

FOREWORD

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The ability to assess and analyze media texts is now one of the privileges enjoyed by most audiences in this contemporary generation. The widespread use of digital media, mainly social media platforms, has enabled us to easily access, generate, and engage in social and political discourse. The affordances of digital platforms to allow audiences to shift the balance in their favor have empowered and restricted content creation and limited the “freedom” that this “free” space provides. We have become more critical of the need to change how we use and consume digital spaces and content.

I have tried various approaches to dealing with my communication and media consumption processes, both traditional and digital. Before joining the faculty at UP Visayas, I worked as a regional television reporter in Negros Occidental. My media consumption and production have shifted from news reporting to teaching communication and media studies. These developments resulted from years of arduous investigation into the communication field and ongoing studies. This is a privilege, and everyone should also have the opportunity to hone their ability to critically analyze media texts at all production, consumption, and distribution stages to maximize their communicative experience and contribute to public discourse.

This issue of the *Philippines Communication Society (PCS) Review* provides us with these privileges and opportunities to assess our position regarding our views and understanding of media consumption. Focusing on “Communication in the Time of Anxiety, Online Affordances, and Advocacy” provides readers with insight into the contributor’s reflexive experiences, particularly as they relate to pressing issues presented across various media platforms.

The curated issue for this year offers readers an opportunity to explore the various communication processes, beginning with a personal account of coping with anxiety, followed by their engagement with online media affordances, non-mediated communication, and advocacy and communication. The eleven research articles, two essays, and one interview transcript in this issue address a wide range of subjects, such as local experiences, youth political engagement and political efficacy, news portrayals of the drug war, self-representation, modern queer representation, digital politics, targeted SNS advertising, Indigenous media scholarship, and more. Every article could serve as a springboard for

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further research by scholars or anybody else interested in learning more about the dynamics of how we respond to media and adapt to technological changes that affect and influence how we connect with people online or offline.

These significant research contributions also enable readers to value the role of interpretive understanding in how they engage with and “read” their media consumption. Particularly in a generation where technological advancements impact the production and consumption of media texts, readers are urged to actively engage in critically analyzing their communication processes.

We applaud the Philippines Communication Society for consistently fostering the growth of a more liberating media landscape.