

“Skid Row”: Filipinos, Race and the Social Construction of Space in San Diego

By Rudy P. Guevarra, Jr.*

Like other racial and ethnic minority groups in early twentieth century San Diego, Filipinos found their use of space profoundly circumscribed. Racial segregation restricted where Filipinos could live, work and enjoy their leisure time. Like other Asian immigrant groups before them, Filipinos were prohibited from owning land or property in California due to existing alien land laws. In addition, the city’s racial structure also ensured that Filipinos were denied access to rental housing in various parts of San Diego, which limited their choices. As a result of these restrictions, Filipinos remained in several enclaves: the South Bay and Southeastern sections of San Diego, small pockets in Coronado and La Jolla (known as the “servants quarters”) and in downtown San Diego’s Chinatown, or as many called it, “skid row.”¹ This area, which was described as the “tenderloin” of San Diego, was as one 1946 report noted, “the location of most of the interracial



Stingaree, 3rd Avenue and J Street, c. 1924. © SDHS #14116.

multiple family dwellings in San Diego” where “rooming houses, cheap hotels and tenements” were located.² In this article, I argue that this restricted area – encompassing the blocks of Fourth through Sixth Avenues, Island, Market, and J Streets –served as the spatial locus for the formation of a distinct Filipino community in San Diego.

Ironically, Filipino migration to California was largely the result of late nineteenth and early twentieth century American policies to exclude Asian

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immigrants. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the Gentleman's Agreement of 1907-08 restricted the flow of Chinese and Japanese immigrants that served as a critical labor force in West Coast agriculture.³ In desperation, employers looked for another cheap labor source. Filipinos were an ideal replacement. After the Spanish-American War (1898) the United States began its own imperial project to colonize the Philippines. This resulted in the Philippine-American War (1899-1902). In the end, the U.S. remained in the Philippines, molding their new colonial subjects through American education and ideals of democracy.⁴

As colonial subjects with U.S. national status, Filipinos were exempt from U.S. immigration laws. Starting in 1923, thousands of young Filipinos arrived in California, where they labored in agriculture, fish canneries, the service industry, and in domestic servant roles as houseboys for rich white American families. Filipinos also came as part of the U.S. Navy, where they served primarily as stewards. Because U.S. employers did not usually pay for the passage of families and most Filipinos were not allowed by their parents to leave home, the Filipino population in California was overwhelmingly male.⁵

During the first half of the twentieth century, Filipinos (along with other racial and ethnic minorities) found themselves relegated to skid row in San Diego, and this is where they lived, established businesses, and enjoyed their free time. To outsiders, skid row was a place where the homeless and derelicts went to drink their lives away. It was seen as the red light district or the tenderloin area where men saw sexually suggestive shows, visited prostitutes and sought out other vices. All racial and ethnic minorities associated with the area carried the stigma of inferiority and criminality, including the Filipino, Chinese, African American, Mexican, and Latino populations that were forced to live there. Such segregation, one scholar noted, "does not rest on inherent group inferiority, it creates it."⁶

While outsiders associated Filipino men (among other racial and ethnic minorities) with the negative connotations of skid row, Filipinos living and working in downtown worked hard to forge community and to transform this blighted area into home. As one Filipina recalled, skid row was "not a scary place because it was home." She would be sent with her siblings to go shopping, even walking at sundown, yet she always felt safe. Rather than see the bachelors who frequented the area as dangerous, sex crazed men, she experienced them as friendly individuals who always treated the children with kindness, oftentimes buying them candy.⁷

Filipinos were forced to live in and around skid row because of economic and racial restrictions. Ruth Abad remembered that during the 1940s poverty kept many Filipinos confined to downtown San Diego: "A lot of Filipinos used to live there, on Forty-fifth and Forty-sixth Streets. Almost all our neighbors were Filipinos. That was where the cheapest houses were."⁸ Some Filipinos lived where they worked: in a number of downtown hotels and restaurants. Racial segregation also played a major role. Landlords outside the district simply refused to rent to Filipino bachelors, so skid row became home for many of them. Filipino writer Carlos Bulosan called the downtown section "our world," where "the streets were filled with pimps and prostitutes, drug addicts and marijuana peddlers, cutthroats and murderers, ex-convicts and pickpockets. It was the rendezvous of social outcasts."⁹ He went on to write: "There was no other place in the district where we were allowed to reside, and even when we tried to escape from it, we were always



Filipino, Chinese and American Food at Fifth Avenue and Market Street. UT 80-4137 © San Diego Historical Society

driven back to this narrow island of despair.”¹⁰

Filipinos were living in skid row as early as the 1920s. Trapped downtown and with limited means, Filipino men used available rental space efficiently. Migratory field hands who lived off of seasonal income especially had to be cost conscious, and sometimes ten or twelve Filipino men shared a single hotel room or small apartment. For example, in 1932, Porfirio S. Apostol and twelve other Filipinos rented a room at the Earl Hotel for \$8 a month. Those with more steady employment in service related work in the downtown district were able to have a bit more stability in regards to their living situation. Others, like Felix Budhi and Ciriaco “Pablo” Poscablo, lived in the area with their Mexican wives and multiethnic Filipino-Mexican children.¹¹

Skid row was also home to a number of Filipino businesses that catered to the needs of Filipino men. San Diego City Directories for the years 1920 to 1965 provide a glimpse of the various Filipino-owned businesses. During this period, one found Filipino markets, restaurants, cafes, pool halls, and dance halls alongside Japanese, Chinese, Mexican and other establishments. The directories also suggest that as the Filipino community grew, Filipino businesses did as well, although not as much as one would expect. This may have been a result of continued confinement of Filipinos downtown, which had limited space for growth.

Skid row was also the place where Filipino men enjoyed their leisure. Just as Filipinos had trouble renting rooms outside of downtown, they also had difficulty gaining access to public parks, beaches, theatres, restaurants, nightclubs, and other places of public and commercial leisure. Filipinos, for instance, could not hold dances at the U.S. Grant, Coronado, or El Cortez ballrooms (despite the fact that many Filipinos worked in these hotels).¹² In order to keep from being humiliated and angered and to avoid racial confrontation and discrimination, Filipino men tended to steer clear of these spaces. Instead they enjoyed themselves closer to home. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century (and all the way up to the 1970s), downtown San Diego remained the hotbed for Filipino social life. It was there that Filipino men forgot exclusion and work, and enjoyed themselves. As one

Filipino student noted in 1929: "In his spare hours, he [the Filipino] seeks ... the places and companionship that can make him forget, even for a moment, that he has become a slave, not in name to be sure – but what is in a name?"¹³

For Filipino men, some of the most important places of leisure were taxi dance halls, pool halls, restaurants (such as chop suey houses), barbershops, and gambling dens, sometimes known as "Filipino Social Clubs." During the first half of the twentieth century, outside observers of these places of leisure frequently associated them with social disorganization and pathology. The writer Carey McWilliams noted, for instance, that the taxi dance hall, the pool hall, and the Filipino Social Club "preyed upon their [the Filipinos] loneliness and ostracism."¹⁴ In reality, though, Filipino agricultural workers, sailors, cooks, janitors, and bellhops used these institutions to forge community. This is where Filipinos (among others) sought out recreation, camaraderie, and a good time. As Consuelo Zuniga recalled: "There used to be a Filipino district in downtown. They had bars down there...down on Fifth Street...it was like little nightclubs. It was mainly populated by Filipino people. You know we had the Filipino Hall on Market Street...we used to go dancing there, they'd have a wedding there."¹⁵

The ways Filipinos spent their leisure time was quite similar to the ways that early twentieth century African Americans spent it. Historian Douglas Daniels notes that nightlife in San Francisco actually served to bring the African American community together. Entertainment, music, dancing, and socializing, he argues, "made racism seem less important." People from different racial and class backgrounds mixed together without the constraints of outside norms. Similarly, dance halls, restaurants and barbershops gave Filipino men a place where they could escape from work and persecution and forge bonds with other countrymen.

Restaurants played an important function as a site for the creation of a Filipino bachelor subculture. There was the Luzon Café, which was located on Third Avenue and Market Street. Owned by the Manzano family, the Luzon Café was a popular place where the old *manongs* (elder males) gathered, ate, and enjoyed each other's company.¹⁶ The café was also a place where many Filipino sailors on shore leave went to eat cheap food and meet friends and women.¹⁷ Right next to the restaurant was the Luzon Pool Hall. Other Filipino restaurants included the Manila Café on Market Street.¹⁸

The Custado family owned Bataan Café located on Fourth and Island Avenue during the 1940s. Hugo Marzo and Julio Advincula owned the P.I. Café on Fourth Avenue. There was also the Mabuhay Café on Island Avenue. It was a restaurant that also served as a bar and dance spot. Rolando Mata recalled that in the



Manila Café – Photo courtesy of Herb S. Tuyay.

Mabuhay, you could order beer and eat *tapa* (dried or fried meat) and request short orders like *pancit* (a stir-fried noodle dish). There was also music that played from the jukebox. As he recalled, "...it's dark, lights are dim. Music most of the time they play, you know dancing music: Latin, jazz, and some bouncy music." It was in the Mabuhay that he met Mary, a "*mestiza*" who often frequented the place with her Mexican girlfriends.¹⁹ Other non-Filipino owned restaurants that catered to their large Filipino clientele included the Nanking Café on Fifth and Island Avenue and the Sun Café on Market Street, where Rolando Mata noted they served sukiyaki, which he recalled was "very popular here at the time."²⁰

Filipino barbershops also played a role in fostering sociability. Marciano Padua owned a shop on Third and Island Avenues.²¹ A man named Hermipaco, or "Paco," owned another barbershop that was popular among Filipinos during the 1930s. It was located on Fifth and Market Street. As Pedro Lacqui, a Filipino migrant who lived in San Diego during the 1930s noted, many happy times were spent at the barbershop. There, the old *manongs* came to gossip and listen to the local *rondalla* groups (or string ensembles) that came to play for them.²² By the 1960s, Filipinos frequented the Manila Barber Shop, located on Fifth Avenue and owned by Cris S. Reyes Dangan. There was also Johnnie's Barber Shop on Fourth Avenue.²³ Ricardo Romio remembered going to the Manila Barber Shop with his father and experiencing the vibrant social scene:

I'd go with him and get my haircut and sometimes he would stay there and not leave. And they had a pool hall right behind there, at Mr. Reyes's barbershop. Actually, there was a pool hall and they used to have a little room in the front where you cut hair, and I used to go in there and shoot pool sometimes. It was a hang out where they hung out at all the time...I'd go over there and they'd do more talking than cutting...I'd be sitting there eating and blah blah blah...that's all they did. They just got together. My dad used to walk all the way up there, half the day up there with him and walk home.²⁴

As can be seen in the above quote, pool was also an important diversion, and there were a number of pool halls (besides the one in back of Mr. Reyes barbershop) that catered to the Filipino population. Rudy Guevarra, Sr. remembers going to the poolroom with his grandfather Pablo and his grandfather's friends. At the pool hall, Rudy watched Pablo and the other *manongs*, dressed in their khakis and flannel shirts, the pool hall filled with smoke and the sound of their *Ilocano* dialect and pool balls cracking all around him.²⁵

One of the most important (and for whites, notorious) places of leisure was the Filipino taxi dance hall. The Filipino population in San Diego was almost exclusively male. Because of racism and fears of miscegenation, there were serious limitations on whom Filipinos could date or marry. As such, the dance halls were the locations where most socializing with women occurred. As sociologist Paul G. Cressey observed in his study of the taxi dance hall during the 1930s: "The Filipino finds himself in a racially hostile society where not only his occupational and professional opportunities are restricted but where he is denied the usual contacts with social women." Whites saw Filipinos as brown bodies, as "objects of labor." But within the dance hall, Filipino men found a different world. For ten to fifteen

cents a dance (which usually lasted about a minute), Filipinos could enjoy the warm touch and be lost in a moment of dancing with a woman as the music played. It was an escape from the reality of life on the margins of society.²⁶

One of the most popular dance halls in San Diego was the Rizal Dance Hall, located on Market Street. As one migrant noted about the city's Filipino district, "Oh, you should have seen Market Street then. It was like the Las Vegas strip with all those bright lights and dancing girls."²⁷ As the center of recreational life it was the "rendezvous point" where as one scholar noted, "Filipinos could cement and rejuvenate personal bonds, share food, swap stories, and surely gossip about the *kababayan* (countrymen) among the migration circuit."²⁸ As outsiders, Filipinos and other marginalized groups in San Diego formed this subculture that allowed them to be themselves, find recreation and some sort of normalcy from their everyday working lives.

Most of the women who worked in the Filipino dance halls were white, although Mexican and African American women danced too. The idea of white women dancing with Filipino men angered some white men, and this resulted, occasionally, in horrible acts of violence. In taxi dance halls in Chicago, Los Angeles, and throughout California, violent mobs sometimes confronted Filipinos. One white attacker described a fight (not in San Diego) with Filipino men at a taxi dance hall:

Us guys were standing outside one of those dance halls on Madison Street waiting for the "niggers" [Filipinos] to come out. When our gang goes to one of those halls we just about run it. These "niggers" came out and they said real polite like, "We don't want to fight. We want to be your friends." They would have gotten away with it, but somebody yelled, "Don't let them get away so easy!" So we all chased after them. One "nigger" was wearing a big new topcoat, and a big fellow from our gang chased after him, and would have caught him. The Filipino took off his coat as he was running, and threw it right into the big fellow's face. Of course, the "nigger" got away, but the big fellow didn't care because he had a good topcoat.²⁹



Marciano Raguro Padua, January 14, 1954, © San Diego Historical Society

One report noted that:

The Pinoys [Filipinos] have been molested for many months by these gang of white fellows. They get after the Pinoys because they can get dates with some of the girls and the gangsters can't. So they began attacking Filipinos where there were only one or two together. They would jump on a couple of Pinoys and tear their clothes and take their money.³⁰

In San Diego, there are no records of major altercations between whites and Filipinos in the dance halls, but this hardly means that San Diego was free of this sort of violence. Given the ubiquity of racial violence at taxi dance halls elsewhere, it is likely that San Diego also experienced white-on-Filipino violence, especially given the city's conservative atmosphere and poor treatment of Filipinos. We do know that whites, despite the fact that they had their own "whites only" dance halls, did sometimes go downtown and crash the Filipino dance halls. As one white patron noted: "When I was at State we'd sometimes take a fraternity pledge down there to one of these Filipino dance halls. There was one called Rizal. For fifteen cents a dance, there were white girls and the Filipinos liked to dance with the white girls. I think the girls got seven and a half cents a dance. We'd go down and dance with them just for fun."³¹ When asked if he saw any violence there, the man replied, "They were fairly well run. The Filipinos were rumored to carry a knife, but I never saw any disturbances down there myself."³² Some Filipinos tell a different story. Vincent Elquin, a Filipino migrant in San Diego noted that "the Mexicans and Anglo guys did not like us because we got all the girls at dance halls. We wore the best clothes in the market and entertained the girls well."³³

One way the San Diego City Council tried to curtail Filipino dance halls was to make it illegal to operate a dance hall with "dancing partners." The new ordinance created a major obstacle for Patricio Yangco, a Filipino entrepreneur who had just requested a permit to operate a taxi dance hall on Market Street. Yangco was able to overcome this problem, though, by simply filling out a new permit. Women in his establishment would not be dancing partners, but dancing instructors. Because there was no rule against instructors, the Council was forced to issue Yangco his permit. It was a minor victory for Filipinos who had limited options for recreation outside of the city's tenderloin district.³⁴

At dance halls, barbershops, pool halls, and restaurants, Filipinos



Crescencia Padua, 1950. UT 84_14380 s, 1950. © San Diego Historical Society

came to exchange information such as employment opportunities as well as the latest gossip about their countrymen. These spaces were, in conjunction with ethnic newspapers, the means by which this “bachelor subculture” was able to create and expand notions of home and community. This community not only included permanent residents, but also migratory Filipino laborers and sailors. By having what Linda España-Maram called “portable communities,” or “mobile homes,” Filipinos were able to “tailor a life in harmony with their migratory work patterns, they created a community that was versatile, and for them, functional. They took their communities with them.”³⁵ It was in the confines of these sedentary spaces however, that the portable or mobile communities met up to share news, information and each other’s company.



*Deanna Mirafior, Filipino Women's Club Queen, 1952.
UT - 84_12877.1 © San Diego Historical Society*

For Filipinos who were permanent residents in San Diego, Filipino places of leisure were the hub where information was exchanged and the space where migrants met and relaxed. Given the nature of their geographically mobile community, they could find each other only through advertisements and word-of-mouth. It was indeed a means by which they took home wherever they went. Thus, home and community did not necessarily mean permanency, though the roots of several families tied everyone together in an intricate web of familial, kinship, and friendship networks. This was also true for migratory laborers and visiting Filipino sailors who were stationed in San Diego. What bound all of these migrants and sailors was the fact that many were homesick and they also shared a collective experience of racial discrimination and violence.³⁶

Although racial segregation confined Filipinos and other nonwhites to multiracial and multiethnic communities at the margins of white society, these spaces provided important functions. These spaces helped them to cope with their conditions by allowing them to feel a sense of safety and security from the outside world, which was often unwelcoming to Filipinos. These cultural islands also provided domiciles for families and individuals, an ethnic labor market, a space to start small businesses, and places where one could find some refuge and healing from an oftentimes hostile outside environment. In these enclaves, Filipinos created social stability and shaped a collective identity. This became the foundation for early ethnic social organizations and clubs, which were formed in response to their isolation. Because this shared identity was dependent on shared community space, these spaces had significant meaning to those that lived there.³⁷

Families welcomed newcomers and provided community for those that had none. Residents were responsible for the cultural retention and survival of their communities by creating this safe haven for new and old residents alike.



Tommy Mangusing, 1954, UT 84_1152, © San Diego Historical Society.

Indeed, cultural retention functioned as a mechanism for the survival of Filipino communities in San Diego. The area also provided a sense of home away from home, where familiar sights, sounds and smells could be found. These were experienced within the various Filipino owned or managed barbershops, restaurants, pool halls and other establishments. This also provided a sense of safety and comfort for these men who were not welcomed by the white population. Filipino markets and the space outside these establishments for example, provided a sense of familiarity to those who were alienated from mainstream society. Here, Filipinos could do their shopping, eating, and also meet up with friends



Filipinos came to San Diego via the U.S. Navy. Most Filipinos served as stewards like Venancio Ayap (left) who served aboard the U.S.S. Taconic, August 25, 1948. Photo courtesy of Freddie Ayap.

and family to talk and share the latest news. Thus, in addition to goods and services, Filipino owned stores reminded their ethnic patrons of the sari-sari stores of their homeland, conjuring up a sense of nostalgia, where the sights, sounds and smells provided comfort and fellowship.³⁸

Finally, these spaces provided a sense of normalcy and permanency in an environment where Filipino men were always on the move. Their transient, migratory life made a sense of “home” problematic.



Inside the Bataan Cafe, Filipino Restaurant on Island Street between 4th and 5th avenues, ca. 1954. Owned from 1946 to 1954 by Sophia and Sixto Custado. MSS 407, File 10, Box 2. [copyright sign] San Diego Historical Society.

By having a physical location where Filipinos could frequent and find a sense of home, safety, and normalcy, these spaces provided them with a reason to endure the senseless acts of discrimination and racism that they felt on a daily basis. Many of these aging *manongs* had no family so other Filipinos provided a sense of family for them. They picked them up and took them to their homes to celebrate holidays and special events. These families were also the only ones that were available to identify the bodies of those that died alone. Nena Amaguin recalled her role among the old *manongs*, whom she visited and brought home. She stated that:

I used to pick them up (from downtown)...there are Filipinos who have been old and living in a small shack there...there were five or six of them in a dinky house...then some of the older people died and they don't have nobody, nobody even buried them...there's so many of them that don't even know their family. Some are farmers, some from Stockton and then they live here in San Diego because of the weather.³⁹

Nena's role highlights the sense of family and community that was established by Filipinos in an era when they were not always welcomed in San Diego. Indeed, skid row was just one of several locations in San Diego where Filipinos lived, worked and spent their leisure time. Today, there is little to remind us of the Filipino district, or skid row, that once pulsated with life in the early to mid twentieth century, save for two photographs that are housed in the historic U.S. Grant Hotel in downtown San Diego. These photographs, along with the countless memories of those that lived in the area, as well as the presence of Filipinos in San Diego today, are testimony to the racialized space that many once called home.

NOTES

1. The first alien land law in California was passed in 1913. See Sucheng Chan, *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History* (New York: Twayne, 1991), pp. 38-39, and Linda España-Maram, *Creating Masculinity in Los Angeles's Little Manila: Working-Class Filipinos and Popular Culture, 1920s-1950s* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), p. 41. See also See R. Marciano, D. Goldberg, S. Beemer, K. Franklin, and C. Hou, *T-RACES: a Testbed for the Redlining Archives of California's Exclusionary Spaces*, <<http://salt.sdsu.edu/T-RACES>> accessed 18 December 2006. I would like to thank Richard Marciano for allowing me to use his maps and other related information on segregated housing in San Diego.
2. Laurence I. Hewes, Jr., and William Y. Bell, Jr., *Intergroup Relations in San Diego: A Report to the City Council and the Board of Education of the City of San Diego* (San Francisco: American Council on Race Relations, 1946), p. 10.
3. See Lucie Cheng and Edna Bonacich, eds., *Labor Immigration Under Capitalism: Asian Workers in the United States Before World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); Sucheng Chan, *This Bittersweet Soil: The Chinese in California Agriculture, 1860-1910* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei: The World of the First Generation Japanese Immigrants, 1885-1924* (New York: The Free Press, 1988), and Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1998).
4. For more on the Philippine-American War and its aftermath in the Philippines, see Angel Velasco Shaw and Luis H. Francia, eds., *Vestiges of War: The Philippine- American War and the Aftermath of an Imperial Dream, 1899-1999* (New York: New York University Press, 2002); Abe Ignacio, Enrique de la Cruz, Jorge Emmanuel, and Helen Toribio, *The Forbidden Book: The Philippine-American War in Political Cartoons* (San Francisco: T'Boli Publishing, 2004); Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000); Teodoro A. Agoncillo, *History of the Filipino People, 8th Edition* (Quezon City, Philippines: Garotech Publishing, 1990), pp. 213-386; Stephen Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq* (New York: Times Books, 2006), and Luzviminda Francisco, "The First Vietnam: The U.S.-Philippine War of 1899," *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (December 1973), pp. 2-16.
5. On Filipinos and immigration to California, see Will J. French, dir., *Facts About Filipino Immigration Into California, Special Bulletin No. 3* (San Francisco: State of California Department of Industrial Relations, 1930); Bruno Lasker, *Filipino Immigration To Continental United States and Hawaii* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931); The Commonwealth Club of California, "Filipino Immigration," *The Commonwealth*, Vol. 24, No. 7 (November 5, 1929); Fred Cordova, *Filipinos: Forgotten Asian Americans* (Seattle: Demonstration Project for Asian Americans, 1983); Yen Le Espiritu, *Home Bound: Filipino Lives Across Cultures, Communities, and Countries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), pp. 26-31, and España-Maram, *Creating Masculinity in Los Angeles's Little Manila*, p. 167.
6. Walter G. Beach, "Some Considerations in Regard to Race Segregation in California," *Sociology and Social Research*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (March-April 1931), pp. 346-350.
7. Carol Hemminger, "Little Manila: The Filipino in Stockton Prior to World War II," Part II, *The Pacific Historian*, Vol. 24 (Spring 1980), p. 214.
8. Espiritu, *Home Bound*, p. 113.
9. Bulosan, *America is in the Heart*, p. 258.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 134.
11. Interview with Rolando Mata, interview by author, La Puente, Calif., 1 September 2004, and Adelaida Castillo-Tsuchida, "Filipino Migrants in San Diego, 1900-1946" (master's thesis, University of San Diego, 1979). See also Buenaventura, "San Diego's Manongs of the 1920s and 1930s," *Filipino American National Historical Society Journal*, Vol. 5 (1998), p. 31.
12. Espiritu, *Home Bound*, p. 113.
13. D.F. Gonzalo, "Social Adjustments of Filipinos in America," *Sociology and Social Research*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (November 1929), p. 170.
14. Carey McWilliams, *Brothers Under the Skin* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1964), p. 238.

15. Interview with Consuelo "Connie" Zuniga, interview by author, San Diego, Calif., 20 August 2001.
16. *Manong* means older brother. It is a term of respect and endearment for the majority of elder Filipinos, who were bachelors in the U.S.
17. Jona Cruz, Jessica Sarsoza, Ronald S. Buenaventura, and Fidencio S. Pampo, "A Sailor's Sacrifice: The Navy Steward," *Kalayaan*, Vol. 3 No. 3 (March 1997), p. 6.
18. According to several San Diego City Directories, the Manila Café was listed as being located at 429 Market Street (1944-1945) and 470 Fifth Avenue (1960 and 1965). A photograph of the Manila Café circa 1970 also shows it as being next to a building numbered 515 ½, which may be located on Fifth Avenue. Because of the frequency of having to move establishments due to new ownership and rental space, this may account for the different locations. For more on this see *Polk's San Diego City Directories, 1944-45, 1960, and 1965*, and "Photo of Manongs in front of Manila Café," circa 1970, Photograph Collection, Filipino American National Historical Society, San Diego Chapter. The author would like to thank Felix Tuyay for providing the photograph for this essay, courtesy of Herb S. Tuyay.
19. "Photograph of Bataan Café, 1946," Kistner, Custado, Redondo Collection (Mss 169), Box 1, San Diego Historical Society; Gunitaang Palatuntunan Souvenir Program, Philippine Independence Day, Cavite Association of San Diego County, June 12, 1965, Filipino Organizations Folder, Thelma Hollingsworth Local History Room, National City Public Library. See also interview with Rolando Mata, interview by author, La Puente, Calif., 1 September 2004.
20. *Ibid.* See also *Polk's San Diego City Directories, 1930 and 1960*.
21. *Polk's San Diego City Directories, 1920-1965*; Buenaventura, "San Diego's Manongs of the 1920s and 1930s," p. 31.
22. Rondalla are Filipino string bands that include guitars, ganjo and the "kudyapi" (a small guitar that has its origins in the Philippines during the 1500s). For more on the barbershop and its activities, see Castillo-Tsuchida, "Filipino Migrants in San Diego, 1900-1946," pp. 81-82.
23. Gunitaang Palatuntunan Souvenir Program, Philippine Independence Day, Cavite Association of San Diego County, June 12, 1965, Filipino Organizations Folder, Thelma Hollingsworth Local History Room, National City Public Library.
24. Interview with Ricardo Romio, interview by author, Lakeside, Calif., 4 May 2004.
25. Notes from personal conversations with Rudy Guevarra, Sr., San Diego, Calif., July 5, 2001.
26. Paul G. Cressey, *The Taxi-Dance Hall: A Sociological Study in Commercialized Recreation and City Life* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), p. 145. For more on the activities of Filipinos in the taxi dance halls, see Roberto V. Vallangca, *Pinoy: The First Wave* (San Francisco: Strawberry Hill Press, 1977), pp. 50-53; Rhacel Salazar Parreñas, "'White Trash' Meets the 'Little Brown Monkeys': The Taxi Dance Hall as a Site of Interracial and Gender Alliances between White Working Class Women and Filipino Immigrant Men in the 1920s and 1930s," *Amerasia Journal*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (1998), pp. 118-121, and España-Maram, *Creating Masculinity in Los Angeles's Little Manila*, pp. 105-133.
27. Castillo-Tsuchida, "Filipino Migrants in San Diego," p. 106.
28. España-Maram, *Creating Masculinity in Los Angeles's Little Manila*, p. 110.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 219.
30. Cressey, *The Taxi-Dance Hall*, p. 218.
31. Interview with John Spencer Held, interview by Ruth V. Held, San Diego, Calif., 4 August 1990, Oral History Collection, San Diego Historical Society.
32. *Ibid.*
33. Castillo-Tsuchida, "Filipino Migrants in San Diego," p. 52.
34. "Wrong Word Used in Dance Request," *San Diego Union*, December 19, 1934, p.8, and "Taxi Dance 'Partners' Now 'Instructors,'" *San Diego Union*, December 27, 1934, p. 5.
35. Linda Nueva España Maram, "Negotiating Identity: Youth, Gender, and Popular Culture in Los Angeles's Little Manila, 1920s -1940s" (Ph.d. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1996), pp. 48-50. For more on the concept of "mobile homes," see Yen Le Espiritu, *Home Bound: Filipino American Lives Across Cultures, Communities, and Countries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

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36. Castillo-Tsuchida, "Filipino Migrants in San Diego, 1900-1946," p. 42.
37. See Lisbeth Haas, *Conquests and Historical Identities in California, 1769-1936* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 199-201.
38. Rick Bonus, *Locating Filipino Americans: Ethnicity & the Cultural Politics of Space* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000), pp. 57-91.
39. Interview with Nena Amaguin, interview by author, San Diego, Calif., 6 July 2004.



Filipino bands were popular forms of entertainment in their communities. The individual holding the saxophone is Ciriaco "Pablo" Poscablo, circa 1940s. Photo courtesy of author.