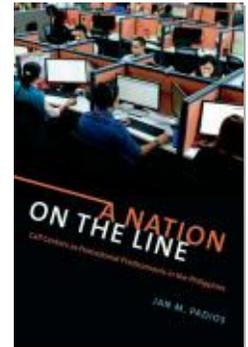# A Nation on the Line

Padios, Jan M.

Published by Duke University Press

Padios, M..
A Nation on the Line: Call Centers as Postcolonial Predicaments in the Philippines.
Durham: Duke University Press, 2018.
Project MUSE., https://muse.jhu.edu/.

➡ For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/64075

NOTES

Introduction

1 Vikas Bajaj, "A New Capital of Call Centers," *New York Times*, November 25, 2011.

2 Chrisee Dela Paz, "Philippines' Back Office Shines in 2015, Exceeds Target," *Rappler*, February 3, 2016; Sicat, "'Successes' and Adjustment"; Camille Bersola, "26 Interesting Facts about Call Centers and the BPO Industry," *Philippine Star*, July 29, 2012; "2012–2016 Philippine Information Technology and Business Process Management (IT-BPM) Road Map," Information Technology Business Process Association of the Philippines (IBPAP); and Lee C. Chipongian, "OFW Remittances Reach $25.8B in 2015," *Manila Bulletin*, February 19, 2016. For a brief scholarly account of call centers in the Philippines prior to 2010, and the human resource and cultural questions they raised, see Hechanova-Alampay, *1–800-Philippines.*

3 Outsourced work falls into various categories: *health information management*, for example, refers to work that supports the health care industry, while *business process management* refers to work that supports businesses broadly. *Global in-house call centers* refers specifically to call centers that are still maintained by a parent company, and thus not outsourced but moved offshore. *Knowledge process outsourcing* refers to work that supports knowledge-oriented businesses specifically.

4 Batalla, "Divided Politics"; "PHL Now a Creditor Nation, Helps Troubled Europe Cope with Debts—BPL," Money, *GMA News*, February 21, 2012, http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/. money/personalfinance/248866/phl-now-a-creditor-nation-helps-troubled-europe-cope-with-debt-bsp/story/; Richard Jevad Heydarian, "The Philippines: The Next Asian Tiger Economy?," *Al Jazeera*, June 14, 2014; Cris Larano, "As Economy Soars, Philippines No Longer 'Sick Man of Asia,'" *Wall Street Journal*, August 24, 2014; and Danessa Rivera, "PHL Is Asia's Second Fastest-Growing Economy with 6.4-Percent Growth in Q2," *GMA News*, August 28, 2014, http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/money/economy/376831/phl-is-asia-s-second-fastest-growing-economy-with-6–4-percent-growth-in-q2/story/. Heydarian goes on to make the vital point that such economic growth did not benefit the majority of the population.

5   Hoang, *Dealing in Desire*, 7.

6   As the term suggests, *sunrise industry* refers to an economic sector that is new but growing rapidly.

7   My use of the term *postcolonial* is similar to that of Dylan Rodríguez in *Suspended Apocalypse: White Supremacy, Genocide, and the Filipino Condition*. Rodríguez deploys the term from a critical perspective in which the Philippines has not quite escaped the colonial condition vis-à-vis the United States. The *post* in *postcolonial* thus refers not to the nation's transcendence of colonial structures of power but to Filipinos' persistent and urgent attempts to define and enact Philippine independence from within those structures.

8   See Heller, "Commodification of Language"; and Hoang, *Dealing in Desire*. More broadly, however, this book also builds on a body of scholarship that has examined how the shift toward neoliberalism has reshaped social relations, cultural practices, and subjectivities outside of the west. See Rofel, *Desiring Subjects*; Ferguson, *Global Shadows*; Gregory, *Devil behind the Mirror*; and Ong, *Neoliberalism as Exception*.

9   Heller, "Commodification of Language," 103. See Tadiar, *Fantasy-Production*; and Gershon and Alexy, "Introduction."

10 Chow, *Not Like a Native Speaker*, 31. See Heller, "Commodification of Language."

11 The canonical text in this vein is Carla Freeman's *High Tech and High Heels in the Global Economy: Women, Work, and Pink-Collar Identities in the Caribbean*. More recently, attention has been paid to India's rise in the global knowledge economy through outsourced work in IT, as well as the material and ideological role of English in Slovakia's turn toward the knowledge economy. See Radhakrishnan, *Appropriately Indian*; and Prendergast, *Buying into English*.

12 Brophy, "Language Put to Work," 411–13.

13 See Brophy, "The Subterranean Stream"; and Frenkel et al., "Beyond Bureaucracy?"

14 On no-collar work, see Ross, *No-Collar*; on Theory Y management, see McGregor, *Human Side of Enterprise*; on the extended workday and work-life balance, see Ciulla, *Working Life*; on presence bleed, see Gregg, *Work's Intimacy*.

15 Similar works in this vein include Patel, *Working the Night Shift*; Hegde, "Spaces of Exception"; Rivas, *Salvadoran Imaginaries*; and Pal and Buzzanell, "Indian Call Center Experience."

16 Although *postindustrial* is a term typically reserved for the areas of the world presumed to have moved beyond manufacturing and into services as a major driver of wealth and national growth, I use it to describe the social and cultural conditions that gave rise to offshore outsourcing in the Philippines precisely because Filipino workers are increasingly integrated into the service operations that support U.S. and other foreign corporations. If, as Michael

Hardt has noted, industrial production, agriculture, and the service industry can now "mix and coexist" within nondominant countries in the world economy—that is, if countries like the Philippines can participate in the growing global services industry while never having fully industrialized to the level of more dominant nations—then the terms and theories that explain postindustrial society must also answer to the areas of the world where "our" service work is carried out. See Hardt, "Affective Labor," 92.

17 See Aneesh, *Neutral Accent*; Mankekar, *Unsettling India*; Mirchandani, *Phone Clones*; Pal and Buzzanell, "Indian Call Center Experience"; Patel, *Working the Night Shift*; Poster, "Who's on the Line?"; Raghuram, "Identities on Call"; Rowe, Malhotra, and Pérez, *Answer the Call*; Russell, *Smiling Down the Line* (which also examines call centers in Australia); Shome, "Thinking through Diaspora."

18 Mirchandani, *Phone Clones*, 3.

19 My understanding and use of the term *affect* are derived from and build on the definition of the term in cultural studies, where affect has been predominantly treated as a state of feeling distinct from but still linked to emotions. In this literature, *affect* names a psychic as well as bodily orientation or attitude toward something and is thus a highly relational aspect of individual and collective life. In turn, various affects, affective registers, or affective relations have the power to create and shape moods and motivations in the realm of everyday social life and politics. See Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*; Gregg and Seigworth, *Affect Theory Reader*; Staiger, Cvetkovich, and Reynolds, *Political Emotions*; and Stewart, *Ordinary Affects*. My understanding and use of *affective labor* has been shaped by feminist sociology and neo-Marxist philosophy that identify the term (along with *emotional labor* or *emotion work*) as the labor that produces particular affective states in other people (such as family members or coworkers) or in a particular place (such as an office or restaurant). See Emma Dowling, Rodrigo Nunes, and Ben Trott's special issue of the journal *Ephemera* (*Ephemera* 7); Hardt, "Affective Labor"; and Hochschild, *Managed Heart*.

20 See also Tadiar, *Things Fall Away*, 12. For work that takes the approach outlined here, see Dowling, "Producing the Dining Experience"; Nakano Glenn, "From Servitude to Service Work"; Vora, *Life Support*; and Ramos-Zayas, *Street Therapists*. For a study of Filipino affects in particular, see Manalansan, "Servicing the World."

21 Long and Moore, "Introduction: Sociality's New Directions," 9.

22 On U.S. empire and militarism in the Philippines, see Baldoz, *Third Asiatic Invasion*; Campomanes, "Casualty Figures"; Go, *American Empire*; Gonzalez, *Securing Paradise*; Isaac, *American Tropics*; Kramer, "Race, Empire"; Mendoza, *Metroimperial Intimacies*; Rafael, *White Love*; D. Rodríguez, *Suspended Apocalypse*; and Shaw and Francia, *Vestiges of War*. On the Filipino diaspora, labor, and labor migration, see D. Aguilar, "Imperialism"; D. Aguilar, "Ques-

tionable Claims"; F. Aguilar, *Filipinos in Global Migration*; F. Aguilar, *Migration Revolutions*; Choy, *Empire of Care*; Constable, *Maid to Order*; Espiritu, *Home Bound*; Fajardo, *Filipino Crosscurrents*; Francisco-Menchavez, *The Labor of Care*; Guevarra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes*; Manalansan, *Global Divas*; Parreñas, *Servants of Globalization*; R. Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*; and Tadiar, *Fantasy-Production*. On Filipino subjectivities and imaginaries, see Benedicto, *Under Bright Lights*; Cruz, *Transpacific Femininities*; Galam, *Promise of the Nation*; Hau, *Subject of the Nation*; Tadiar, *Things Fall Away*; Raymundo, "Womb of the Global Economy"; and Tolentino, *National/Transnational*.

23 My attention to the Philippine political economy and culture at the national scale resonates with scholarship of a similar scope in anthropology, sociology, and literature. See Bello, *Anti-development State*; Cannell, *Power and Intimacy*; McKay, *Satanic Mills*; and Tadiar, *Things Fall Away*.

24 Fabros, "Global Economy," 346 and 351.

25 Circulating in scholarship, politics, and the popular imagination today, the notion of a special relationship between the United States and the Philippines rests on the idea of the United States as a munificent imperial power that gifted the Philippines with democratic institutions, American education, and the English language, with the relationship culminating with Filipino and American troops joining forces against a common enemy in World War II. Like other scholars in the field, I am interested in the affective underpinning of this narrative. See Ileto, *Payson and Revolution*; Gonzalez, *Securing Paradise*; and Rafael, *White Love*.

26 Poster, "Who's on the Line?," 271.

27 William McKinley, "Benevolent Assimilation Proclamation," Washington, DC, 1898.

28 McKinley, "Benevolent Assimilation Proclamation," Washington, DC, 1898.

29 We might further characterize this as the power of the colonizer's desire to materialize, through visual or aural means, their power in the *other*—what Homi K. Bhabha refers to as the discourse of mimicry. Bhabha, *Location of Culture*.

30 Quoted in Gamalinda, "English," 48.

31 In *American Tropics: Articulating Filipino America*, Allan Punzalan Isaac draws on the work of Diana Fuss to describe these dynamics of difference. Fuss writes that within the operations of empire "it therefore becomes necessary for the colonizer to subject the colonial other to a double command: be like me, don't be like me; be mimetically identical, be totally other." Quoted in Isaac, *American Tropics*, 10.

32 D. Rodríguez, *Suspended Apocalypse*, 102.

33 D. Rodríguez, *Suspended Apocalypse*, 102.

34 Choy, *Empire of Care*; Guevarra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes*; Parreñas, *Servants of Globalization*; and R. Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*. The language of labor brokerage comes from Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*.

35 Tadiar, *Fantasy-Production*, 19. See Gonzalez, *Securing Paradise*, 37–39.

36 Bello, *Anti-development State*, 13.

37 Balisacan and Hill, *Dynamics of Regional Development*; Bello, *Anti-development State*; and "Philippines: Asia's Knowledge Center."

38 "Philippines: Asia's Knowledge Center"; see Saloma-Akpedonu, *Possible Worlds*, 3.

39 Tadiar, *Fantasy-Production*, 43; and Tadiar, "If Not Mere Metaphor." On the metaphor of penetration and its shifting meaning, see Tadiar, *Fantasy-Production*, 74.

40 R. Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, xix.

41 Tadiar, "If Not Mere Metaphor." See also Caroline Hau, who writes that "power relations among countries are asymmetrical, and the hierarchy of nation-states is perceived, comprehended, organized, and managed through the logic and practice of gender inequality." *Subject of the Nation*, 191.

42 R. Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*, xix.

43 In 2008–9, for example, an entry-level agent in a Philippine call center might earn anywhere from ₱10,000 to ₱15,000 per month—about $1.20 to $1.86 per hour—while an entry-level agent in the United States might earn an hourly wage of $10.00 to $12.00.

44 Yellin, *Your Call*, 27.

45 Palm, "Phoning It In," 28–29.

46 Cohen, *Consumer's Republic*, 285.

47 Cohen, *Consumer's Republic*; and Green, *Race on the Line*. According to Venus Green, Ma Bell was deeply invested in cultivating a "white-lady" image of the telephone operator, an image that drew on contemporary racial ideology and racial exclusivity that maintained that "only white women could be 'ladies,' and the telephone company hired 'ladies' as telephone operators." The status of the white-lady image diminished with increased automation of Bell Systems, and was completely dissolved with the integration of the workforce in the 1960s. *Race on the Line*, 53.

48 Green, *Race on the Line*, 53.

49 David Rohde, "GE Uses PassageWay for CTI," *Network World*, March 25, 1996, 19.

50 Nadjii Tehrani, "A Tribute to the Distinguished Women of Our Industry," *Telemarketing and Call Center Solutions*, January 1996, 2; Tamsen Tillson, "Call Moll," *Canadian Business*, September 1996, 56–57.

51 For example, the catalog center of the major retailer J. C. Penney reported that nearly 80 percent of its workforce was composed of women. Meanwhile, at Pioneer about 50 percent of the workforce was composed of women and 50 percent of black and Hispanic workers. Kim Tyson, "Dialing for Dollars . . . Austin's Attributes Lure National Telemarketers," *Austin American-Statesman*, June 1989, 12.

52 Brenda Read, "Call Center Cool," *Facilities Design and Management*, October 1998, 54–58.

53 Morini, "Feminization of Labor," 43. For Cristina Morini, contemporary capitalism makes "social precariousness," and thus "the baggage of female experience," a "general paradigm irrespective of gender."

54 Brenda Read, "Call Center Cool," *Facilities Design and Management*, October 1998, 54–58. Computer telephone integration allows a telephone system (increasingly an Internet-based system) to connect to an agent's computer, such that when a customer phones a call center, their telephone number automatically brings up their information in the customer database. Customer relationship management tools are the databases themselves, programs that companies use to store and recall customer data, as well as to record the details of customer service calls.

55 "How One Teleservices Agency Successfully Manages Growth: An Interview with Daniel Julian," *Call Center Solutions*, August 1999, 116.

56 For evidence of early outsourcing to countries of the global south, see Martin Conboy, "Call Centers in Asia: A Question of Comparative Advantage?," *Telecom Asia*, November 1997, 82; Julekha Dash, "Customer Support Moves Overseas," *Computerworld*, March 19, 2001, 18; Vivian A. Sun, "Global Access Wireless World Opens New Opportunities to RP Firms," *BusinessWorld* (Manila), June 29, 2000, 1; Mukesh Sundaram, "Outsourcing in the Telecommunications Industry," *Call Center CRM Solutions*, September 2000, 92; Karene S. Witcher, "Asia Isn't Immune to Rash of Hot Jobs—Surveys Indicate Many Types of Employers Have Hiring on Their Minds," *Asian Wall Street Journal*, February 23, 1999.

57 See Roediger and Esch, *Production of Differences*.

58 Radhakrishnan, *Appropriately Indian*, 36–37.

59 Radhakrishnan, *Appropriately Indian*, 36–37.

60 Ong, *Neoliberalism as Exception*, 169.

61 Bello et al., *State of Fragmentation*, https://focusweb.org/content/state-fragmentation-philippines-transition.

62 Blyton and Jenkins, *Key Concepts in Work*, 118. The authors go on to say that "what at first sight may appear to be highly routine activities are often in practice significantly enhanced by the knowledge and experience that the individual workers bring to the job—be that serving meals in an old person's home, tending the garden in the local park or answering queries in the tourist information office."

63 Blyton and Jenkins, *Key Concepts in Work*, 118.

64 Heller, "Commodification of Language," 109.

65 Saloma-Akpedonu, *Possible Worlds*, 3.

66 Radhakrishnan, *Appropriately Indian*, 36.

67 On studying up, see Nader, "Up the Anthropologist"; and Dávila, *Latinos, Inc*.

68 Marcus, *Fieldwork*, 1.

69 de Genova, *Working the Boundaries*, 18.

70 Rosenbaum, "Longing and Belonging."

71 On decolonizing ethnography, anthropology, and the study of minority populations, see Allen and Jobson, "The Decolonizing Generation"; Harrison, *Decolonizing Anthropology*; Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*. On feminist pedagogy, see hooks, *Teaching Critical Thinking*. For a discussion of mastery in feminist pedagogy, see Maher and Tetreault, *The Feminist Classroom*.

72 Jackson, *Real Black*, 22–23.

73 Gupta and Ferguson, "Beyond 'Culture.'"

74 I conducted the bulk of the ethnographic observations and interviews from October 2008 to June 2009, as well as from May to June 2013. In between these fieldwork trips, I kept up with research participants through social media and e-mail, collected and analyzed relevant primary-source documents on the call center industry, and conducted interviews and fieldwork in and from the United States. As a result, I have met and observed several dozen call center agents and a handful of industry actors and government officials, and I conducted a total of fifty-five extensive one-on-one or small-group interviews. I also took tours of and observed operations in five different call centers in Manila and Bacolod combined. All the individuals mentioned in the book have been given pseudonyms, as have the various companies I discuss. Many of the company names that I use are, however, shared by real companies operating in completely different industries (e.g., Vox Elite, Premier Source), thus there is no connection between the call centers I portray here and the real companies bearing the same names. I also changed all proper nouns, such as the titles of training courses or customer service evaluation tools, to prevent them from being traced back to particular companies. The only organization whose name has not been changed is the Information Technology Business Process Outsourcing Association of the Philippines (IBPAP) because of the inherently public nature of their mission; however, I have changed the names of all the IBPAP executives that I interviewed.

75 This process occurred over an approximately three-month period.

76 R. Rodriguez, *Migrants for Export*; Guevarra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes*.

77 The term *bakla* refers to Filipino men who, instead of identifying with a static marker of sexuality like *gay*, understand themselves as situated within what Martin Manalansan describes as "a system of generative practices" that is more transitional and fluid than U.S.-based sex and gender traditions, while also "inflect[ing] gender, class, race, and ethnicity through dramaturgical or theatric idioms." Manalansan, *Global Divas*, x.

78 For accounts of transnationalism within American studies, see Briggs, McCormick, and Way, "Transnationalism" and Fishkin, "Crossroads of Culture," 2005. For transnational in Asian American studies, see Duong, "Transnationalism"; for transnationalism as a standpoint of critique of the nation-state, see de Genova, *Working the Boundaries*, 4.

Chapter 1: Listening between the Lines

1　This dichotomy is perhaps best understood as the contrast between those who, taking up critical theory, see the application of psychology to the workplace primarily as a form of domination, and those who, adopting neo-Marxist philosophy, see the proliferation of social relations and communication among workers as a major step toward worker emancipation and true pluralistic democracy. The latter idea has been associated with the work of *Multitude*, by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri. For a discussion of the former, see Illouz, *Cold Intimacies*, 17.

2　Hochschild, *Managed Heart*, 83–90.

3　Hochschild describes relational work as "recalibrations of the emotional climate" that flight attendants achieve by paying attention to each other's moods and attempting to adjust them through encouraging talk and light banter (*Managed Heart*, 114–115). These efforts, she argues, sustain the attendants' willingness to treat customers as welcomed guests, rather than nuisances, on a flight. My notion of relational labor builds on this definition by seeing in it a much more expansive and more rationalized set of techniques that management not only encourages but requires. My definition of relational labor thus overlaps with but differs from the notion of relational practice, which names the labor associated with interactive workplaces such as those found in nursing, social work, and education. Whereas these approaches emphasize the interactive work that occurs between a worker and a patient or client, my emphasis is on the way that managing relationships in call center work is part of the burden placed on workers by capital as well. On relational practices, see Fletcher, *Disappearing Acts*; and Holmes and Marra, "Relational Practice."

4　Knights and McCabe, "Governing through Teamwork," 1602.

5　Manalansan, "Servicing the World," 222. Manalansan uses the term *disaffection* to describe a state in which workers feel "antipathy and emotional distance," which "allow them to have the energy to go on, despite the onslaught of material and psychic forces from the outside" (225).

6　For a more robust discussion of subsumption, see Dyer-Witheford, *Cyber-Marx*. Although the term *subsumption* comes directly from Karl Marx, my discussion and ensuing analysis lean firmly on the ideas of autonomist Marxist theorists, especially the concepts of the socialized worker and the social factory. The socialized worker is one who draws not from a particular set of skills learned in job training but from those developed in other areas of social life, such as the home, the consumer realm, or mass media—that is, "the entire social and territorial network within which a person moves." Morini, "Feminization of Labor," 45. The term *social factory* points to the reorganization of social relations to better facilitate capitalist accumulation through intangible human capacities, including emotion, affect, desire, and attention. Writing about the role of social reproductive labor within capitalism, feminist

Marxists Maria dalla Costa and Selma James made clear that the social factory did not mean that the household was like a factory but that the capitalist system relies on "sites of extraction 'beyond the factory,'" in what they called "the community" or simply society itself. *Power of Women,* 121.

7 Vora, *Life Support.*

8 Originating with Douglas McGregor's *The Human Side of Enterprise*, published in 1960, Theory Y management is anchored in the idea that people can find pleasure and personal fulfillment in work and thus that managers should encourage participation and openness among workers so as to fully unleash this positive potential. Y-style managers are contrasted with X-style managers—those with authoritarian methods who discipline and control workers through more punitive means, and who believe that people naturally lack a strong inclination toward work.

9 On disconnection, isolation, and call center work, see Aneesh, *Neutral Accent*; and Rowe, Malhotra, and Pérez, *Answer the Call.*

10 Writing about similar dynamics in the U.S. context, Melissa Gregg argues that workplace activities "bear relation to, even if they do not fully mask, a culture of long working hours that often prevent workers from establishing more traditional friendship and community networks beyond the compulsory sociality of the office." *Work's Intimacy*, 253.

11 In his work on call center workers in the Philippines, Emmanuel David argues that transwomen in particular are expected to perform these socially reproductive roles. "Purple-Collar Labor," 188. I discuss this further in chapter 6.

12 My impression of Global Invest thus lined up with Andrew Ross's observations about call centers in India, which were promoted as "ultramodern, dotcommish funhouses, buzzing with clever hipsters." Ross, *Fast Boat to China*, 143.

13 Weeks, *Problem with Work*, 13, 60.

14 Weeks, *Problem with Work*, 60.

15 I am adapting Michel Foucault's notion of biopower—a form of state power that regulates populations through bodies—to corporate settings, where services, as commodities for the market (exchange value) and for profit (surplus value), are produced. See Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 140–141. As Hardt and Negri further explain, biopower is "a form of power that regulates social life from its interior, following it, interpreting it, absorbing it." *Empire*, 24.

16 Knights and McCabe, "Governing through Teamwork," 1588.

17 Lazzarato, "Immaterial Labor," 135.

18 For the kind of approach that frames Western-style management and Filipino culture as a clash, see Hechanova and Franco, *Way We Work*. This is not to say that my research participants did not feel a contrast between American and Filipino communicative styles. For example, agents sometimes explained

to me that the need to be direct with customers and coworkers, especially with demands or criticism, conflicted with their desire for harmony and to respond to others in the affirmative that, they felt, defined Filipino relational norms.

19 Cannell, *Power and Intimacy*. In her explanation of the concept, Cannell, building on the canonical work of Raymond Ileto (*Payson and Revolution*) and Vicente Rafael (*Contracting Colonialism*)—argues that unlike the way it has been represented in American social science literature, that is, as a social debt between two parties that spells and hardens their distance and inequality, *utang na loob* does not represent a fixed state of unequal power distribution but one that can be negotiated through proximity (10–11), or what she refers to as intimacy (230). Cannell thus rejects the interpretive framework of exchange and instead develops the language of an "emotional economy" that "represents the experiences of such encounters through terms meaning 'shame,' 'oppression,' 'enslavement,' blending and 'becoming used to,' and especially love and 'pity'" (231). See also Fajardo, *Filipino Crosscurrents*, 87–90.

20 Marla Gonzalez, "Leadership with a Heart," *Breakthroughs! The Philippine Business Process Outsourcing Newsletter*, July–September 2011: 9.

21 Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*, 303.

22 My discussion of the way particular Filipino cultural traits are made compatible with global systems of production resonates with Smitha Radhakrishnan's notion of the "cultural streamlining" she observed among Indian IT professionals. Radhakrishnan, *Appropriately Indian*, 5.

23 See, *Decolonized Eye*, 91.

24 This willingness to work on one's own emotions to achieve a state of agreement with the emotions of others—what Hochschild, writing about gender and emotion work, calls "shadow labor"—tends to be invisible, giving the doer the appearance of a natural passivity or making the behavior seem "automatic." *Managed Heart*, 167.

Chapter 2: Contesting Skill and Value

1 At the time of my research, ₱10,000–15,000 equaled approximately $215–$321.

2 The standard pro-globalization argument here is that although corporations don't pay offshore workers the same wages as workers onshore in the United States or other advanced industrial nations, wages for offshore work are still higher than those that can be found in other nonglobalized sectors of the economy—that is, that something is better than nothing and that people in poor countries are just happy to have a job. Yet the fact that call center wages are considerably higher than what other workers could demand elsewhere in the Philippines, and thus the standard of living may be rising among call center workers, does not change the structural relations in any fundamental

way; it only makes the asymmetry harder to see. Also, it is simply untrue that workers in poor countries are *just* happy to have a job. I address this point at the end of the chapter.

3   Developed by market researchers, these categories are used in everyday conversation among Filipinos, and definitions of them can be readily found on the web. I thus reproduce them here, although with caution. Roughly speaking, classes A, B, and C might be called affluent, middle class, and lower-middle class, respectively, while AB might be referred to as upper-middle class. Like the concept of class generally, the distinctions in the Philippine context revolve around property ownership, family wealth, education, income, occupation, and, more recently, access to status-oriented consumer goods. Class A individuals, like my research participant named Mia Mendez, have been educated in elite institutions, have significant family wealth that can be passed on to children (*mana*), and live in large homes or compounds. Like their counterparts in other classes, class B individuals have finished or are enrolled in college, yet their family income and wealth—property, savings, and so on—are quite modest compared to those of class A, the educational institutions they attended are respectable but not necessarily elite, and they have minimal personal possessions (e.g., cars, personal electronics). Compared to class C individuals, however, class B, or middle-class Filipinos, have relatively consistent access to not simply the means of survival (food, housing, clothing) but some material comforts. Classes D and E are considered the poor and uneducated who lack assets of any kind, and they are not well represented in the call center industry. See PinoyMoneyTalk, "Socioeconomic Classes (SEC) ABCDE Explained," October 12, 2012, http://www.pinoymoneytalk.com/sec-abcde-percentage-population/.

4   When I returned to Bacolod for follow-up research in 2013, this problem had taken a different form. Although it had become more socially acceptable for members of the privileged classes to go into call center work, they were just there, as one manager I interviewed put it, "for something to do" and thus were not as motivated to perform as those who were working out of economic necessity. To a certain extent, then, it was perhaps just a matter of time before would-be employees and their parents gained knowledge of and confidence in the industry. But the point remains that local configurations of class structures, status, and identity matter to the labor market and the experience of young people within it.

5   Andrew Ross notes a similar mentality on the part of Chinese workers in offshore technology jobs. See *Fast Boat to China*.

6   It is important to note that these attitudes on the part of agents did not go unnoticed by management, which, in some call centers that I knew of, adopted the kinds of institutionalized diversity training seen in the United States. I discuss the pitfalls of such training in the following chapter.

7   My research participants' way of relating to me as a possible representative of

their experiences to a specifically American audience demonstrates the extent to which I as an ethnographer was interpellated into the ongoing tacit debate about the meaning and value of their work and thus shows how research "subjects" never simply see themselves as subservient to the researcher or research process but actively involve themselves in it.

8 Luz, "A Time to Celebrate."

9 Juan Miguel Luz, "Statement Poorly Expressed, Speaker Offers His Apologies," *Philippine Daily Inquirer,* April 9, 2013.

10 Mirchandani, *Phone Clones*, 160n4. Mirchandani cites Goldberg, *The Threat of Race*.

11 Mirchandani, *Phone Clones*, 14.

12 This is not to suggest that all applicants hired by a call center speak flawless English in the eyes of corporate management, trainers, and customers. As Cecilia Maribal Rivas has shown in the case of call center workers in El Salvador, the ideal English speaker does not simply exist; he or she must be produced through training and discipline in the workplace. See Rivas, *Salvadoran Imaginaries.*

13 Palatino, quoted in Carl Marc Ramota, "Economic Woes Drive Bright Graduates to Call Centers," *Bulatlat* 5, no. 7 (March 20–26, 2005).

14 *Effort* refers to the exertion required by the specific job task, while *intensity* refers to the conditions under which the effort is made. See Blyton and Jenkins, *Key Concepts in Work*, 58–64.

15 Bello et al., *State of Fragmentation.*

16 Sarah Raymundo describes the state as the primary promoter of transnational discourses that "normalize and naturalize the exploitative conditions of neoliberal globalization." "Womb of the Global Economy," 551–552. Furthermore, Caroline Hau argues that "telling the nation's 'life story' is an intrinsic aspect of constituting the nation as a form of community." *Subject of the Nation*, 9.

17 Bennet Dahl, "BPO Roadmap Plots Philippines Direction for 2010," *Breakthroughs! The Philippine Business Process Outsourcing Newsletter*, May–June 2007: 2.

18 Michael Alan Hamlin, "The Tempered Enthusiasm of the IT-BPO Industry," *Breakthroughs! The Philippine Business Process Outsourcing Newsletter*, April–June 2011: 4.

19 As Kalindi Vora demonstrates, biocapital is value created through "investment in human energy in other bodies," including gestational surrogacy and organ transplant but also "'noninnovative' knowledge work" or customer care. *Life Support*, 1.

20 One of the first of these talent-development initiatives was the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority's Training for Work Scholarship Program. Begun under the Arroyo administration, the program subsidizes the cost of training call center applicants so they can successfully apply for

call center work. "Hiring Rate in Contact Centers Expected to Rise," *Break-throughs! The Philippine Business Process Outsourcing Newsletter*, July-August 2008: 12. Similarly, a program called ADEPT (Advanced English Proficiency Training) was developed in response to the low passing rate of 5 percent for college graduates who apply to work for IT-BPO companies, with language skills being the main reason for not meeting recruitment standards. Marla Silayan-Gonzalez, "ADEPT Program to Further Develop BPO Workforce's English Proficiency Skills," *Breakthroughs! The Philippine Business Process Outsourcing Newsletter*, April–June 2009: 1–4.

21 Penny Bongato, "BPAP National Competency Test (BNCT) Identifies Critical Competences Needed by Industry," *Breakthroughs! The Philippine Business Process Outsourcing Newsletter*, April–June 2011: 15; Abigail Ho, "More BPO Assessment Tests Set," Business/Headlines, Inquirer.net, October 31, 2011, http://business.inquirer.net/27573/more-bpo-assessment-tests-set.

22 Penny Bongato, "Talent Development Initiatives for Globally Competitive Professionals," *Breakthroughs! The Philippine Business Process Outsourcing Newsletter*, July-September, 2011: 6.

23 "BPAP Announces Name Change to IBPAP," *Breakthroughs! The Philippine Business Process Outsourcing Newsletter*, April 2013: 2.

24 Penny Bongato, "Talent Development Initiatives for Globally Competitive Professionals," *Breakthroughs! The Philippine Business Process Outsourcing Newsletter*, July–September, 2011: 6.

25 Martin Crisostomo, "IT-BPO Means Bringing Purpose to Outsourcing," *Breakthroughs! The Philippine Business Process Outsourcing Newsletter*, July–September 2011: 6.

26 Martin Crisostomo, "It's Time for Heroes to Come Home," *Breakthroughs! The Philippine Business Process Outsourcing Newsletter*, October 2010–January 2011: 8.

27 Martin Crisostomo, "IT-BPO Means Bringing Purpose to Outsourcing," *Breakthroughs! The Philippine Business Process Outsourcing Newsletter* 5, July–September, 2011: 6.

28 Crisostomo, "IT-BPO Means Bringing Purpose to Outsourcing."

29 Salvador Bubbles, "Everyday Heroes," *Breakthroughs! The Philippine Business Process Outsourcing Newsletter*, January 2015: 1.

30 In 2011 the corridor housed seventy-five thousand call centers and BPO firms, which were being served by a high-bandwidth fiber backbone and digital network. *The Report: Philippines 2010*, Oxford Business Group, December 16, 2009: 141.

31 Tadiar, *Fantasy-Production*.

32 Philippine Institute for Development Studies, "Services: Today's Most Prolific Industry," *Development Research News* 23, no. 5 (September–October 2005): 8.

33 "Investor Primer 2012," Business Process Outsourcing Association of the Philippines, 14–15.

34 Anna Romina Guevarra, for example, writes about the ways that the reification of care as a distinctly feminine capacity, coupled with the idea that Filipinos possess a "pleasing and comforting nature," constructs Filipino women as ideal nurses, while Kale Bantigue Fajardo reveals how the Philippine state cites Filipinos' labor in the Spanish galleon trade as making them particularly skilled at seafaring work. See Guevarra, *Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes*, 133–34; and Fajardo, *Filipino Crosscurrents*, 42.

35 The notion of a postconquest identity comes from D. Rodríguez, *Suspended Apocalypse*, 4–5.

36 I refer to the organization as BPAP rather than IBPAP because these interviews took place in 2009, before its name change in 2013.

37 On cost cutting, see Ross, *Fast Boat to China*, 144. See also Aneesh, *Neutral Accent*, 57.

38 See Aneesh, *Neutral Accent*.

39 Aneesh, *Neutral Accent*, 3.

40 Tsing, "Supply Chains," 157.

41 McKinley, "Benevolent Assimilation Proclamation."

42 Rodríguez, *Suspended Apocalypse*, 102.

43 Jonathan de Luzuriaga, "Filipino Qualities as Competitive Edge in This Crisis," *Breakthroughs! The Philippine Business Process Outsourcing Newsletter*, January–March 2009: 5.

44 Jonathan de Luzuriaga, "Filipino Qualities as Competitive Edge in This Crisis."

45 From the Philippine perspective, the key points of comparison between the two countries have been primarily cultural: while India may have the infrastructure and experience to handle the type of work being outsourced there, Filipinos are said to possess many more of the intangible qualities, or soft skills (such as a caring attitude and comprehensible accents), needed to secure the confidence of Western customers. Thus, a discourse of Filipinos as *more human* than Indians ensues.

46 Although the Philippines does not meet the official criteria for an emerging economy, I would argue that we can extend the spirit of this label to the country in this context, since the discourse of emergence evokes the notion of economic partnership and participation between historically strong and growing nations.

47 The language of "nested ideologies" was shared with me by Sumanth Gopinath, who heard and commented on a portion of this chapter at the American Studies Association's annual meeting in 2013.

48 Rafael, *White Love*, 199.

49 Culpeper, *History of English*, 82–83.

50 Smith, "Global English," 57.

51 With the boom in outsourcing, Eric Friginal writes, "it is clear that fluency, accent reduction, and the acquisition of high-level English"—all of which are associated with American English rather than English as an international language—"have gained the upper hand in setting the direction of language planning and shaping of popular opinion." Published in 2009, Friginal's book goes on to foreshadow how offshore outsourcing may affect the debate over language policy in the Philippines: "As a key growth industry currently providing jobs and revenues to the country, the government and the education sectors are ready to respond to the language needs of call centers . . . Highlighting the importance of fluency in English following the typical American variety could define the nature of macro and micro language policies in the Philippines." *Language of Outsourced Call Centers*, 32.

52 Prendergast, *Buying into English*.

53 Chow, *Not Like a Native Speaker*, 31.

54 Rafael, *White Love*, 198–199.

55 Here I take up a critique articulated by Monica Heller, who has argued that the celebration of English as the language of global capitalism erases "the problem of who defines the value of linguistic commodities or, more broadly, of who regulates the market." "Commodification of Language," 103.

Chapter 3: Inside Vox Elite

 1 This disconnection between the two companies is what A. Aneesh refers to as a divergence between organizational spaces, which is one of three main challenges to communication in call centers. See Aneesh, *Neutral Accent*.

 2 Hochschild, *Managed Heart*, 96.

 3 Said, *Orientalism*.

 4 For an illuminating study of the way capital disciplines both customers and labor in service work, see Leidner, *Fast Food, Fast Talk*.

 5 In this way, the class illustrated rather perfectly what Nick Dyer-Witheford describes as "the increasing popular capacity to reappropriate communication technologies" for personal or political ends. *Cyber-Marx*, 71.

 6 Although it is often not discussed in ethnographic analysis, boredom during fieldwork is a common experience. It is sometimes addressed in lessons on ethnographic methodology. See Blommart et al., *Ethnographic Fieldwork*, 37; Pollard, "Field of Screams"; and van der Berg, "Boredom and Lethargy."

 7 There is a large literature that examines these dynamics of inclusion. See Espiritu, *Home Bound*; Isaac, *American Tropics*; Manalansan and Espiritu, *Filipino Studies*; Tiongson, Gutierrez, and Gutierrez, *Positively No Filipinos Allowed*; and Shaw and Francia, *Vestiges of War*. For a critique of the idea of

a historical symbiosis between the Philippines and the United States, see D. Rodríguez, *Suspended Apocalypse*. On the politics and language of "inclusionary racism," see Espiritu, *Home Bound*; and Kramer, "Race, Empire."

8   On Philippine amnesia, see Shaw and Francia, *Vestiges of War*; and Tiongson, Gutierrez, and Gutierrez, *Positively No Filipinos Allowed*.

9   Isaac, *American Tropics*, 11.

10 Kiran Mirchandani discusses the characterization of Indian English as "deficient" in *Phone Clones*, 36. In CC, Bella also went on to explain that agents would receive low marks on their QA evaluations if their construction of a sentence in the English language sounded too much like the syntax of Tagalog (or another native Filipino language). This protocol is designed, she explained, to prevent agents from "thinking in Tagalog but speaking in English."

11 Shome, "Thinking through Diaspora," 110.

12 Shome, "Thinking through Diaspora," 111–112.

13 Aneesh, *Neutral Accent*, 7–8.

14 Chow, *Not Like a Native Speaker*, 42.

15 Chow, *Not Like a Native Speaker*, 45; emphasis in original.

16 It is also worth remembering here that, as Fenella Cannell has argued in *Power and Intimacy in the Christian Philippines* with regard to Filipino culture, imitation is a practice in intimacy, which in turn constitutes the practice of negotiating unequal power relations. Thus, Filipino call center agents are not simply imitating American voices and accents but, in speaking the language of those in power, are also constantly mediating the power differential.

17 At the time of my research, "he" and "his" were the pronouns that Sammy was using, at least in the workplace, where we primarily met and interacted.

18 Ross, *Fast Boat to China*, 22.

19 As Hochschild argues, emotional labor requires "deep acting" (*Managed Heart*, 38), or the use of the "trained imagination" (36) to actually feel the feelings that one is displaying—or at least to close as much as possible the gap between what one feels and what one displays.

20 See Mirchandani, "Practices of Global Capital," 362–363.

21 Sherman, *Class Acts*, 19.

22 For an authoritative account of the mutual imbrication of militarism and tourism in the Philippines, see Gonzalez, *Securing Paradise*.

23 Gregory sees this racialized structure of feeling as an important affective component of what he calls "imperial masculinity." *Devil behind the Mirror*, 133.

Chapter 4: Service with a Style

1   Emphasis in original.

2   Chin, *Purchasing Power*, 125.

3   In her study of consumer culture, inequality, and black children in New Haven, Connecticut, Elizabeth Chin describes how "going to the mall alone is

a thrilling experience" that allows her ten-year-old informants to "be playful in ways that are impossible at home and in the neighborhood." *Purchasing Power,* 107.

4 I use the term *life stages* to denote not age but relation to family life—that is, whether my research participants lived with and were supported by, or were supporting, their parents; whether they were married; whether they had children of their own; and so on. All of these situations can be the case for Filipinos, especially those in their twenties.

5 Although it is often difficult to track the many factors that go into constructing the notion of class in the Philippines, I often found that it was not an individual's income alone but the extent to which an individual could rely on the incomes or resources of other family members that was crucial in these constructions. For example, a working single mother whose parents contribute to her budget may have more economic resources than a two-parent family with no other source of income than their own wages. Hence, I focus on individuals whose families rely on their call center income alone.

6 In her study of call center workers in India, Reena Patel discovers class differences among workers similar to those in the Philippines. *Working the Night Shift,* 124.

7 For Clive Barnett, Nick Clarke, Paul Cloke, and Alice Malpass, ethical problematization names the way that people "make a 'project' out of various aspects of their lives." Quoting Ian Hodges (2004, 457), the authors explain that "the concept of ethical problematization directs analytical attention to investigating the conditions 'for individuals to recognize themselves as particular kinds of person and to reflect upon their own conduct—to problematize it—such that they may work upon and transform themselves in certain ways and toward particular goals.'" "Elusive Subjects of Neo-Liberalism," 641.

8 Foucault, *Foucault Reader,* 340–372.

9 See Kimura, "Middle Classes," 266–268; and Pinches, "The Philippines' New Rich," 109.

10 In addition, the Aquino era (1986–1992) saw a rise in the international price for agricultural exports, the state's funding of labor-intensive infrastructure projects, and a 20 percent increase in the state's number of employees—all of which expanded the consumer economy.

11 Pinches, "The Philippines' New Rich," 123.

12 Pinches, "The Philippines' New Rich," 123.

13 Hall, "Deconstructing 'the Popular.'"

14 Cultural studies scholar Randy Martin theorized risk, a central feature of neoliberalism, as a movement marked by the "risk-driven accumulation of finance" by the investor. For Martin, "the investor would become the holiest figure in the trinity of personhood completed by citizen and consumer." *Financialization of Daily Life,* 22.

15 In 2005 the credit card receivables of universal, commercial, and thrift banks

in the Philippines were valued at about ₱70 billion ($1.5 billion). By December 2007 they were valued at around ₱117 billion ($2.5 billion). In 2008 consumer loans made up about 10 percent of total bank lending. See W. Tan, "Consumer Credit."

16 See Salzinger, *Genders in Production;* and Wright, *Disposable Women.*

17 Recent heightened attention to consumer culture in relation to postindustrialism, late capitalism, and neoliberalism has highlighted that the Fordist idea and experience of consumption as a mirror of production—that is, a process reflective of but experientially separate from the productive realm of work—has shifted, such that consumption itself is a productive process. As Nick Dyer-Witheford explains, in the era of the Fordist factory, "capitalist organization . . . requires the synchronization of the factory, where surplus value is pumped out on the assembly line, with the household, where the punishing force of such work is repaired, displaced, and hidden, and the pay packet translated into purchases of standardized domestic goods." *Cyber-Marx,* 74.

18 On the way that commodity culture ushers into a consumer-based society the notion of the right to personal pleasure, see Liechty, *Suitably Modern*, 98–99.

19 "Editor's Note," *Spiff*, May 2008, 6.

20 For a definition of *bakla,* see the introduction, n. 77.

21 In her canonical work on offshore informatics women workers in Barbados, *High Tech in High Heels in the Global Economy: Women, Work, and Pink-Collar Identities in the Caribbean*, Carla Freeman examines the sartorial practices of her Afro-Barbadian informants, arguing that their engagement in fashion is crucial to their construction of professional identities as well as being a source of shared pleasure.

22 Wissinger, "Modelling," 258.

23 Thrift, "Material Practices of Glamour," 292, 297.

24 Martin has referred to this shift as "the financialization of daily life," in his book by that title.

25 I use the term *youth* not only because most people in call centers are in their twenties or thirties but also because, in the Philippine context, workers in this demographic are increasingly the subject and object of the productivist-consumerist ethos—in part because the median age in the country as of 2010 was less than twenty-four years old. "The Age and Sex Structure of the Philippine Population (Facts from the 2010 Census)," Philippine Statistical Authority, August 30, 2012, https://psa.gov.ph/content/age-and-sex-structure -philippine-population-facts-2010-census. Moreover, my definition of productive youth overlaps thematically with Leslie Salzinger's analysis of "productive femininity." *Genders in Production*, 51.

26 Bello, *Anti-development State*, 102.

27 "Marketing in Manila," *Business Asia*, January 18, 1993, 7–8.

Chapter 5: Queering the Call Center

1 "HIV Cases Soar among Filipino Yuppies, Call Center Workers," ABS-CBN *News,* January 27, 2010, http://news.abs-cbn.com/lifestyle/01/27/10/hiv-cases -soar-among-filipino-yuppies-call-center-workers; and "Cabral Vows to In- tensify Gov't Info Drive against HIV/AIDS," Nationwide International News, *Philippine News Agency,* January 29, 2010. The Philippine National AIDS/HIV Registry reported that the number of new HIV cases recorded for all of 2009 stood at 835 (already the highest in twenty-five years) and that in the first ten months of 2010 alone, the number of cases had shot up to 1,305—representing a 56 percent increase over the previous year. The Philippine National AIDS/ HIV Registry also reported that 4,567 Filipinos total were infected with HIV, although a more realistic estimate put that figure around 9,000. Johanna D. Poblete, "AIDS Advisory Body to Lobby for Stronger Law," *BusinessWorld,* January 10, 2011; and Johanna D. Poblete, "HIV-AIDS: The Frightening Real- ity," *BusinessWorld,* March 12, 2010. Of course, these numbers are remarkably low compared to HIV rates in countries similar in size to the Philippines—an issue that has puzzled epidemiologists and public health officials since the first case of AIDS in the Philippines was recorded in the mid-1980s. Seth Mydans, "Low Rate of AIDS Virus in Philippines Is a Puzzle," *New York Times*, April 20, 2003.

2 "Cabral Vows to Intensify Gov't Info Drive against HIV/AIDS," Nationwide International News, *Philippine News Agency*, January 29, 2010.

3 "HIV Cases Soar among Filipino Yuppies, Call Center Workers; Casual Sex, Orgies Are Seen as Possible Cause of the Problem," ABS-CBN *News*, January 27, 2010, http://news.abs-cbn.com/lifestyle/01/27/10/hiv-cases-soar-among -filipino-yuppies-call-center-workers.

4 M. Tan, "AIDS," 153.

5 Antonio Figueroa, "Rise in HIV/AIDS Cases in Philippines Alarming," *Digital Journal*, January 30, 2010, http://www.digitaljournal.com/article/286683; em- phasis added.

6 My approach is grounded in an understanding of HIV/AIDS as inciting moral panics; in the Philippines, this panic points as much to the assumed social de- viance and symbolic threat of call center workers as at-risk bodies as they do to an epidemiological crisis. See Boellstorff, "Nuri's Testimony"; Crimp and Rolston, *AIDS Demo Graphics*; Glick Schiller, "What's Wrong"; Root, "'Mixing' as an Ethnoetiology"; Patton, *Inventing AIDS*; Sangaramoorthy, "We All Have AIDS"; M. Tan, "AIDS"; and Treichler, *How to Have Theory.*

7 Treichler, *How to Have Theory*, 1.

8 M. Tan, "AIDS," 163.

9 Root, "'Mixing' as an Ethnoetiology."

10 Antonio Figueroa, "Rise in HIV/AIDS Cases in Philippines Alarming," *Digital Journal*, January 30, 2010, http://www.digitaljournal.com/article/286683.

11 Rey M. Nasol, "Steady Rise in HIV Cases Noted in the Philippines; BPOs as Hi-risk Denied," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, February 5, 2010, https://www.press reader.com/philippines/philippine-daily-inquirer/20100205/282806417452073.

12 "HIV Cases Soar among Filipino Yuppies, Call Center Workers," *ABS-CBN News*, January 27, 2010, http://news.abs-cbn.com/lifestyle/01/27/10/hiv-cases -soar-among-filipino-yuppies-call-center-workers.

13 For such dynamics in relation to India, see Hegde, "Spaces of Exception"; and Patel, *Working the Night Shift*.

14 "NBI Seizes 155 Computers in Cyber Pornography," Nationwide International News, *Philippine News Agency*, December 7, 2007.

15 Hegde, "Spaces of Exception," 183.

16 Hegde, "Spaces of Exception," 184. For the story on Internet cafés and call centers as "sex cybernets," see "Laoag Dad Calls for Regulation of Internet Cafes," Nationwide International News, *Philippine News Agency*, August 12, 2010.

17 "HIV Cases Soar among Filipino Yuppies, Call Center Workers," *ABS-CBN News*, January 27, 2010, http://news.abs-cbn.com/lifestyle/01/27/10/hiv-cases -soar-among-filipino-yuppies-call-center-workers; and Figueroa, "Rise in HIV/AIDS Cases in Philippines Alarming," *Digital Journal*, January 30, 2010, http://www.digitaljournal.com/article/286683.

18 As Michael Tan writes, "HIV has, unfortunately, reinforced class discrimination and pooled prejudicial images: on one hand, the healthy wealthy; on the other, the diseased poor—now overlapping with images of the promiscuous. I will never forget asking, in a central Philippine city, one gay professional if we could conduct HIV prevention workshops for gay men in his area. He looked at me and said, 'Not for professionals. We don't need it. We should do it for the low-class ones. They're the ones with the risky behavior.'" "AIDS," 159.

19 Marjun A. Baguio, "According to Study: Call Center Agents Prone to HIV-AIDS," *The Philippine Star*, January 30, 2010, http://www.philstar.com/cebu -news/544838/according-study-call-center-agents-prone-hiv-aids.

20 In her ethnography of migrant working women in Mumbai, *Street Corner Secrets: Sex, Work, and Migration in the City of Mumbai*, Svati Shah demonstrates that far from being an exceptional realm of work experienced as outside more legitimate sources of income, sex commerce and bartering are best understood on a continuum of survival strategies used by women in the city.

21 Xenos and Kabamalan, "Emerging Forms."

22 Manzano, *Callwork*, "Interview."

23 In "Identity, Mobility, and Urban Place-Making: Exploring Gay Life in Manila," Dana Collins discusses how a discourse of openness is also used to describe places in Manila where people—mostly men—can be public about their sexual orientation toward others of the same sex.

24 As explained in chapter 3, Sammy used the pronouns "he" and "him" at the time of my research.

25 As Julius Bautista reminds his readers, even though church and state are officially separate in the Philippines, the former continues to exert influence on extraconstitutional and legislative processes. Population growth and reproductive health are issues where the church has such influence. Bautista, "Church and State."

26 A majority of Filipinos supported the passage of the bill, which is not to suggest that the bill was unequivocally accepted by its supporters. Like other reproductive health bills, the Philippines' bill was in part framed in terms of population control, which members of the Philippine Left and activists within the national democratic movement reject.

27 See d'Emilio, "Capitalism and Gay Identity."

28 Brenda Alegre, "Becoming: A Transgender's Story," *Spiff* 1, no. 6 (2008): 51.

29 Bautista, "Church and State," 37. The term *culture of death* was first used by Bishop Karol Wojtyla (who became Pope John Paul II) in 1960 in his book *Love and Responsibility*, a philosophical and ethical treatise that states the Catholic Church's position on the "full meaning of erotic love within the context of married life." Wojtlya, *Love and Responsibility*.

30 On the ability of stories to narrate social location, see Duggan, "Trials of Alice Mitchell."

31 As John d'Emilio puts it, "in divesting the household of its economic independence and fostering the separation of sexuality from procreation, capitalism has created conditions that allow some men and women to organize a personal life around their erotic/emotional attraction to their own sex." "Capitalism and Gay Identity," 185.

32 For example, a study conducted by the PGH using rapid HIV tests targeted men only, while the ABS-CBN news article about the study pointed out that, of the 406-person sample, 130 were male call center agents who have sex with men. Other men in the sample were men who have sex with men but who are not call center workers, bisexual males, and male sex workers. This information is followed by a quote from an internal medicine intern at the PGH: "The data we are seeing now, the one that alarms us, is just focused on this small subset of call center agents. So these are the vulnerable call center agents . . . men having sex with men, gays or bisexuals engaging in high-risk behavior." "No Link between Call Centers and HIV Spread?," *ABS-CBN News*, February 10, 2010, http://news.abs-cbn.com/lifestyle/02/09/10/no-link-between-call-centers-and-hiv-spread. This shift in attention alone signifies something important in the public perception of the disease. Michael Tan has argued that in contrast to the way the AIDS epidemic in the United States has been linked quite closely with male homosexuality, such associations have not dominated media representations in the Philippines. This has meant that although homosexual and bisexual men accounted for 20 percent of all reported HIV cases in the Philippines at the end of the twentieth century, their visibility to the public has been disproportionately low by comparison. The link between

HIV and call centers forged a decade later thus shows a different dynamic at play. Tan, "AIDS," 148–149.

33 This situation echoes what Gayle Rubin has written about the United States in the 1980s: "Just when homosexuals have had some success in throwing off the taint of mental disease, gay people find themselves metaphorically welded to an image of lethal physical deterioration. The syndrome, its peculiar qualities, and its transmissibility are being used to reinforce old fears that sexual activity, homosexuality, and promiscuity lead to disease and death." "Thinking Sex," 26.

34 David, "Purple-Collar Labor," 188.

35 Despite the call centers' diversity policy with regard to hiring gay men and women, lesbians are hardly, if ever, explicitly mentioned by informants as a significant demographic within the workforce.

36 Hochschild, *Managed Heart*.

37 Cannell, *Power and Intimacy*.

38 Writing within the Indonesian context, Tom Boellstorff has argued that "HIV/AIDS is powerfully linked to questions of knowledge" (351), such as knowing the origins of AIDS, knowing about HIV as a virus, knowing who has HIV and knowing why they became infected, knowing how not to become infected with HIV, and knowing how to treat or someday cure HIV infection (358). Boellstorff's emphasis on knowledge does not, however, recapitulate the information deficit model, with its problematic assumption that information is effective as such and thus leads directly to behavioral changes. Rather, Boellstorff focuses on how knowledge of HIV/AIDS shapes how his Indonesian *waria* ("roughly, male transvestite," 351) informant Nuri experiences and talks about HIV, and thus how Nuri produces herself as an ODHA (*Oran Dengan HIV/AIDS*), or "Person With HIV/AIDS" (358). "Nuri's Testimony."

39 Drawing connections among lifestyle, HIV risk, and a particular category of person, doctors, journalists, and state officials drew on and conflated the two dominant categories through which a person's risk for HIV is assessed within the medical establishment: who a person is and what acts and relationships the person engages in. The latter are often understood as part of a lifestyle or culture marked as *other*, which can produce and proliferate ideas about a particular group but not necessarily a better understanding of the cause of contracting and transmitting HIV. See Glick Schiller, "What's Wrong," 243–249.

40 Bong Austero, "HIV/AIDS in the Workplace," Opinion, *Manila Standard Today*, February 1, 2010.

41 Joseph Ryan /AKMA-PTM, "HIV Infected Call Center Agent," YouTube video, 2:15, February 28, 2010, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcaPPM07TEM.

42 Translation by Agnes (Bing) Magtoto.

43 ABS-CBN News, "Lifestyle, Not Job, Increases HIV Risk, Says Agent," *YouTube.com*, January 29, 2010, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ClJyBFEt5EM.

Conclusion

1 Reese and Soco-Carreon, "No Call for Action?," 157. In addition to the two I named here, the authors point to a number of other reasons that unionization has not occurred in the Philippine call center industry: workers' lack of understanding as to the source of their grievances, the perception that grievance procedures are merely token or symbolic gestures, call center hopping, the normalization of working conditions, the stigma attached to unions, and workers' underestimation of their market power. I would qualify the latter by adding that while I believe that workers understand their level of power in the market, they channel this understanding into uplifting the nation rather than attempting to disrupt the power of capital.

2 Here I echo A. Aneesh's question as to why there has been no collective struggle against the night shift, given its intensified use around the world. *Neutral Accent*, 127.

3 Roberts, "Commercial Content Moderation." On Filipinos as commercial content moderators, see Adrian Chen, "The Laborers Who Keep Dick Pics and Beheadings Out of Your Facebook Feed," *Wired*, October 23, 2014.

4 Some of the changes that I am referring to are indeed already taking place. Basic tasks such as retrieving customer data or making changes to a mobile phone account are already being done by software systems, which are becoming increasingly sophisticated. As a result, some predict that in the future humans will be tasked only with jobs that require more complex language skills, such as sales or medical consultation. The trend I want to highlight here, however, is that with these changes there may be an ever-widening gap between the affective quality and intensity of such work—that is, a gap between work one finds fulfilling (such as health care) and that which is directly damaging (such as handling the most irate customers whose demands cannot be met by an automated system). See "The End of the Line," *Economist*, February 6, 2016, https://www.economist.com/news/international/21690041-call-centres-have-created-millions-good-jobs-emerging-world-technology-threatens.

5 See Fernández-Kelly and García, "Underground Economy."

6 On the betrayal of the narrative of American entitlement to knowledge-economy jobs for college-educated men specifically, see Ong, *Neoliberalism as Exception,* 157–160. On the relationship to Trump, see Hochschild, *Strangers*; and Amanda Taub, "Behind 2016's Turmoil, a Crisis of White Identity," *New York Times*, November 1, 2016.

7 Teehankee, "Duterte's Resurgent Nationalism," 79; on comparisons between Duterte and Trump, see Thompson, "Introduction," 4.

8 Trisha Macas, "In China, Duterte Draws Cheers by Saying Americans 'Loud, Rowdy, Not Adjusted to Civility,'" *GMA News Online*, October 20, 2016, http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/585826/news/nation/in-china-duterte-draws-cheers-by-saying-americans-loud-rowdy-not-adjusted-to-civility.

This page intentionally left blank