

ANIMA, HOMOPHOBIA, MACHISMO: Masculine Constructions in Alfred A. Yuson's *Confessions of a Q.C. House-Husband and Other Privacies*

Alfred B. Diaz

Studies on masculinities have revealed that although certain cultures and sub-cultures, and generations share the same views and practices on masculinities, these are not fixed and universal. For masculinities “come into existence at particular times and places, and are always subject to change.” (Connell 2002, 245) They are also a constantly changing collection of meanings.

Masculinities are anchored on psychological, social, political, spiritual, economic factors. Not to mention the personal lives of the men involved. A discussion of a certain type of masculinity, for instance, will have to include a discussion of these factors. According to Homi K. Bhabha, “Masculinity is the taking up of an enunciated position, the making up of a psychic complex, the assumption of a social gender, the supplementation of a historical sexuality, the apparatus of a cultural difference.” (57)

Confessions of a Q.C. House-husband and Other Privacies (Anvil, 1991) is Alfred Yuson's definition and construction of masculinities. The book is composed of seventy five essays and narratives whose topics revolve around the lives of the persona as Quezon City resident, father, writer, husband, friend, citizen, and basketball fan.

The term *confessions* can traditionally refer to women because they are stereotypically represented as more expressive and

verbose than men. The term *house-husband* brings to mind a man who stays in the house and does household chores maybe in the absence of the wife who works as a professional. The term *privacies* can also be feminine because it connotes an emotional and sentimental concept, traditionally assigned to women. Stereotypically too, the private space is assigned to women. In *Confessions*, however, Yuson uses the terms “confessions” and “privacies” to refer to the male gender; the male (house-husband) has become feminized. He has learned to express his sentiments and emotions.

This essays looks at the masculine constructions of Yuson’s essays and narratives, focusing especially on masculinity as bisexuality/anima, masculinity as homophobia, and masculinity as machismo.

Masculinity as Bisexuality: The Anima

According to Carl Jung, “No man is entirely masculine that he has nothing feminine in him. The fact is that, very masculine men have—carefully guarded and hidden—a very soft emotional life, often incorrectly described as “feminine.” (qtd. by Connel 20) Jung believes that men have a feminine side and women have a masculine side. He coined the term *anima* to refer to the feminine aspect of the men, and *animus* to the masculine aspect of the women. Men and women have both masculine and feminine sides.

Sigmund Freud believes that men are bisexual. In his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1961), he offers the idea that humans were constitutionally bisexual. These two theories of Jung and Freud find their relevance in the analysis of masculinities in Yuson’s essays and narratives. The persona in *Confessions* is both feminine and masculine. He engages in traditionally masculine activities like smoking, gambling, sports (especially basketball), drinking, male bonding, politics, etc. He also enjoys traditionally feminine activities like marketing, childcare, gardening, housekeeping, etc.