they were invisible to be black was to be a sin, they were marketed they were sold in town plazas and marketplaces, they were bartered they were given as gifts but the black slavery movement, the civil rights movement persevered and persisted. In 1963 in Washington DC, the great March happened where Dr. Martin Luther King delivered his "I have a dream" speech. That dream came true in 2008, forty four years later. In 2008 the United States of America elected its first black president in Barack Obama, my argument is if blacks were treated like beasts like animals in the past and today the president of the most powerful country in the world is black, why can't we have a gay president?."

In many situations, but particularly in the area of leadership positions, the predetermined norm of society was altered and modified. By discussing historical events that have enormous value and contributed to the freedom that certain people enjoy now, Mr. Abunda refuted the argument that the country cannot have a gay president, despite the potential and possibilities. The speaker draws attention to the election of non-binary prime ministers in Belgium and Iceland, implying that, should these nations elect gay leaders, it would not be out of the question for the Philippines to follow suit.

Furthermore, the speaker clarified its assertion regarding the potential for LGBT leaders in the nation by citing the advancements in civil rights enjoyed by the Black community. He talked about how black people have spent many years fighting for their rights and defending or showcasing their skills in a range of disciplines, including leadership. Mr. Abunda focuses on the detrimental battles of enslavement, oppression, and dehumanization that Black people endure. He brought up a few well-known black

people, like Barack Obama and Dr. Martin Luther King. The specific reference to Dr. Martin Luther King regarding his speech "I Have a Dream" is only an aspiration to eventually attain complete freedom, veering away from the oppression and discrimination that black people experience. The struggle of black people to obtain the equal rights they rightfully deserve is exemplified by this speech. In which was eventually accomplished when the former U.S. 2008 marked the election of President Barack Obama to the nation's highest office. A black person elected to a position of leadership carrying the highest honor and most arduous duty fulfilled Martin Luther King's dreams.

Extract 3

“The black slavery movement inspired the women's liberation movement, the women's rights movement, the women's suffrage movement. There was a time in our story as human beings, when women were nothing, they were second-class citizens, they were third-class citizens, they were invisible, they had no voices, they could not participate in public debates, they could not even walk beside their men in some cultures because women were shadows and extensions of their men and their fathers. Today, women's movement against violence continues, but women have become Presidents and Prime Minister's, you have Merkel of Germany, Thatcher, Taiwan just elected his first woman president, Tsai Ing-wen, Park Geunhye now is the president of South Korea, this country has had two presidents, President Corazon Aquino and President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. My argument is, if women who were shadows, if women who were extensions of their men and fathers have become presidents and prime ministers, I ask you, why can't we have a gay president?.”

The question of why the Philippines cannot have a gay president is further developed by pointing out how the fight against black slavery encouraged women to fight for their rights and freedom or, in the end, to live freely, based on their own desires and areas of personal potential. The extract discussed the various challenges faced by women, particularly the notion that they are unproductive and have nothing to contribute, which is why society ignores them, views them as unimportant, and labels them as something bad when they participate in society or speak up for themselves. It has been highlighted that historically and in previous generations, women have only had one position in society that of being an extension of their fathers and husbands. At times, this role has even resulted in restrictions on how women behave, particularly toward certain boys. All of these things, however, are gradually but steadily being accomplished because of a persistent, unwavering conviction that upholds what is morally right and right at the same time. This is because the world is constantly changing, and women adapt to positive changes for the betterment of feminism which promotes equal treatment and opportunities for all as well as because of issues that negatively affect women's ability to live whole lives due to imposed standards and limitations.

He cited a number of well-known women to back up his statements about the women's movement. These women demonstrated abilities that went beyond the stereotypes that society imposes on women, essentially demonstrating that women are powerful and capable of more if they are not constrained by social norms. Among the females listed are Corazon Aquino and Gloria Arroyo, the two former female presidents of the Philippines. This suggests that women may hold positions of authority and, even more so, hold the highest positions with great collaboration and conviction to achieve balance and equitable treatment for all. The extract also highlights a number of female presidents from across the nation who refuse to accept the stereotypes of them and keep demonstrating that they are capable of more than just carrying out menial tasks. They

can also be a leader who, through their skills and qualities, uplifts others, exerts significant influence, and assists others.

3. Appraising the Defined Prerequisites for a Leadership Position

It is clear from the speech that the speaker wants to enlighten the audience while also raising the thought-provoking issue, "Why can't the Philippines have a gay president?". He has discussed numerous examples of how social reform movements have changed the nation by combating injustice, prejudice, and norms that are biased against particular groups of people in various content passages. Also, he expresses his opinion and identifies the official requirements for a president or any person wishing to hold a position of authority, identifying that these requirements only apply to specific disciplines and does not necessarily take into account the gender preferences of individuals.

Extract 1

"Natural-born Filipino, registered voter, can read and write, forty years of age, ten year resident, it doesn't say there that you have to be a straight man or a straight woman to be president of this country. In my opinion, we are living in the new age of enlightenment, this is the best time for exploration, this is the best time for discovery, observation and provocation, this is also the best time to challenge, to challenge prejudicial discriminatory, cultural common beliefs, this is also the best time to correct the wrongdoings of colonialism, this is also the best time to ask why can't we have a gay president?"

The statutory requirements for a candidate to be eligible to run for president in the Philippines include being a native-born Filipino, being a registered voter, being literate, being at least 40 years old, and having lived in the nation for ten years. Interestingly, it is not stated that a person's sexual inclinations have an impact on their eligibility for the presidency of the Philippines. Additionally, Abunda uses a call to action to convey his sentiment, pointing out that this viewpoint is in line with inclusion and that inclusivity leads to discoveries and a dawning of a new era. While this section discusses defying preconceived conventions, its key point is that gays are not excluded from consideration for the highest post in the nation's highest governing body.

Extract 2

"I researched, and I found the most insightful in size of discourse written by Karl Rove, policy advisor, to George W. Bush and in that discourse he enumerated some traits of what makes a great president, what makes a great president, clarity of vision, consistency of purpose, emotional intelligence, a healthy respect for public opinion, a great team, nowhere in that discourse will you find that you have to be a straight man or straight woman or LGBT to be a great president, it just have to be a human being to be a great president."

The speaker in this extract cited a discourse written by policy advisor Karl Rove, who addresses societal views about what qualities a president should possess in order to be regarded as exceptional and successful during their leadership terms. His convincing written speech revealed several characteristics, including a clear vision, a consistent goal, high emotional intelligence, respect for public opinion, open-mindedness, and the understanding that a healthy group dynamic is attained through teamwork.

The identification of these critical characteristics in Rove's written speech focused on the idea that a person's sexual orientation is not a factor in being considered a great president or qualified to hold that office. These are the attributes that only those in lower positions require and request. None of Rove's statements suggested that a person had to identify as a heterosexual man or woman in order to govern effectively,

help those in need, or influence society for the better. There was no mention of being gay, lesbian, or belonging to any other LGBTQ+ group. This finding suggests that one should only conform to these positive traits because one's sexual orientation does not define their personality, behavior toward others, or even how they perform tasks in a formal setting. Therefore, one is not required to conform to what society considers to be the standard for gay people. Overall, this paragraph supports inclusive frameworks about Rovy's written discourse.

Meanwhile, there are three (3) themes emerged in the findings, specifically the Refuting Preconceived Notions and Gender Prejudices, Instigating Transformative Change Through Social Reform, and Appraising the Defined Prerequisites for a Leadership Position. The idea that underlies gender stereotyping or prejudice is addressed in the first section, Refuting Preconceived Notions and Gender Prejudices. This is classified into three subthemes, Reconfiguring the pressure of achieving behavioral conformity, Navigating Issues on Gender Roles, and Repercussions of the environment on an individual's sexual orientation. The second approach is known as Instigating Transformative Change Through Social Reform, where it has three subthemes: the robust conviction of LGBTQ+ individuals in their potential and rights; the influence of the Civil Rights Movement; and the integration of a reform movement for the progression of women's empowerment. Appraising the Defined Prerequisites for a Leadership Position, the final one, only produced one subtheme.

THEMES	SUBTHEMES	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES
1. Refuting Preconceived Notions and Gender Prejudice	Reconfiguring the Pressure of Achieving Behavioral Conformity	This entails developing strategies that subvert the concept of behavioral conformity and relieve people of pressure related to their sexual orientation. The act of modifying oneself based on behaviors, inclinations, and methods to follow the normative requirements that society sets in order to win the approval and affection of the majority is known as behavioral conformity. This subject includes a broad wish to promote inclusivity and freedom of speech in a setting by making a deliberate	Extract 1: As a child, as a young boy I was told many things. I was told to be a good boy and I was also told to love nanay and tatay and that I was told to love my country, the Philippines. I was also told to love and honor God above all. Ginawa ko po yan. I did all those. As a young boy I was also told to play basketball. I tried. I tried with all the bones in my body but I just didn't have the rhythm. I didn't have the timing of the alacrity of basketball players. I was a failure. As a young boy I was also told to like a young normal girl because young normal boys

		<p>modification.</p>	<p>played basketball and like young normal girls. Again with bravery with a lot of prayers I tried to like a young normal girl. Again, I was a failure.</p> <p>Extract 6: Some parents actually allow the young lesbian daughters to be raped because they believe that rape can cure lesbianism. In 1973, homosexuality has been stricken out from the diagnostics and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. We are not an ailment, we're not a disease.</p>
	<p>Navigating Issues on Gender Roles</p>	<p>Gender roles appear to be an inevitable problem in many societal domains. Fighting the stereotype that a certain person has only certain behaviors, performances, and jobs to pursue based on their group or what they belong to is essential to navigating these challenges. The navigational strategy took into account the diversity of individuals within various groupings, each with their own preferences.</p>	<p>Extract 2: but aren't gays supposed to be cowards? you you guys back off from fights, diba naririnig na ho natin ng madalas na kapag hindi ka lumaban dapat ah bakla ka, anybody who backs up from the fight is supposed to be gay.</p> <p>Extract 3: Somebody told me, boy, I have so much respect for you. I love gays. You're just so funny. I can't imagine a world without gays. You're just the best comedian in the world, and you excel in the creative endeavors. You're the best hairstylist or the best eyebrows stylist.</p>

			<p>You're the best fashion designers. I said excuse me, we can be many and we can do anything.</p> <p>Extract 7: I said why can't we have a gay president? and my friend said because gays are supposed to be promiscuous, they salivate at the sight of flesh, the Predators, they prey on young boys, I said, excuse me, some gays are promiscuous, some women are promiscuous, some men are promiscuous. Promiscuity is not a gay monopoly, and then, even beauty queens drink, and then, somebody said, but isn't homosexuality a curse? I said no, we're a blessing.</p>
	<p>Repercussions of the Environment To An Individual's Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>This subtheme deals with the ongoing and permanent effects that a person's environment has conditioned into them. This includes the numerous external elements that the majority assumed to be the result of the effects, including cultural, societal, and even personal experiences. This could have either positive or detrimental effects,</p>	<p>Extract 4: and then somebody said but, boy, I guess you're supposed to be half Men and half women and you're supposed to be trapped in somebody else's body. I said no we're not half half. We're whole, and we're not trapped in somebody else's Island. For you to know you have to be me, but since you cannot, let me tell you that we are not half, we're whole.</p> <p>Extract 5:</p>

		such as promoting stigma or acceptance.	Diba naririnig ho natin sa oh ayan sama ka ng sama sa mga kababaihan, di magtatagal magiging bakla ka, oh ayang anak mo pinasama mo sa mga babae naging bakla tuloy.
Instigating Transformative Change Through Social Reform	The Robust Conviction of LGBTQ+ Individuals In Their Potential and Rights	This means that individuals who identify as non-binary have their own position about what they can contribute and completely execute it by fighting for the freedom and liberties they are due. This supports their steadfast belief that they should stand up for what they believe to be right and oppose the dominance of people in positions of authority who impose damaging norms that have an impact on various facets of society's individual lives.	Extract 1: I said no, we're not cowards, we are courageous, we're brave like the Stonewall Riots in 1969 in New York. Transwomen, queer young people, a drag queens, LGBT people who fought valiantly, fearlessly the cruel brutal violent police of New York. We are courageous, we're brave, we're not cowards. Extract 2: Belgium had a gay Prime Minister, Ella Di Rupo, Iceland had a lesbian Prime Minister, Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir. My argument is if Iceland and Belgium had gay Prime Minister's, I asked you why can't we have a gay president?
	The influence of Civil Rights Movement	This focuses on the time when African Americans battled for their freedom and rights throughout the era of slavery, injustice, and prejudice. The goal of the movement is to	Extract 2: Let's go to the black slavery movement, yes, there was a certain part in our history as human beings when blacks were treated like beasts, they were animals, they were

		<p>advance inclusivity with regard to the US Constitutional rights. While this strategy has proven beneficial, it has also served as inspiration for women to continue advocating and using their voices to advance their well-being.</p>	<p>invisible to be black was to be a sin, they were marketed they were sold in town plazas and marketplaces, they were bartered they were given as gifts but the black slavery movement, the civil rights movement persevered and persisted. In 1963 in Washington DC, the great March happened where Dr. Martin Luther King delivered his “I have a dream” speech. That dream came true in 2008, forty four years later. In 2008 the United States of America elected its first black president in Barack Obama, my argument is if blacks were treated like beasts like animals in the past and today the president of the most powerful country in the world is black, why can't we have a gay president?.</p>
	<p>Integration of a Reform Movement for the Progression of Women’s Empowerment</p>	<p>This has to do with people coming together to move the battle for women's rights forward and bring about change. Reducing unfair treatment of women and granting them equal access to various fields and societal aspects as men do are the objectives of forming a collaborative</p>	<p>Extract 3: The black slavery movement inspired the women's liberation movement, the women's rights movement, the women's suffrage movement. There was a time in our story as human beings, when women were nothing, they were second-class citizens, they were third-class citizens,</p>

		<p>movement. In addition to reducing barriers for women who aspire to goals above what is typically expected of them, this movement encourages effective teamwork and understanding.</p>	<p>they were invisible, they had no voices, they could not participate in public debates, they could not even walk beside their men in some cultures because women were shadows and extensions of their men and their fathers. Today, women's movement against violence continues, but women have become Presidents and Prime Minister's, you have Merkel of Germany, Thatcher, Taiwan just elected his first woman president, Tsai Ing-wen, Park Geunhye now is the president of South Korea, this country has had two presidents, President Corazon Aquino and President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. My argument is, if women who were shadows, if women who were extensions of their men and fathers have become presidents and prime ministers, I ask you, why can't we have a gay president?.</p>
<p>Appraising the Defined Prerequisites for a Leadership Position</p>		<p>This includes looking into the formal prerequisites, such as a candidate's qualifications, experience, and other eligibility to run for office. Sexual orientation is not listed as a prerequisite for running for</p>	<p>Extract 1: Natural-born Filipino, registered voter, can read and write, forty years of age, ten year resident, it doesn't say there that you have to be a straight man or a straight woman to be president of this country. In my opinion,</p>

		<p>president in the Philippine government. As a result, people are being empowered and made aware that all forms of expression, regardless of one's sexual preferences, are acceptable as long as one satisfies the requirements for presidential candidates.</p>	<p>we are living in the new age of enlightenment, this is the best time for exploration, this is the best time for discovery, observation and provocation, this is also the best time to challenge, to challenge prejudicial discriminatory, cultural common beliefs, this is also the best time to correct the wrongdoings of colonialism, this is also the best time to ask why can't we have a gay president?</p>
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CONCLUSION

This research paper sums up the speech "Why Can't We Have a Gay President?" that was presented by Boy Abunda in 2016 for a TED Talk at Ateneo de Manila University, which specifically targets how Boy Abunda's language was used in the speech 'Why Can't We Have a Gay President?' to challenge traditional gender norms and expectations, and as well as what are the gender issues present in the speech concerning gender, and how does feminist theory help the researchers understand it. A content analysis of the speech was conducted using Jo Ann Arinder's Model of Feminist Theory as a guide.

The researchers identify three themes related to gender issues in the speech and how these themes go against conventional norms and expectations through a thorough examination. The initial theme, "Refuting Preconceived Notions and Gender Prejudices," was introduced with eight extracts that could be categorized under it. This theme deals with assuming and oversimplifying people's actions, behaviors, choices, and perceptions in order to simply follow the norm. Refuting Gender Prejudices focuses on how people have set roles for what individuals should perform based on their gender, while Refuting Preconceived Thoughts is how people, especially those who identify as non-binary, fight the idea that a standardized approach sets for every individual. Three subthemes emerge from the first theme: Reconfiguring the pressure to achieve behavioral conformity, which is explored in two speech extracts; Navigating Issues on Gender Roles, which is explored in four speech extracts; and Repercussions of the environment on an individual's sexual orientation, which is explored in two speech extracts. Instigating Transformative Change Through Established Reform, the second topic, is characterized by a coordinated and cooperative effort to question established norms and discover answers to problems. Its three subthemes are the strong belief held by LGBTQ+ people in their rights and potential, which inspired two extracts from the speech; the impact of the Civil Rights Movement, which inspired one extract from the speech; and the incorporation of a reform movement to advance women's empowerment, which is also associated with one extract from the speech's content. Lastly, Appraising the Defined Prerequisites for a Leadership Position, the final one, looks at the official qualifications for a president or any other person aspiring to a position of power. It points out that these

specifications are specific to a given discipline and do not always consider a person's gender preferences. As a result, it only produced one subtheme but two extracts from the speech.

The framework of feminist theory serves as the direction for the content analysis. It helps the researchers understand the nuances of Abunda's language by providing a lens through which to examine power dynamics, cultural expectations, and the intersectionality of gender issues. Essentially, Boy Abunda's use of language in the speech content has made it a powerful and transformative tool in the fight against oppression, gender norms, and expectations. It also highlights and uncovers the stigma and consequences that have been associated with the traditional norms that society has imposed throughout history. The speech also makes a significant contribution to a current and prevalent gender-related issue in a variety of contexts, particularly by addressing problems that non-binary persons face. Feminist theory is applied to enhance the researchers' analysis, give a phenomenon that clarifies the complex world of gender issues, and collect support for improving the nation. Most importantly, power dynamics are clearly and fundamentally a part of the topic of leadership.

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