

A0216695U_Edward Ng_Travel Diary.pdf

by Ng Jong Ray, Edward e0540252

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Travelling around Singapore, I have never given much consideration to the choices I make during my commute until this assignment. Now this made me realise that my choices vary with the mode of public transportation I am taking to and fro my destination.

fascinating - so your bodily habits/muscle memory reflects the physical design of the stations though in the opp way that most users typically relate

When taking the MRT, I gravitate towards the last cabin to stand at the corner at the back of the train as the last cabins are usually less crowded, since it is at the end of the platform, and lesser people tend to walk to the end of the platform as it is not conveniently situated near the escalators. Personally, I prefer standing to sitting: comparing the vast amount of free-standing space in the cabins versus the minimal number of seats available, I cannot help but feel that I am not of the right demographic to be taking up these limited seats. As a young male, I understand that I am supposed to be fitter and thus less in need of a seat while travelling. This is reinforced with how campaign posters from the "Thoughtful Bunch" campaign promote actions of a socially responsible commuter using public transport. An example would be the mascot "Stand Up Stacey", who aims to remind us to give up our seat to someone else who needs it more. In Singapore's context, most times this means to give up our seat for the elderly, pregnant and disabled. This reflection will focus on ageism and the role it plays here in exerting societal pressure on the individual. This could be a function of our Asian values which focuses on filial piety and respecting our elders. As such, a younger person, regardless of how tired they are, is expected by society to give up their seat if they meet an elderly person on the train.

Personally, I feel that the responsibility falls on the person who is currently sitting down to be attentive and give up their seat. Hence when I stand at the corner of the train, I do not feel the pressures described above. This to me means a more relaxing ride on the MRT.

On the contrary, when taking the bus, I love finding a window seat. I enjoy looking out to see the sights of the metropolitan city that Singapore is known for, and tens of minutes later, I arrive at the "heartlands". Taking the bus 97 from Suntec City, a downtown attraction, and within 30 minutes I can reach the housing areas of Clementi. This sudden change in landscape shows the constant challenge Singapore has to efficiently blend their suburban landscape with the cosmopolitan image it tries to upkeep. One example would be how along the road near the PSA building, the buildings there are very old and aged offices with concrete walls. However, just across the street, the tall office buildings of Tanjong Pagar lined with glass windows seem much more futuristic. Seeing such sights while taking the bus back is always comforting to see.

*why comforting? intriguing emotion,
curious to hear more*



PSA building (Google maps images)



Across the Street of modern office buildings (Google map images)
(Words: 496)

As I have noted above, the very limited seats on the MRT can bring about certain pressures on younger individuals to give up their seats for the elderly. However, during my travels, there are instances of how the older travellers feel more entitled when taking up the seats on the MRT and even buses. Such behaviour includes taking up the seat beside them by placing their grocery there. On public transports, by placing their groceries or bags on these seats would mean that any individual who could be in need of a seat, despite their age, are denied this opportunity. A policy to restrict people from taking up seats with their objects, or blocking access to seats, will aim to reduce these occurrences in our lives. This would mean that, for example, those carrying luggage must ensure that they can place their luggages on the bus at a place which will not prevent others from sitting. This can be especially important as public buses now have four seats facing each other, sharing their legroom. A luggage which could fit in that space might prevent one to two other people from sitting there. To maybe increase the feasibility of this policy, the public transport can have an area that is dedicated to allowing people to place their bulky or heavy items there while travelling. Otherwise, they should find a way to hold it such that it will not affect others.

(Words: 239)

Very well written set of reflections, Edward. You are a good writer! You brought alive the cityscape vividly and conveyed your points so neatly through that picture. I hope you will continue noticing, learning, and unlearning.

FINAL GRADE

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GENERAL COMMENTS

Instructor

PAGE 1

Text Comment. fascinating - so your bodily habits/muscle memory reflects the physical design of the stations though in the opp way that most users typically relate



Comment 1

excellent section so vividly describing the v diverse and changing landscape of the city - the look and how it links to the feel. counters the idea that Singapore is a homogeneously cosmopolitan city.

Text Comment. why comforting? intriguing emotion, curious to hear more

PAGE 2

PAGE 3

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