

GES1034 We the Citizens – Understanding Singapore's Politics Reflection Paper:

Week 13: 13 Nov 2018, Tuesday
Year 3, Semester 1
National University of Singapore

This is the module which prompted me to start a repository of my reflections at the end of the semester, based on what I learnt, what was valuable to me and how that will affect me in the future. I mean, it's a mix of this module but a bunch of other modules as well, but let me just start my reflection.

Before this module:

I was a nonchalant immigrant Singaporean, with no interest in politics. Why should I? There are so many people who are much better than I was, it was a silly game to play if I don't even have enough time to study and cope with the social standards in Singapore. I'm now hold the Singaporean citizenship even though I was born in Indonesia, got it when I was about 18 in Junior College and renounced my Indonesian citizenship at 21. It's a mix of feelings. Why should I care? It's a rich man's game and frankly, am I even qualified to be a part of this country's politics?

To me, politics is shown to be a scramble for power, getting the people to succumb to the politicians own visions and missions. I couldn't understand why people still voted them in, or why they're still popular. I've seen clear examples in secondary school reality-drama, and it's taxing that politics is so complicated and that there are unforeseen repercussions and externalities.

Why risk it and be bothered by it? I have better things to do than to stress myself out over something I'm not good at.

During this module:

I found out a more satisfactory definition of politics. Politics is about the rightful allocation of power and resources of a community, in most cases a country or state. Politicians, by right, are not there to play any form of games, but to serve the community. They are the public servants. They serve the community for a better functionality, taking care of the amenities and goods provided.

Politicians' views appeal to the public because oppressed groups feel the need of someone to stand up for them, to give a voice to the unheard, and that's how politicians gain popularity. We would never know for sure their motives in desiring the position of power. We've lost the transparency and election of a leader because we see them fit to lead us.

After this module:

Well, what can I say. I want to help. I want to serve the community. It's wrong to say that politics are old people's game. I want to serve the community, if there's anything I can do to provide jobs for the less able, to create something to help them make ends meet. What can I do? Politics as an extension of social work is truly the most satisfactory goal. I will keep these lessons in mind and work towards it. Maybe someday I do want to be a politician.