



## 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 examined 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 looked at the language used by Boy Abunda in his speech, "Why Can't We Have a Gay President?" It also aimed 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 provided insight into how Boy Abunda's presentation of gender issues and language disrupts traditional standards.

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

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Submit date: December 11, 2023 Accept date: December 20, 2023 Publish date: January 31, 2024

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## 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 (Alda-Vidal et al., 2023; Ceschin et al., 2023). Due to the deeply rooted societal norms, expectations, and historical frameworks, the majority selectively favored men who they portray as a dominant identity and treat unfairly those individuals who do not conform to traditional gender roles. Consequently, 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 leads to low public exposure and support for a presidential candidate who identifies as LGBTQIA+.

Boy Abunda's 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. Aspiring to make the present accessible to everyone, Boy Abunda explored the triumphs and challenges of the gay people in his pursuit of 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.

Gender is one of the most evident indications of social disparities because it influences how certain group members view one another (Septianasari et al., 2021). 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. In the study of Afrin & Afrin (n.d.) a, 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.

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 (Syaputri et al., 2021). It is not just a reflection of society, but is involved in the construction

and perpetuation of social realities. Even those who see differences between men and women with regard to the roles of leadership can't deny that language is a key tool that can create a certain understanding of things. It was also mentioned 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.

The study employs a feminist theoretical framework to analyze the language used in Boy Abunda's thought-provoking speech in ted talk 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 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?

## **METHOD**

This section presents a detailed 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. This investigation will include extensive observations, transcriptions, and analysis of the events. According to Miles et al. (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 1896's edition of Webster's Dictionary of the English Language, the term "content analysis" was added to its vocabulary. 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.

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 critical examination of Boy Abunda's speech content.

### ***Data Analysis***

According to (Onyedum, 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 (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 on generated identities.

3. Data Interpretation - Then, the researchers will analyze the data including the process on how the use of the language of Boy Abunda challenges traditional norms, what power dynamics present in his speech, and how feminist theory helps us understand gender roles 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 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 are imposed on their gender. This notion assumes and oversimplifies the behaviors, choices, and perceptions of individuals to simply adhere to what the majority considers standard for a particular group to reinforce agreement and acceptance.

**Extract 1**

*“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 appropriately by his gender identity and the biological attributes he possessed. He asserted that he forced himself to be as robust and alert as basketball players should be, as the basketball game is something straight men should play and is something an innate talent or source of entertainment for men. 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 natural phenomena where young men are attracted to young women, and he admitted that he failed in doing it because of his personal preferences.

**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 and they are incapable of going 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. 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.

**Extract 4**

*"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. Mr. Abunda highlights that being a part of a predefined binary spectrum does not imply that a gay person is divided by these. 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. This remark 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. It 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 passage talks about the extremely concerning and detrimental circumstances that LGBTQ+ individuals face and through the hands of those people who should supposedly support 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 is where parents allow 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. As being gay or lesbian is listed under the Statistical Manual of Disorders, it was explained how being a non-binary person is regarded as 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.

**Extract 7**

*“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 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 linked their role as pedophiles and their ability to coerce boys into hanging out with them. It was also suggested in

the sarcastic statement of how beauty queens even drink, which refers to how a person can cope with activities or fields that go beyond standard 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.”*

The idea suggests that accepting oneself as gay is a sin and goes against God's intention. The speaker counters that 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**

*“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 gays are brave rather than cowardly by using an example of 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 gay 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, especially in 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. This 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 notion points 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. Feminism is gradually but steadily being accomplished because of a persistent, unwavering conviction that upholds what is morally right. 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.

Abunda cited a number of well-known women to back up his statements about the women's movement. 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. 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**

Abunda discussed numerous examples of how social reform movements have changed the nation by combating injustice, prejudice, and norms. 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”*

The statutory requirements for a candidate to be eligible to run for president in the Philippines include being a native-born Filipino, a registered voter, literate, at least 40 years old, and having lived in the nation for ten years. 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.

**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. Its 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 and that one should only conform to these positive traits for their performance in a formal setting.

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. Refuting Preconceived Notions and Gender Prejudices is addressed in the first section where it is classified into three subthemes. The second approach is known as Instigating Transformative Change Through Social Reform, where it has three subthemes. Appraising the Defined Prerequisites for a Leadership Position, the final one, only produced one subtheme.

**Table 1. Result**

<b>THEMES</b>	<b>SUBTHEMES</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>EXAMPLES</b>
1. <b>Refuting Preconceived Notions and Gender Prejudice</b>	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.	<b>Extract 1:</b> 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. <b>Extract 6:</b>

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.

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Navigating Issues on Gender Roles  
Gender Roles

Gender roles appear to be an inevitable problem in many societal domains. The navigational strategy took into account the diversity of individuals within various groupings, each with their own preferences.

**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.

**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.

**Extract 7:**  
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.

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	<p>Repercussions of the Environment To An Individual's Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>Deals with the ongoing 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. This could have either positive or detrimental effects, such as promoting stigma or acceptance.</p>	<p><b>Extract 4:</b>          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><b>Extract 5:</b>          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.</p>
<p><b>Instigating Transformative Change Through Social Reform</b></p>	<p>The Robust Conviction of LGBTQ+ Individuals In Their Potential and Rights</p>	<p>This supports the steadfast belief that LGTBTQ+ people 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.</p>	<p><b>Extract 1:</b>          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.</p> <p><b>Extract 2:</b>          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?</p>
	<p>The influence of Civil Rights Movement</p>	<p>This focuses on the time when African Americans battled for their freedom and rights throughout the era of slavery, injustice, and prejudice. The movement served as inspiration for women to continue advocating their</p>	<p><b>Extract 2:</b>          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</p>

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voices to advance well-being.

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?.

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Integration of a Reform Movement for the Progression of Women's Empowerment

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 movement.

**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?.

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**Appraising the Defined Prerequisites for a Leadership Position**

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 president in the Philippine government. Thus, people are being empowered that all forms of expression, regardless of one's sexual preferences, are acceptable as long as one satisfies the requirements for presidential candidates.

**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?

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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, 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. Thus, 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 and gender norms. 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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