



The Day the Dancers Stayed: Performing in the Filipino/American Diaspora

Theodore S. Gonzalves

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Pilipino Cultural Nights at American campuses have been a rite of passage for youth culture and a source of local community pride since the 1980s. Through performances - and parodies of them - these celebrations of national identity through music, dance and theatrical narratives reemphasize what it means to be Filipino American. In "The Day the Dancers Stayed", scholar and performer Theodore Gonzalves uses interviews and participant observer techniques to consider the relationship between the invention of performance repertoire and the development of diasporic identification. Gonzalves traces a genealogy of performance repertoire from the 1930s to the present. Culture nights serve several functions as exercises in nostalgia, celebrations of rigid community entertainment, and occasionally forums for political intervention. Taking up more recent parodies of Pilipino Cultural Nights, Gonzalves discusses how the rebellious spirit that enlivened the original seditious performances has been stifled.

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