

Introduction to Japanese Society Final Impression

The topics that were the most interesting to me in this class were the chapters on *Japanese Identity*, *The House & Family System*, *Socialization & Classification*, and *The Education System*. I found that these topics were the ones that were easiest to read since I experienced them firsthand and secondhand. *The Japanese Identity* gave me a better perspective on why Japanese people try so hard to be uniform and are afraid to stick out in society. *The House & Family System* as well as the *Socialization & Classification* chapters expressed the importance of politeness and respectfulness amongst those of higher social ranking, which I see in the classroom between teacher and student as well as in restaurant settings whereas the guest I'm treated as if I'm a higher status than the worker. *The Education System* showed me how my Japanese classmates were raised in school and explained why they react in certain ways in the classroom, especially when I was a TA. Since these topics heavily affected my study abroad experience, these topics stood out the most to me.

The Social Security and *Government & Politics* chapters, however, were not the most interesting to me. I believe this may be because I find it difficult to grasp the content even in American society, so naturally in Japanese society it would be the same. Even after trying to take the time to read them, the information just didn't process through my brain efficiently. They are both, however, very important topics to be familiar with if one is living in Japan, so much so as I see campaign posters everywhere in the streets as well as occasionally coming across loud cars advertising a candidate. Living here in Japan temporarily has made me realize this.

If there were any topics that I felt should've been covered in class, it was pop culture. In today's society, I feel it's a huge thing among Japanese people as well as tourists (especially being a major reason why many tourists come to Japan). Entertainment was covered in class, but I don't think it really dove into most of the aspects of pop culture such as animation, movies, video games, music, etc. I believe this would be an interesting topic for a lot of people and is an accurate interpretation of how society depicts itself or fantasizes what an ideal society would look like.