

The Structuration of the Sexual Habitus of Youth Culture

An Exploratory Study of Some of the Sexual Dimensions of Youth Culture of the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy

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The College of Social Sciences and Philosophy (CSSP) is one of the biggest colleges in the University of the Philippines Diliman. It has a long illustrious history of being the citadel of political and intellectual ferment in the University. The distinctive character of the College can be traced to the nature of its academic program: the teaching of liberal arts. Bearing these almost mythical images in mind, there is a need to study the youth culture of the students of CSSP. Past studies have only addressed the social and political dimensions of its students. This study therefore investigates some of the sexual dimensions of CSSP youth culture. Findings show that CSSP students are not so different from the average Filipino youth. Filipino youth today still highly value close family ties; therefore, they are wary of social changes that might disrupt this traditional setting. The sexual habitus of CSSP students is shaped largely by their religious background. Because of modernizing currents and globalizing forces enveloping our country and the University, the trajectory of the sexual habitus of CSSP students will be a good ground for exploring young Filipinos' response to modernization and postmodernization.

The College of Social Sciences and Philosophy (CSSP) is one of the biggest colleges in the University of the Philippines Diliman. It has a long illustrious history of being the citadel of political ferment in the University. Furthermore, it has also a long tradition of liberalism with regard to a wide spectrum of social issues. Numerous images are

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attached to the College that makes it stand out among other colleges. For instance, its teachers and students in the past and until now have been considered the forerunners of academic freedom, atheism, agnosticism, anticlericalism, skepticism, critical thinking, radicalism, and other unconventional lifestyles. Also, the College is the stronghold of student activism and intellectual ferment. The distinctive character of the College can be traced to the nature of its academic program: the teaching of liberal arts. The academic values the College champions are enshrined in its liberal education and in its general education courses. This orientation has substantially influenced and is still impacting on its own students and those from other colleges.

Bearing these almost mythical images in mind, there is a need to study the youth culture of the students of the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy. In particular, the political dimensions of CSSP youth culture have been the primary concern of past studies (Santos 1977; Jacob 2002). The most recent study done on CSSP students along this line is *The Meaning of UP Education: A Preliminary Evaluation of Knowledge Management, Attitude and Value Formation in UP Diliman Degree Programs* (Doronila et al. 1993). More popularly known as the KAVS, this study is just one among the series of studies done in to assess the role and meaning of UP education among its students and faculty. A follow-up study focusing on the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy was also done. However the sexual dimensions of the life of CSSP students remain unexplored in these studies. This is surprising, given the fact that many studies on youth culture in the Philippines have focused on sexuality of Filipino youth. There is therefore a need to investigate the sexual dimensions of CSSP youth culture. There are studies done by undergraduate students (e.g., Sustal 2001) but they have not been based on random sampling procedures. The best source so far is the study by Lanuza (2000) on the youth culture of UP students. But the peculiar qualities of CSSP subculture are not dealt with extensively. Hence the current study is focused mainly

on some of the sexual aspects of the youth culture of the students of College of Social Sciences and Philosophy. However this study does not claim to be an exhaustive inventory of the sexual habitus of CSSP students. The choice of pertinent dimensions is guided by the theoretical assumptions of the research.

THE STRUCTURE OF YOUTH CULTURE

Following Parsons, Shils, and Tolman (1962), one can assume that culture as a system consists of three elements or subsystems, namely, the cognitive or belief system, the evaluative or value system, and the expressive element or system of expressive symbols. The cognitive element or belief system refers to the ways of cognizing about external objects. The expressive element refers to the ways of cathecting or investing an external object with affective significance. The evaluative element involves "the various processes by which the actor allocates his [*sic*] energy among the various actions with respect to various cathected objects in an attempt to optimize gratification" (pp. 59, 162-163). These subsystems refer roughly to value orientation, belief system, and attitudes. Now it must be insisted here that values, attitudes, and belief systems must be viewed as social in nature and in origin. Value orientations, attitudes, and belief systems are products of cultural construction. They are the products of the group's attempt to wrestle and cope with the problems of the contingencies of social life (Schaffer 1997). These elements of culture are learned by the individual within the context of the culture of the social group she or he is in. They are transmitted through the process of group socialization and communicative interactions. Communicative interactions, in turn, are carried on through discourses, which embed and transmit beliefs, values, and attitudes. Discourses are not homogeneous media, however. They are, rather, as multiple as the universes of the people themselves. People live in a variety of segments, of different universes of meanings that are not necessarily incompatible with each other.

And these universes overlap as well as contradict each other. This gives rise to varieties of cultural expressions of various collectivities.

The culture is learned through the process of socialization. Needless to say, socialization is a never-ending process (Giddens 1979). The infant from the very moment of its birth is already undergoing socializing processes. And as the infant grows, it is introduced into the world of the "significant others", that is, to people who are members of its primary group (Mead 1956). From here, the child is further introduced into the world of "generalized others," or the world of peer group, schools, and cliques. From primary socialization, the child moves to the secondary type. Subsequently, the youths may be characterized as a category of people who are undergoing rapid secondary socialization. Secondary socialization is the locus of anticipatory socialization which prepares the youths towards their entry to the adult world.

THE DIALECTIC BETWEEN STRUCTURE AND AGENCY

The individual, then, constructs her or his own belief system, equips her or himself with a certain value orientation and attitudes within a social situation. Following Bourdieu (1995) this may be called the "habitus" of the individual. The habitus is "the conditioning associated with a particular class conditions of existence." Bourdieu adds that habitus are "transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them" (Bourdieu 1995, 32-33). The habitus is both the combination of the affective and cognitive dispositions of the individual (Jenkins 1992). Practice is the result of the individual's actions structured by the habitus. In this sense, the individual's actions are not mere passive replications of the normative prescriptions of

culture. Neither are they the passive fulfillment of need-dispositions as Parsons and others have argued. Moreover, values and attitudes as part of habitus are not mere regulatory entities that force themselves into the individuals, and thereby, predetermining their actions. Rather, they simply provide the normative rules by which the actors draw upon in order to perform certain actions. This allows for the diversity of individual actions. Yet amidst this diversity in human actions, there are discernible patterns of regularity of actions. This regularity of practice resulting from the habitus is called the *field*. This field is the area of culture where praxis occurs.

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF YOUTH

The category *youth* is a modern invention. George Stanley Hall's (1904) monumental study of adolescence traces the beginning of this stage around 12 and 13 years, and ending when the individual achieves full adult status around 22 and 25. Almost seventy years later, Kenneth Keniston (1972) introduced the term "youth" to update Hall's analysis and capture the drastic social changes that had occurred to Hall's concept of adolescence. He calls youth "a new stage of life" (Keniston 1972, 23). According to Keniston, youth as a new stage of life has five major themes. First, there is the tension between the youth's "emerging selfhood and the social order". Second, "youth," for Keniston, "is a time of alternating estrangement and omnipotentiality" (25). The youth feels that he or she is isolated from society as a result of his or her disengagement with the community. Yet he or she also feels a sense of absolute freedom, "of being able to change or achieve anything." Third, there is the refusal of socialization and acculturation. It is a time for self-examination about the roles assigned to him or her by society. Fourth, it follows from this last issue that youths are looking for transformation and movement. They fear being stuck or being in a static position. Finally, youths tend to form counter-cultures, "characterized by their deliberate cultural distance from the existing

social order” (27). It is a time for solidarity with people experiencing the same developments. This is a psychosocial definition of youth.

In the Philippines, the definition of youth is tied with the age bracket between 7 and 24 (Gomez et al. 1986). Today, however, the National Youth Commission follows the stipulation of RA no. 8044 that pegs the age range of youths between 15 to 30.¹ Nonetheless, most countries now have adopted the age-definition used by the United Nations. Currently the United Nations pegs the age-definition of youths in the age bracket between 15 and 24. In the case of the Philippines, the law broadens the age bracket by putting the age ceiling at 30. In the Philippines, people who are in ages 15 to 30 would normally include second year high school students, college students, and those who have finished four year college courses, those who are already working, and even married individuals.

In view of these often differing and conflicting age-definitions of youths, this research, for its practical and operational purposes, has adopted the convention of the United Nations. The University of the Philippines Population Institute (UPPI) also adopts and uses this same definition, and the one it also used in its YAFSS II Study (Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality Survey).

Taking this operational definition into account, youth culture,² broadly speaking and within the context of Philippine culture refers to the way of life of a younger group of people within the age bracket of 15 and 24. In this study, the category youth specifically covers all the currently enrolled BA/BS students of the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy of the University of the Philippines Diliman for the second semester of school year 2001 to 2002.

BRINGING BACK THE “SEXUAL” IN YOUTH CULTURE

The sexuality of adolescents has been the fascinating fields of research and study in the social sciences beginning with the

controversial Kinsey Report in 1948. Since then, the sexual life of youth has been the subject of much controversy especially during the Sexual Revolution in the West in the seventies (Gagnon and Simon 1973). In the Philippines, the sexual practices, beliefs and attitudes of youth of various groups had also been the principal subjects of investigation. The most ambitious of course is the Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality Study. This is a nationwide study that focuses on mapping out the characteristics of young adults aged 14 to 24 (Raymundo 1999). Closer to home is the study by Lanuza (2000) where sexual elements of UP youth culture are also analyzed. The present study is not a replication of these two studies, but a contribution towards preliminary clarification and exploration of the sexual habitus of CSSP students.

Sexual experimentation and adjustment are often associated with adolescent life (Allgeier and Allgeier 1984, 431). This is tied to the rapid and dramatic biological and physical changes in adolescents at the onset of puberty. As one writer observes, the adolescence stage is a way of making sense and self out of newly changed body (Rice 1990). Whereas Freud (1963) established the presence of autoeroticism in infants, the youth find their sociosexual life heightened due to interactions with the different agents of socialization, namely, the family, peer groups, church and religion, school, and mass media (Strong and Reynold 1982).

It is in this process of activating the sociosexual life that the youth learn traditional sexual scripts (Gagnon and Simon 1973) and build their own sexual repertoire (Allgeier and Allgeier 1984). Sexual scripts are very similar to the nature of gender schema as developed by Sandra Bem (1981). Gender schema is learned by people to facilitate social interactions and classifications on the basis of gender. As discussed earlier, it must be pointed out that the learning process should not be seen as a passive, one-way transmission of knowledge from culture to individuals. Following Giddens' structuration theory, one can claim that cultural norms, symbols, and beliefs about sexuality are both the

condition and the outcome of human sexual interactions and sociations. Gender schemas or sexual scripts therefore must be seen as background resources that youth employ strategically to negotiate the meanings and outcomes of sexual activities. In short, following Garfinkel (1972), youth are not mere passive recipients of sexual socialization from their peer, family, church, and mass media. Far from that, the youth also exhibit symbolic and creative acts (Willis 1977) in fashioning, re-inventing, and re-defining their own sexual orientations and lifestyles. In this sense, it is very appropriate to follow Zimmerman and West's (1998) ethnomethodological definition of sexuality as performance. From an ethnomethodological and social constructionist account, sexual habitus refers to background dispositions of the youth that they constantly redefine and reconfigure and transform as they encounter different situations in the field. In this sense, adolescent transformation is not hormonally driven but is culturally constructed (Irvine 1994, 9). Consequently, the sexual habitus of young people is not a simple reproduction or clone image of the parent culture. It has also its own nuances that must be investigated in its own right. This is the main objective of the study. The current study aims at mapping out some of the elements of the practices and beliefs of young students of the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy.

METHOD

The survey was conducted with the help of Sociology 199 students towards the end of the first semester of SY 2001-2002. The survey questions were taken from Lanuza's 1998 survey questionnaire designed for UP Diliman students.³ The survey asked the following questions about the opinion of CSSP students regarding some sexual issues: same-sex marriage, pre-marital sex, extramarital affairs, virginity, pornographic literature, masturbation, contraceptives, sex education, casual sex, sex with a prostitute, group sex, whether Filipinos are liberal today, and abortion. The questionnaire was formulated using Likert scaling (strong agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain or no opinion).

The survey also asked the sexual behaviors of the students in terms of the following: sexual intercourse, petting and necking, sex with the same sex, phone sex, casual sex, use of sex toys, voyeurism, and exhibitionism.

Religiosity of the students was measured in terms of three separate questions: belief or non-belief in traditional theism, prayer life, and church attendance. The influence of peers on the sexual culture of the students was measured dichotomously in terms of membership or non-membership in student organizations. Family influence was measured also in dichotomous terms: whether living with or independently living away from parents.

To facilitate the nonparametric statistical analysis, the dimensions of some variables were collapsed from their original form. Belief in God, composed of four dimensions was reduced into two dimensions (orthodox belief in monotheism or not). The same was done for prayer, church attendance, residence (collapsed into two dimensions: living with parents or not), and year level (collapsed into junior or senior).

Due to budgetary, resources, and time constraints, proportional stratified random sampling based on a quota of one hundred students was employed. The respondents for the present survey were selected from a sampling frame based on the official student list of the Office of the College Secretary of CSSP. One hundred (100) respondents from seven departments were randomly selected using systematic random sampling without replacement. Self-administered survey questionnaires were distributed by the students of Sociology 199 class to the selected respondents. However, there were only 91 respondents included in this study (91% response rate). This study is limited to the survey of the students of the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy for school year 2003-2004. The findings based on this survey may not be generalized to the entire CSSP population, or to the entire UP Diliman student population.

RESULTS

Demographic Profile

The respondents had a mean age of 19 years. The range was from 16 to 25 years old. The highest concentration was in the age category of 20 with 24% (22 respondents). Almost two-thirds of the respondents (71% or 65 respondents) were females, and 29% (26 respondents) were males. Majority of them (67% or 61 respondents) came from urban centers, while only 33% (30 respondents) came from the rural areas. The highest number of respondents belonged to the Political Science department with 28% (25 respondents). This was followed by Philosophy and BS Psychology students both with 17% (15 respondents), Sociology (10%), History (9%), Anthropology (7%), BA Psychology (5%), and Geography and Linguistics (both 4%). Thirty-two percent (29 respondents) of the respondents were seniors, 23% freshmen, 23% juniors, and 22% sophomores.

More than half of the respondents (55% or 50 respondents) were currently living independent of their families and relatives. These respondents lived in dormitories, boarding houses, rented their own house, or were staying with friends.

Family Background

Majority of the respondents had their families intact during the survey with 68% (62 respondents). Only 13% (12 respondents) reported they have separated/divorced parents. Meanwhile, 5% (5 respondents) reported they have single parents.

Academic, Organizational, and Religious Background

At the time of the survey, half of the respondents indicated they were currently members of UP-based organizations (59% or 55 respondents).

Majority of the respondents held orthodox views about belief in God (80% or 73 respondents). Seventeen percent (17% or 15 respondents) held a pantheistic view, 1% a humanistic view, and 1% a naturalistic view. It is interesting to note that there were no atheists among the respondents.

With regard to their religious activities, 31% (28 respondents) indicated they regularly attend religious weekly services in their churches. Only 1 respondent indicated he does not attend religious services. Eighty-six percent (78 respondents) reported that they do pray everyday, while only 14% (13 respondents) indicated they do not pray at all.

Opinions about Sex-Related Issues

More than three-fourths of the respondents agreed with the statements that Filipinos are now more liberal when in terms of sex (87% or 79 respondents) and that the use of contraceptives should be promoted (87% or 79 respondents). Meanwhile, more than half of the respondents agreed with the statements that sex education should be taught early in school (79% or 72 respondents), that virginity is still valued by Filipino women today (76% or 69 respondents), that masturbation is just a natural activity (71% or 65 respondents), that sexual intercourse should only be done in the context of marriage (60% or 55 respondents), and that it is okay for people to watch/read pornographic materials (60% or 55 respondents). The issue that respondents disagreed most was extramarital sex (92% or 84 respondents). This was followed by abortion (85% or 77 respondents), prostitution (77% or 70 respondents), group sex or orgy (75% or 68 respondents), homosexual sexual intercourse (67% or 61 respondents), and casual sex (55% or 50 respondents).

The respondents were most liberal when it came to the use of contraceptives, with 26% (24 respondents) approving it in all situations.

They were most moderate in approving public display of affection (PDA) in some situations (85% or 77 respondents). They were most conservative in disapproving extramarital sex in all situations (86% or 78 respondents). They were also conservative when it came to approving abortion (75% or 68 respondents), exhibitionism (71% or 65 respondents), prostitution (70% or 64 respondents), orgies or group sex (70% or 64 respondents), phone sex (66% or 60 respondents), anal sex (65% or 59 respondents), homosexual sexual encounters (64% or 58 respondents), voyeurism (59% or 54 respondents), cybersex (58% or 53 respondents), and the use of sex toys (55% or 50 respondents).

Among the independent variables tested for predicting opinions about sexual issues, only few variables were significant. Respondents who had engaged in sexual intercourse were more liberal when it comes to opinion regarding premarital sex and sex within marriage (cf. Ventura and Cabigon 2004, 132). However having sexual experience was not a very good predictor of opinions. Only twenty percent reduction in error could be explained by this variable on opinion about sex within marriage, while only eighteen percent reduction in error was explained with regard to premarital sex.

Church attendance was a better predictor with regard to opinion on premarital sex. It reduces error up to twenty-nine percent. Among the significant variables, church attendance was the most consistent. It has the highest value for predicting opinion about sex within marriage (0.329 or 32 percent).

Sexual Practices

When the survey was done, 53% of the respondents had already experienced having steadies (of the opposite sex). Only one respondent indicated he had a steady with the same sex. Forty-three percent (39 respondents) indicated they had never experienced any intimate relationship with anyone.

More than half of the respondents had already engaged in watching pornographic films (68% or 62 respondents) and reading pornographic materials (64% or 58 respondents). A very small number of them had experienced more daring sexual activities. Twelve percent of them (11 respondents) had already experienced sexual intercourse, 11% (10 respondents) had engaged in phone sex, 9% (8 respondents) in cybersex, 4% (4 respondents) in group sex, 2% (2 respondents) had experienced sex with a prostitute, and 1% experienced homosexual sex.⁴

There was only one significant variable that was a good predictor of a sexual practice, namely, masturbation. More males practiced masturbation compared with females. And this variable (sex of respondents) was able to reduce the error of prediction up to sixty percent.

DISCUSSION

The Sexual Habitus of the Respondents

Based on the results, at the time of the survey, the majority of the respondents belonged to traditional middle class Catholic families, members of student organizations, in their senior years, and living independently of their parents.

In general, more males had engaged in sex-related activities. It is only in masturbation, however, that there was a significant difference between males and females. These trends tend to support the patriarchal double standard in Filipino culture, and heterosexist character of youth culture in general. It appears that the youth culture of CSSP students tend to reproduce the patriarchal structures of Filipino society. However, it must be pointed out that there are a small number of female students that parallel the characteristics of the more promiscuous cohort of male students. This indicates that the feminine youth subculture is not lacking in resistance. It is not a homogeneous system.

In general, the respondents tended to overrate Filipinos as being more liberal today in sexual matters. This simply reflects the influence of the prevailing dominant opinion about sexual norms among the respondents. Majority still thought that virginity is still valued by Filipino women. They were open-minded when it came to the use of contraceptives, watching and reading pornographic materials, and masturbation. However they were relatively non-permissive when it came to the issues of extramarital sex, abortion, orgies or group sex, prostitution, premarital sex, homosexual sex, and casual sex. These results show that in general majority of CSSP students are still conservative when it comes to “deviant” (i.e., practices which Philippine society consider as violating the prevailing social norms) sexual issues. This conservatism may partly be explained by the religious socialization of the respondents. Many respondents came from sectarian high schools. Among the variables that could predict the opinion of the respondents regarding sexual issues, church attendance and having experienced sexual intercourse are the most significant. Church attendance reduces the error of prediction up to thirty-three percent (33%) for opinion regarding sex within marriage. If religiosity is defined as regular church attendance, then, religious students are more stringent when it comes to sexual practices. Meanwhile, those who engage in “deviant” sexual activities tend to be permissive with regard to such practices.

The CSSP Youth in Transition to Modernity and Postmodernity

The sexual habitus of youth develops from the confluence of different institutional sources and social forces. From autoeroticism of the body, the sexuality of the youth widens into the sociosexual realm. This is made possible by the entry of the youth into the adult world. But the primary source of the development of the sexual habitus of youth is in the family. The family serves as the primary reference group of the youth in their quest for self-identity. Based on the findings of the study, the family is not a significant influence on the sexual practices and opinion of the students. Perhaps a more detailed study of the family background of the students must be formulated. This study

only measured the influence of the family in terms of residence (living or not living with parents). This variable measures the degree of parental control.

Other than the family, the next most important source of the sexual habitus of the young people is the peer group. The peer group serves as the rival reference group of the family as the youth shift their activities from their family to peer group. The influence of the peer group was not significant in this study. There were no significant relationships between the membership of respondents to school organizations and their opinion to sexual issues and their sexual practices. Perhaps a bigger sample can yield a significant relationship. But for now, one major reason for this trend is that the peer group may not necessarily espouse values that contradict the parental culture of young people. In effect, the peer group could even reinforce the traditionalizing influence of the family, while giving the youth the freedom to pursue unconventional lifestyles.

If the peer group and mass media provide more spaces for sexual experimentation for the youth, the church and other religious institutions provide the counter-forces. The results show that the residues of religious orientations of the students are still present in the formation of their sexual habitus. Church attendance, belief in God, and prayer serve as counterweights to the propensity of youth to experiment with their sexuality.⁵ They seem to serve as countervailing forces against the modernizing impact of mass media and peer group. This might also explain the more conservative character female youth subculture. Because girls are usually more religious and they are expected to be more active in religious practices, they tend to follow conservative attitudes and opinions. But, again, as mentioned earlier, this should also be balanced by the fact that there are already young women who are equally modern as the men in the study, albeit they are still in minority. This is a very interesting phenomenon to study further.

The trends in this study show that in general, CSSP students have liberal sexual orientation towards more common sexual issues (like masturbation and reading/watching pornographic materials). But they have conservative attitudes towards more controversial sexual issues (like abortion, extramarital sex, premarital sex, and homosexuality). This pattern is largely dependent on the disciplinary control being exercised by the traditional institutions, especially religion and the family. The traditional attitude of CSSP youth towards these issues reflects the persistence of strong familism among the respondents. It indicates they do not favor practices that undermine customary family values and structure (like extra-marital affairs and same-sex marriage).

However this should not preclude one from also pointing out that amidst the formation of conservative sexual orientation, there are also pockets of resistance within CSSP youth culture. Resistance comes mainly from those who engage in culturally and socially prohibited sexual behaviors, and those who are open minded towards controversial sexual issues. The spaces of resistance are located mostly outside the immediate reach of family territory. These spaces of resistance are usually found in the school and in places where the hold of traditional institutions are weak. In this way, the University and the College provide the most convenient spaces for structuring more tolerant and liberalized sexual habitus of the students. While this study failed to see any significant relationship between stay in the University (the number years in the University) and the sexual habitus of the students, nevertheless, the subculture of students who are open-minded about sexual issues and who had experienced “deviant” sexual practices are usually those who had stayed longer in the University (at the time of the survey). Moreover this group of students engaged in these practices when they entered the University.

Consequently, it can be suggested that the longer the students stay in the College and in the University, the students’ sexual habitus

will be more and more exposed to the pluralistic and diverse subcultures that exist within and outside the educational field. Whether it will pluralize and liberalize the sexual habitus of the students in the long run is another interesting research topic to pursue.

CONCLUSION

This study, although limited in sample, hopes to have shown a glimpse of the sexual habitus of CSSP students. The findings of this study have shown that CSSP students are not so different from the average Filipino youth. Filipino youth today still highly value close family ties; therefore, they are wary of social changes that might disrupt this traditional setting. Because many CSSP students come from sectarian private high schools, the influence of religion is something to be reckoned with. If the social forces of modernization (through mass media, the school, peer group, and globalization) expose young people to lifestyle experimentation, the religious institutions and the family still provide the youth with the procrustean anchor upon which they draw their primary value orientation. In other words, at this juncture, young people, while bombarded with all sorts of modern images and secularizing currents that threaten their traditional plausibility structure, also reflexively filter these images via their pre-given sexual habitus. In the clash of these different subcultures and institutions, their modernizing and anti-modernizing currents, young people will find themselves more and more transforming their given sexual habitus. And in return, from these transformative practices the dominant sexual structure youth culture will also be dialectically transformed. This is a very interesting field to explore. This study hopes to have contributed, in a modest way, towards this endeavor.

Notes

¹ In fact, Secretary Amina Rasul of the National Commission on Youth acknowledged that there are many age definitions of youth in the Philippines: PCYA (15-14), DILG (15-21), DSWD (17-18), DOLE (15-24), DOH (10-24),

POPCOM (15-24). In this list, only POPCOM, DOLE, and PCYA adopt the UN convention. This latter definition is also what is adopted in this present paper.

² Other terms that could have been used are “*teenage culture*,” or “*culture of teenagers*.” But these terms carry stereotypical connotations about teenage behavior. As Sebald (1984) explains, “This behavior is less than valued by the establishment; when adults talk of ‘teenage behavior’, there is a trace of derogation and tendency to label the behavior ‘immature’. There is also the connotation of collectivity, suggesting that teenagers exist as a group rather than as individuals. It is this latter connotation that is of sociological significance; since it purports to explain the teenage behavior in terms of peer group norms” (10).

³ This survey was part of the final class project. The students served as distributors of the survey questionnaires and they encoded the finished questionnaires (using SPSS 10). All analysis and theoretical discussion are solely the author’s responsibility. I therefore would like to acknowledge the enormous labor of my students in completing the survey. Without their cooperation and patience, this study would have not come into full fruition. Full consent from my students to publish this study (in the future) was thoroughly discussed in the class. They only demanded that their contributions be recognized. Publishing this study is a tribute to their efforts.

⁴ The prevalence of premarital sexual intercourse among CSSP students is much lower compared with the 23.1 percent reported in the YAFS3 (2004). See Natividad and Marquez (2004, 72).

⁵ Local studies also reveal that majority of the parents of Filipino youth require their children to attend religious services (Raymundo and Xenos 1999, 14).

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