Heteronormativity, the Key for the Successful Singapore?

A discourse analysis of the heteronormative family discourse performed by the Singapore Government which limits LGB people

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Abstract

In Singapore, it is forbidden by law for two men to have consensual sex, but the law is in practice not enforced. Same-sex marriage as well as parenthood is not recognised by the Singapore Government for lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) people. This arbitrary situation has lead me to the aim of this thesis which is to explore the discourse of the heteronormative family performed by the Singapore Government, and how LGB persons would be a threat to this. This has been done through critical discourse analysis with the material consisting of already existing speeches, lectures and dialogues conducted by the Prime Minister of Singapore. The material has been analysed with the help of a relevant theoretical framework built up by heteronormativity, governance, post-colonial theory and theory around nationalism.

The results of the analysis show that marriage is a fundamental part of the framework of the family, and in extension a big part in the Singapore society. This focus on marriage alongside the unquestioned norm being heterosexuality, limits and excludes LGB people from the discourse of family. LGB people become a threat to this unquestioned norm and thereby risks the existence of the society as it is today. The Prime Minister’s strategy is to stay neutral as to let the issue evolve on its own and saying that this is something that the citizens of Singapore need to decide on, however this is said while the Government in reality are the ones that possess the power in this issue.

Keywords

governance, LGB rights, heteronormativity, marriage, family, post-colony, nationalism
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1 | Introduction

[Stuart] Koe, who is one of the petitioners [...] said the current situation is like, I quote him, ‘Having a gun put to your head and not pulling the trigger. Either put the gun down or pull the trigger’. (Lee, 2007a)

1.1 Background

In 2007, the Singapore Government conducted a thorough revision of the country’s Penal Code. In this revision, section 377 was abolished, making what previously has been categorised as unnatural sex, i.e. oral and anal sex, legal for heterosexuals and homosexual females. Section 377A, criminalising male homosexual behaviour was however kept in place. The section 377A in the Penal Code reads:

Any male person who, in public or private, commits, or abets the commission of, or procures or attempts to procure the commission by any male person of, any act of gross indecency with another male person, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to 2 years. (Penal Code, 2008)

Both of the above mentioned sections were left from the Victorian Empire and are similar to laws in other former British colonies such as India and Uganda. Same-sex marriage is not legal and neither is civil partnership between persons of the same sex. Parenthood of same-sex partners is not recognised. There is no law protecting people against discrimination on the grounds of one’s sexuality or gender expression, while there are laws protecting against discrimination of a person’s ‘...religion, race, descent or place of birth’ (Constitution of the Republic of Singapore, 1965). The Government has however given a verbal promise to homosexual men that section 377A will not be actively enforced (Lee, 2007a).

The introducing quote is a statement made by the Prime Minister, Lee Hsein Loong during the revision of the Penal Code, referring to a comment made by the LGBT activist Stuart Koe when the 377A section was up in the limelight for whether it would be kept or not. The
feeling of despair that Koe expresses is a good summary of how large parts of the LGBT community felt about the law staying in place.

It is worth mentioning the ambiguity of the Penal Code regarding men and women differently, women not being criminalised for same-sex ‘acts’, while men are. This ambiguous state is not exclusive for Singapore, but applies to almost half of the 72 countries in the world where homosexuality is criminalised (Ilga, 2017). The Singapore Government has not commented as to why this difference in law exists for men and women.

Singapore is a democratic country with an elected conservative party in the Government, the People’s Action Party (PAP) (PAP, 2017). The PAP has been in governance since 1965, at the same time as Singapore granted independence from Malaysia. Singapore has a long history of being colonised, first by the British Victorian Empire in the late 1800s, then occupied by Japan during the second world war, and lastly a short period connected to Malaysia up until 1965 (BBC News, 2017). Hence, Singapore as the nation it is today is rather young. Despite this, Singapore is successful in a global perspective in fields such as economics, education and infrastructure, with a large middle-class and an unemployment rate of around 2 percent (Trading Economics, 2017). The Singapore Government has in many ways succeeded in providing a well-functioning society with welfare protection and an accessible state housing program through HDB-flats (Housing & Development Board-flats). Behind this well-established society lies a base of a strong state power and an extensive Penal Code. Singapore has strict laws concerning offences such as drug dealing and use, murder, and kidnapping where canning, long prison sentences, and death penalty is used in the most severe cases of the crimes mentioned (Criminal Procedure Code, 2016).

The current Prime Minister of Singapore is Lee Hsien Loong, son of the former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. Singapore is officially a democratic republic with General, open elections every 5 years and Presidential elections every 6 years. The country has however on several accounts been accused of being a ‘hidden’ dictatorship as the same political party, with two out of three Prime Ministers being father and son, has governed without interruption since the day of Singapore’s independence in 1965 (PAP, 2017). Singapore’s President is the
State Chief but has more of an official symbolic role than a power position of the governance of the country.

Prime Minister Lee is from what I can tell of own experience, having lived in Singapore, loved and respected by the large part of the Singapore population. He has his own Facebook page, which is clearly operated by himself and he has said what a great tool social media is to communicate with the Singaporeans. He is now starting to come of age, with just turning 65 earlier this year, and is in a not so far away future looking to retire from his post, something that has upset many Singaporeans meaning the man replacing Prime Minister Lee will have a tough job winning over the public’s heart.

1.2 Situating Myself
My interest in LGB people’s situation in Singapore evolved while I lived in Singapore for a period of time a few years back. I then learnt about the arbitrary circumstances that the LGB community are forced to live with. The original intention was to write my Bachelor’s Thesis on the subject, however then in a more qualitative interview based study with the aim to portrait the individual stories of LGB people living in Singapore. I then abandoned that idea and let the thesis rest for a while until I now decided to dust it off in my Master’s Thesis. With a few years down the road, and a soon to be complete Master Graduate in Gender Studies, the thesis outline has changed quite a bit from my original thought. My focus has shifted from investigating the lives of LGB Singaporeans, to investigating the power structure performed by the Singapore Government on LGB people. It is hence a shift from focusing on the oppressed to focusing on the oppressors.

I situate myself in a Western, European context and since Singapore is a post-colony, I feel the need to state that I am aware of that I am a part of the colonial history that has been the core of the oppression on Singapore.

Haraway (1988) brings forward the idea that objectivity, in the traditional sense, is not something that is to be strived for in feminist and humanist research. Every researcher has their own perspective, view and translation of what they see, some are conscious choices,
while many are unconscious and depend on the experience and knowledge that the researcher is carrying. With situated knowledge, the feminist researcher can understand how we learn what to see (Haraway, 1988:583). Since I am the author of this thesis, I have knowingly but most probably also unknowingly, focused on specific aspects, theories and discourses and left others out because of my own situated knowledge in Gender Studies as a field and more specifically about the issue around LGBT in Singapore. It is a difficult practice to follow in Haraway’s path and become conscious of what I see and don't see, but being aware of this, and importantly; not striving for objectivity through out the thesis, will take the study a long way.

1.3 Terminology

Throughout the thesis the term LGB people (lesbian, gay, and bisexual people) will be used. I have intentionally not included the T that usually follows this line of letters which stands for transgender. This is because the situation in Singapore for LGB people and transgender people is very different. Transgendered people in Singapore are classified as having a ‘psychological disorder’, as in Sweden and many other countries, and are permitted to go through a gender reassignment process and surgery (Equaldex, 2017). The hook is that the gender needs to be changed completely either from male to female or from female to male, hence there is no room for non-binary identities. Once the person has done this transition, he or she is allowed to marry, however only to the opposite sex, meaning that the view of transpeople is strictly heterosexual. The fact that transgender people are recognised by the Singapore Government, does however not mean that transpeople are not stigmatised or discriminated in the Singapore society. My focus will however be on LGB people as I needed to restrict the group of people to concentrate on and given the situation is differing between LGB and transgender people, I decided to not include transgender in the analysis.

The Prime Minister uses different terms to describe the group in focus including ’LGBT’, ‘homosexual’, ‘gay’, ’gay-activists’ and ’non-heterosexual’. I will however use ’LGB people’ consistently throughout the thesis when speaking of all the terms that the Prime Minister uses.
1.4 Aim and Research Questions
The aim of this thesis is to explore the discourse of the heteronormative family performed by the Singapore Government and how LGB people would be a threat to this. My interest is to understand what the aim is of the Singapore Government to follow and encourage this heteronormative agenda through their governance. This will be done through discourse analysis of a number of speeches, lectures and statements made by Prime Minister Lee Hsein Loong with the purpose to answer the following research questions;

- How is the governing of the Singapore Government performed through policies of family relations? More specifically, what role does heteronormativity and the notion of family play in Singapore Government’s governance?
- Does the fact of Singapore being a post-colony effect the laws of the Singapore State and in that case how?
- What role does nationalism play in the governance of Singapore?

1.5 Gendering Practices
The name of the this Master Programme is 'Gendering Practices’, therefore it becomes relevant to have a discussion around the gendering practices of this thesis. Gendering practices is continually present through out the thesis in the form of theoretical approach chosen around heteronormativity, power structures through governing, nationalism and postcolonial theory. That my aim is to explore a discourse around heteronormativity and family related to governance by a state within a power structure that limits LGB people, indicates that this thesis is part of the field of gendering practices and that it even can be a relevant contribution to the field as specifically this sort of thesis, with the Singapore context, has not been done before.

1.6 Disposition of Thesis
This thesis is divided into six parts, starting with an introduction where I have presented a background on the topic of the thesis as well as the aim and research question. This is followed by a literature review as to map out the research field of which I am about to enter. The second part is dedicated to the theoretical approach of the thesis, where theories that I
have thought relevant for the topic and the coming analysis are presented. The third part
covers the methodological approach, giving an introduction to critical discourse analysis as
well as presenting the chosen material and describing my methodological process of the
thesis. The fourth part is the analysis which is divided into three themes that have shown to be
relevant for my aim and research questions. This is followed by results and discussion of the
analysis, ending the thesis with a concluding part where the aim and research questions are
brought back as well as possible further research is mentioned.

1.7 Literature Review

I have chosen to write this section with a focus on the research field regarding LGB people’s
rights and the legal withdrawal or absence of these, and sovereign states’ interference in the
private, more specifically the question of same-sex marriage. The aim of the following
discussion is to present what this specific research field looks like and to gather useful
previous research that has been done within the field. This review is by no means exhausted,
its purpose is to present a part of the research field covering LGB rights and sovereign states’
involvement in the private arena as to get a better understanding of the field that I am entering
with this thesis. I have chosen to have a theoretical approach to this chapter of the research
field, meaning that I will bring up research that is similar to my study in a theoretical way.

1.7.1 Equal Marriage?

There are several studies that have sought to take a closer look at the debate of same-sex
marriage (e.g. Kail, Acosta, & Wright, 2015; Wight, LeBlanc, & Badgett, 2013; Wienke &
Hill, 2008). These research studies investigate what role marriage plays in same-sex
relationships, both in states where it at the time was legalised and not, in a USA context. The
findings of these research studies all point towards how LGB couples living in states with
legalised same-sex marriage have a higher level of self-assessed health (ibid). Their theory
around how this can be, is that having a legal recognition of one’s relationship correlates with
one’s feeling of being included and of being seen as normal. From looking at the research
mentioned, it isn't actually marriage itself that is the reason for a higher level of well-being,
but rather the feeling of being accepted in the society that one is a part of (ibid).
On this level, Spade (2013) does not disagree, however in his article *Under the Cover of Gay Rights*, he takes the issue further when he means that marriage as an institution should be abandoned all together, for all couples regardless of gender and sexuality. He questions the view that many feminists and LGBT activists have of same-sex marriage as a marker of equality and sign of becoming an equal citizen that we should strive for when it is unlikely that it would benefit LGBT people in the long run (Spade, 2013:90). This is because marriage in itself is a form of oppression since it builds on a hierarchy of power and property (ibid, 84). The point that Spade is making is that rather than fighting against the state for equal citizenship specifically through demanding the right to marry, the fight should be against the institution of marriage, which actually in large is built up by the state to form people’s lives in the way that is preferable, so it does become a struggle against the state power in this case too (ibid, 81). He then means that accepting marriage for same-sex couples, would be to take a step in the wrong direction since in the wider perspective, marriage is a form of oppression, it would hence be to go from one form of oppressing institution to another.

This discussion about same-sex marriage is relevant to this thesis as the Singapore Government is not legalising it even though the LGB community is asking for it loudly. This however brings up the thought that perhaps marriage is not what LGB people should be directing their energy on since it is just another form of oppression.

1.7.2 Redistribution and Recognition

On the topic of recognition, Fraser (1995) determines that socioeconomic redistribution has been to a large part replaced with cultural recognition as the most vital problem solving within the leftist movement (Fraser, 1995:68). The socioeconomic redistribution being the redistribution of materialistic value in a class perspective, and the cultural recognition aiming at the recognition of sexualities other than heterosexuality. Fraser is saying that the two are in conflict with each other (ibid, 74) and that recognition is taking up place in the debate on the cost of redistribution. It should be noted however that Fraser means that both redistribution and recognition are vital aspects that both need to be considered, and does not mean that we should abandon the notion of recognition all together. To talk about the two as separate is to put it way to simply, the two are intertwined and can in practice not be separated (ibid, 72).
Fraser means that separating recognition and redistribution in theory does, nevertheless, play a relevant role as one then can see clearly how the two are different.

Butler (1997) has then written an article as a response to Fraser’s statement. Butler’s main critique towards Fraser is that she undermines the left’s intentions to be ‘merely cultural’ without depth and a will for actual change (Butler, 1997:33) and meaning that these new leftist social movements have abandoned Marx. Butler means that Fraser reduces the struggle of these movements to be ’self-centred and trivial’ (ibid, 34) in their new poststructural politics. Butler recognises that Fraser claims that the cultural and the material cannot be seen as separate in practice, however Butler means that the two never can be separated, and should not be separated even in theory. Butler argues that heterosexism is a crucial part of class differences and the oppression of these. The family as an institution builds to a large part on heteronormativity, and the family is a crucial part of the capitalistic model. It is therefore all intertwined and cannot be talked about in separate spheres (ibid, 40). Butler argues that Fraser has a simplified view of the cultural and how it can be separated from the material.

Butler writes in the same article about how the heterosexual relationship has taken patent on the discourse of reproduction and family building, saying it is the natural and only way, connecting sex with its natural purpose; reproduction. This is according to Butler not true as it is absolutely possible for non-heterosexual people to reproduce, there is no bulletproof case here really for the heterosexual norm, however this argument is still circulating as the truth (ibid, 44).

If one takes a look at how the heteronormative family norm effects and lives in society, it becomes clear how it does not only effect LGB people ’merely culturally’. The heteronorm is spread out in society and effects all people socially, politically, juridically and materially, and then especially non-heterosexual people as they naturally do not fit in to the norm (ibid, 41). Separating the two also ignores the multiplicity of oppressing categories, that a person can be part of more than one oppressing order, for example being gay and black, or lesbian and poor (ibid, 37, 41), which Fraser also mentions, but not to that extent. So Butler means that sexuality, both heterosexuality and non-heterosexuality plays a big role in the sphere of
reproduction and family, which on another level plays an important role in the way societies are built up around the world. This naturally differs from country to country, but still playing an undeniably important position in the social and political arena (Butler, 1997:42).

People who are not heterosexual are produced as the sexually abnormal or different in relation to the normative heterosexuality, especially when it comes to ‘naturally’ heteronormative aspects such as reproduction. Butler asks how sexuality then can be categorised as a ‘merely cultural’ issue (ibid, 42). Butler emphasises the point here that it is not that LGB people are simply left out, they actually play an important role in the normalisation of heterosexuality and family as they are seen as the absolute contrast to the ‘natural’ and ‘normal’ (ibid, 42).

The discussion of redistribution and recognition becomes useful in this thesis as it touches the political discourse around LGB people and their rights. The discussion Butler has around heteronormativity in family systems is also relevant as it is the discourse of the heteronormative family in relation to LGB people that I want to explore in this thesis.

1.7.3 State Homophobia and Western LGBT

Bosia (2014) has in the article *Strange Fruit: Homophobia, the State, and the Politics of LGBT Rights and Capabilities* looked at research around state homophobia in France, Uganda and Egypt. He claims that at the same time as rights of LGBT people keep moving forward in the world as a whole, there are several countries that has committed to what he calls ‘state homophobia’ within the governing organ of a state or nation that goes in the complete opposite direction (Bosia, 2014:256). Bosia states in the article that partially, this can have emerged due to an overtaking of defining the LGBT movement and its rights from the West. What he means is that these homophobic states form their stand on LGBT issues based on the Western ideal of LGBT and because of colonial menace and a fear of the population becoming westernised, adapt a homophobic agenda in their politics towards LGBT issues.

The article goes on to discuss the distinction between political and cultural LGBT movements or activities and how a state can have a very distinct approach to the two, for example how political statements and actions of sexual minorities can be very restricted or criminalised by a
state, while ‘cultural’ phenomenon such as gay bars, movies and websites are in a larger extent more accepted (Bosia, 2014:261). Bosia draws the link to capitalism and how the cultural fragments generate consumption and are therefore not threatening in the same way as actions or activities with the aim of following a political agenda (ibid). This is an interesting theory around the neoliberal globalisation and how the acceptance of LGBT has gone in separate ways in different part of the world, but also within the same geographical and national context in the form of differentiating the political and the cultural.

However on the note of the political versus the cultural, Bosia (2014:267) also wants to put light on the issue of the, perhaps unintentional but still, damage caused by western LGBT tourism in states where LGBT rights are diminished. An example that Bosia gives of this is when a number of Egyptian men were arrested at a gay nightclub for tourists in Cairo. The arbitrary situation of the Egyptian men being charged and not tourists can be explained with that for the Egyptian men it was considered a betrayal to not only be part of a gay discourse but to stand on the side of the Western enemy. This caused a big strain in the work of LGBT activists in Egypt for a long time ahead. So, as mentioned above, this means that it may not explicitly be an issue of people being LGBT, but the threat of westernisation and the remembrance of the colonial times that make states turn to homophobia and the determination to limit the lives of LGBT people.

As Singapore has a uneasy attitude towards adapting to whatever the West is doing, this discussion is relevant to the thesis. The arbitrary situation of homosexual acts both being criminalised but not enforced, brings in the discussion of the cultural and political. LGB people are allowed to exist, as long as they don’t ask for special rights or set the tone for the political or social arena.

1.7.4 Summary

The specific focus on the Singapore Government and LGB people that I have in this thesis have not been written about before, this is why it is important that my work is added to the field of research on LGB people’s rights in relation to the governing of a state.
2 | Theoretical Approach

As this thesis is conducted through discourse analysis, that will be my methodological and theoretical approach through the analysis. However, in critical discourse analysis, the social context and structure plays an important role in the analysis of the language used through discourses in text. Therefore an analysis of this sort will not be complete without input from other social theories and structures (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:86-87). I will then be using the following theoretical approaches in the analysis as to anchor the discourse analysis in the social context and practice and to answer the research questions.

2.1 Heteronormativity in the Notion of Family

It may seem odd to give heterosexuality such a big space in a thesis that revolves around homo- and bisexuality. However, to bring in heterosexuality, and more specifically the norm that exists around this sexuality in society, heteronormativity, becomes relevant as it is a norm that effects everyone living in a society, not least the ones that do not live by it, hence in this case homo- and bisexual people.

Rubin (1975) talks of the sex/gender system and how it prevents women and non-heterosexual people from being emancipated from institutionalised sexism (Rubin, 1975:159) and asks whether a society without a gender hierarchy is possible. There are social practices, that are part of the sex/gender system, which have the purpose to keep women and other oppressed groups such as homosexual people in place (ibid, 163). Kinship systems consist of and rely on socially organised sexuality where heterosexuality is the obvious norm (ibid, 163). Rubin writes about the significance of the gift as a part of the existence of kinship systems. The woman and the man in a marriage are not equal actors, instead the man is the subject, who receives the woman, the object, as a gift in a bigger system of kinship, with for example parents and brothers in law. If the woman would refuse to be a part of this system and decide to not be an object, the system falls apart. Kinship bonds will not be tied and the continued existence of the family, and with that reproduction, will be threatened (ibid, 171-172). Kinship hence depends on marriage between a man and a woman. A woman wanting another woman instead of a man is then disrupting this system of exchange (ibid, 183). Rubin means that the
system that oppresses women in this way, is the same system that oppresses LGB people since it is built on the notion of heterosexuality where nothing else can be excepted (ibid, 180).

In another article, Rubin (1984) writes that we need to start thinking about sex, even though (or perhaps especially because) it appears that sexuality is not the top priority when there are many other social and political problems to take care of like poverty, racism and war (Rubin, 1984:150). It can be especially in times of change and stress that the question of sexuality becomes specifically vulnerable with people wanting to restrict sexuality and bring back the sense of moral to keep it under control (ibid, 150-151). Rubin means that there is a need for a more just framework of talking and thinking about sex in politics, it has been much to easy for the issue to be surrounded by feelings and moral panic instead of being based on information and facts (ibid, 155).

A problem with sexuality is that it has for a long time been solely connected to biology, when it rather must be seen as dependent on and constructed by the context of society and history (ibid, 157). Just as categories of race and gender, sexuality is never just a biological product which is stagnated and fixed. Sexuality is hence produced and presented differently in different social, historical and political contexts.

Sex has in a general manner been looked upon as something negative, it is 'ok' within marriage and even then it should be for the purpose of reproduction, outside of marriage it is generally very restricted (ibid, 158). Rubin speaks of a hierarchy of sexual value where married, monogamous, heterosexual couples with children are at the top and the bottom consist of gay, lesbian and bisexual couples, then single or non-monogamous LGB persons, and at the very bottom transsexual people along with sex workers and fetishists (ibid, 158). The ones at the top are valued in a society and receive social and political rights and status. The closer to the bottom a category is, the more stigma is attached to the group as well as the individual and with it comes low status and a restriction on social and political rights and space, and even criminalisation and medical diagnoses in most extreme cases (ibid, 159).
Rubin questions how it can be that sex is such a sensitive subject where the public considers itself to be allowed to have an opinion about other people’s preferences, when the same would be absurd for preferences of for example food or fictional literature (ibid, 158). It is an infected debate where everyone sees their own sexuality and preferences within sex as the universal and natural one and at the same time discards any other sexuality as abnormal and bad (ibid, 162). Since the heterosexual, reproductive sex is on top of the sex hierarchy, they get the first say in the issue and therefore set the tone for what is the best and universal sexuality. Rubin also notices the difference in attitude towards diverse race and religion, and even though those areas of debate are not clean and tidy, there is today a difference in accepting and appreciating diverse cultures than in accepting differing sexualities (ibid, 162). Because of this contrast in attitude towards sexuality, laws restricting sex and sexuality can pass quite unquestioned by the larger public. Today, the same kind of laws could not pass in other areas of social life that are intimately connected to the personal life (ibid, 165). There are cases where states have tough laws on sexuality, but where the laws are not actively enforced. These laws are however still oppressive, they are still there in writing and the ones possessing the power can at any time choose to change their mind and enforce the law anyway, sometimes just to keep the rest of the group in order. (ibid, 167). Law around sexuality does not have to be about criminalising acts, but also withdrawal of rights such as not being able to marry, which closes LGB people out of legal rights that heterosexual couples have and take for granted (ibid, 167).

Some laws restricting sexual behaviour cannot be understood in another manner than that it is moral that stands behind it. Rubin gives the example of homosexual behaviour having been illegal in many states in the US, with no further explanation that that it is against nature, and an example of a S/M masochist being convicted on the grounds that being physically hurt is nothing that a sane person would ever consent too, hence it is not natural or normal (ibid, 176-177). The moral norm plays a big role in the shaping of laws around sexuality and sex.

To talk about heteronormativity and the effects of it in a society in this thesis becomes relevant as what the Singapore Government is doing by limiting LGB people is controlling the population, where heteronormativity together with moral values are important building
blocks. This leads to the next theoretical approach of the thesis, governance and the power of a state.

2.2 Governance

The notion of power has been widely discussed and theorised around. Is power purely repressive? Foucault (1980) means that this is a common misconception of power, and continues to explain how if power were only oppressive with no other agenda, it would probably not be obeyed and in that way useless (Foucault, 1980:119). But this is not the case with power, it’s only aim is never/seldom to oppress or repress and to solely exercise in a negative way. Power is strong because it does not only do that, it also exercises on desire and knowledge (ibid, 59). Power is accepted because it creates things and produces discourse in a social context (ibid, 119). To have this as a starting point, in how power works to form, create and produce, but also repress and oppress, in the social practice it exists in, is of great use to understand the existence of power. Foucault states that power does not only exist in one central point of origin, but exists on different levels in a context. A state apparatus is not the sole holder of power, power also exists outside and beside the state in the form of influential actors such as the bourgeoisie. Even though the power that exists within a state is important in the struggle towards change, the power structures existing outside it cannot be ignored as this power has a significant role (ibid, 60).

Rose (1999) chooses to define the term ‘governance’ with;

\[\text{…a kind of catch-all to refer to any strategy, tactic, process, procedure or programme for controlling, regulating, shaping, mastering or exercising authority over others in a nation, organization or locality.} \text{ (Rose, 1999:15)}\]

Governance is here a quite broad term then, but Rose means that it is a useful tool to investigate the notion of power and the actors possessing it (ibid, 16). This power is not solely possessed by a state apparatus, but as Foucault (1980:60) also mentions, exists in other networks outside the Government State (Rose, 1999:17). The term governance can be seen as a perspective next to the term governmentality, which is the praxis, hence these two are
interrelated (ibid, 21). When investigating governmentality the focus is not on what has happened, but instead what the possessors of power wanted to happen, what the calculated outcome was beforehand, and with what strategies, tools and techniques this has been attempted (ibid, 20). Governmentality is the way the state conducts the population to conduct itself, through living in a regulated freedom (ibid, 21).

Bio-politics is closely connected with governance in the way a Government performs power over the private/personal of the population, for example reproduction, marriage and population growth. This is however done in a way that the individual does not feel forced or overlooked. When bio-politics works, the individual feels that they have made the decision to marry or reproduce without the influence of the state (ibid, 22).

Just as a father of a family, the governor of a state needs to create and uphold a good economy for his family, alongside leading/controlling his family members, in this case the populations of the nation (Foucault 1991:92). A good leader’s aim must be; ‘the common welfare and the salvation of all’ (ibid, 94), to do good for as many as possible. However this act never goes only one way, the population is expected in return to respect and obey laws, serve the nation and do what the nation asks of it (ibid, 95). This system is hence circular, when the state is good the population is good, and then the state rewards it by treating them well (ibid, 95).

To take in governance into the analysis in this thesis becomes crucial as it is this practice that I am descending from. My aim is to explore the governance of the Singapore Government, this means that I need to understand what governance can look like and aspects that are connected to the practice like above mentioned governmentality and bio-politics. Foucault’s discussion of power will help making sense of the analysis and understand things that lay before the political governing performed by the Singapore Government.

2.3 Post-colonial Theory

According to McClintock (1995), there is much more to say through postcolonial theory than on the level the discussion has been in the past. She means that what is taking place is a simplified discussion. Colonialism is being reduced to a single issue in history, much like the
oppression of women has been simplified as an issue of the category women without taking into account historical and hierarchical differences within this broad group (McClintock, 1995:11). How can we start talking about colonialism and post-colonialism in a more useful way?

Race, class, and gender cannot be put to the side when talking of postcolonial theory, which it has been in the past according to McClintock. Even as race, class, and gender each are important on their own, they are not separate categories. They become applicable when they are considered in relation to each other, they are so called articulated categories (ibid, 5).

Imperialism has by European theorists been handled as something that happens elsewhere, therefore it has been spoken of as something distanced and non-Western. However this is odd in the way that imperialism is a creation of the West modernity along with the notion of differentiation on the basis of race (ibid, 5). Even though it seems as though it is white, European men that have been the ones behind imperialism, gender has not been of importance in the discussion of postcolonial theory, it has been put aside as something irrelevant to the bigger picture. McClintock also criticises the way of connecting gender with only women, and race and ethnicity with only the black and the colonised, and in this way means that light should be shed even on the opposites, it would for example be interesting to see a study about race where the invisible norm of ‘whiteness’ was the discourse in focus (ibid, 8). To study the invisible norm, is what is the focus of this thesis, while I could instead have a focus on LGB people and how they are living, I have chosen to direct the light towards the ones that are the cause of oppression against these people. Imperialism is not only talked of as something happening in a different space, but also in a different time from a Western modern time. It is talked about in a historical perspective, as something of the past (ibid, 11).

What is a postcolonial country? This is seen as a binary system where a state that is or has been involved in the imperial system is either a colony or a post-colony. But what about Britain, could it not be referred to as a postcolonial country? Why do we only attach this label to the colonised and not the coloniser? McClintock means that this binary separation suggests that the prefix ‘post’ in front of the word makes all the history disappear, and that now all is
good, the country is no longer colonised. This way of seeing it is interesting in a few ways. Post-colonies do not look the same over the globe (ibid, 12). Take for example The United States, Argentina, India and Uganda. These countries are all very different, with the one common thing that they are so called post-colonies (ibid, 12-13). But I think that many would say it would be absurd to treat them the same way because of this. So what is the reason for clumping these together with no other social level of analysis? Is it then at all relevant to talk about the postcolonial scene or postcolonial condition? (ibid, 12) These are questions that McClintock thinks we should ask in the field of post-colonial theory to avoid the simplistic way it has been talked about in the past.

What replaces the colonisers once they’ve left? The country may then be post-colonial, but it could become the target of a new agent of interest in a neighbouring state for example. Or even if the country gains independence, who will lead the country internally? It is often the rich, bourgeoisie and powerful men that are the ones who take over. How does this change the situation for the less rich, men and women? They get a new coloniser (ibid, 13). McClintock (1995) takes a different take on postcolonial theory, or perhaps rather, she takes a look at how the theory has been discussed and handled in the past and lays out how this way can be problematic. She means that postcolonial theory has been used in a non-useful manner that has rather come closer to the very actions and thoughts that one perhaps have made an effort to move away from through introducing postcolonial theory in the first place.

As Singapore is a post-colony, quite recently too, this aspect is of value to bring in to the thesis. McClintock brings up a side of post-colonial theory that has not been discussed in this manner before which I believe will be a good contribution in understanding how Singapore as a post-colony is relating to its history and what meaning this has for its future.

2.4 Nationalism

Many theorists have had difficulty to put into words exactly what defines a nation and thereby nationalism (Anderson, 2006:5). This is even though being part of a nation in our time period, is the most universally compatible value (ibid, 3). Anderson however proposes the definition that a nation is an imagined community with an expected identification and feeling of
communion with other people who are also part of the same community, even though these people will not have met in person, and probably will not in the future (ibid, 6). Sharing the same nationality automatically creates bonds with people who have nothing else in common than specifically being from the same predefined geographical area. Nationalism and nationality are cultural artefacts which cannot be understood without a historical context and how it has evolved, through political and ideological constellations, to what it has come to be in present time (ibid, 4).

What is forgotten often is that nations are not definite or set in stone, even though that is how they are treated, they are actually invented by people in a way that doesn’t necessarily make sense, they are dependent on the historical events that have lead up to the nations existing in the manner they do today (ibid). Nationalism is invented, and are not the same around the world (McClintock, 1995:360).

Nationalism appears to be a central tool for the Singapore Government to unite the nation of Singapore with the purpose of becoming a stronger nation, ready for threats both from inside and outside of Singapore. An understanding of the nationalism, here described as an imagined community, is of aid in understanding the importance of nationalism in Singapore.

3 | Methodology

The methodological approach in the analysis of the material will be Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) built on Norman Fairclough’s theoretical framework. Choosing between a few different ways to go about analysing discourses, I found that Fairclough’s method was the one that suited the aim and purpose of this thesis best. Fairclough’s way of descending from a three-dimensional framework of text, discursive practice, and social practice, will be a good base for analysing the material as it covers a lot of ground, not only for example the linguistic part of a text (Fairclough, 1992:62).

3.1 What is a Discourse?

Defining discourse is essential when conducting a discourse analysis I would say. But what is a discourse? Depending on in what field and which method one chooses to work with, this
definition tends to vary. A constitutive definition is that a discourse is like an order that allows and premiers some opinions and knowledges above others, and is a hierarchy as to decide who has the voice to utter themselves (Bergström & Boréus, 2012:358). A discourse is however not set in stone but rather dynamic and changeable. The meaning of a discourse has become somewhat vague with the definition varying dependent on the context it is present in. Winther Jørgensen and Phillips argue that one nevertheless can talk about a general definition of discourse;

...the general idea that language is structured according to different patterns that people's utterances follow when they take part in different domains of social life... (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:1)

Discourse is then in a broad sense, a way of talking about or describing the world, within a specific context.

In the domain of Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis, discourse is defined as something that is both constitutive and constituted, this meaning that a discourse forms the social context in which it exists in at the same time as it is formed by the same social context (Fairclough, 1992:64). There is then a dialectical relationship between discourse and social structure, which Fairclough means that it is important to bear in mind as to not overemphasise either the one or the other in the context, both are hence of importance in relationship to each other (ibid, 65). A discourse is also never taken from thin air as a discourse always descends and is built on another discourse existing before or simultaneously as the present discourse (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:1). Fairclough refers to discourse in three ways; first, as language-use being a social practice, secondly, a language used in a specific field or context, and thirdly, as a speech that in a specific way, and from a specific perspective, gives meaning to experiences (ibid, 66-67).

Between theorists within the field of discourse analysis, there are differing views upon what ought to be included within the category of a discourse. Laclau and Mouffe argue that everything is discourse, there is nothing that can be defined as a non-discourse as everything
in some way is part of a social structure (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:67). While Fairclough on the other hand argues that discourse is specifically social phenomena that to be called a discourse, require a number of aspects, such as it being a form of language-use in a specified social context, a non-discourse then being something that is a solely physical practice with no form of language use. (ibid, 65) Social practice is not to be automatically seen as discourse, discourse is part of social practice, but so are non-discourses, a social practice can consist of several discourse and non-discourses (Fairclough, 1992:66). Therefore Fairclough also claims that one gains a lot from integrating other theoretic approaches in one’s work while looking at discourses in relation to non-discourses in the broader social practice (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:86-87).

3.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis is a broad category of discourse analysis which contains several different theoretical and methodological approaches, in this thesis however, the approach that will be used is the one developed by Norman Fairclough which is, just to confuse it a bit, called precisely critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:60). In the following when I write critical discourse analysis or CDA, it is specifically the methodological framework of Fairclough that I am referring to. CDA uses a three-dimensional framework consisting of the key concepts text, discursive practice, and social practice. These three aspects are all part of the notion of language use, and play a central part in the analysis part of CDA (Fairclough, 1992:62). The main aim of CDA is to understand the relationship between the use of language (discourse) and social practice (ibid, 62-63). Fairclough is clear with that if using this type of analysis, one needs to be aware of that it cannot be politically neutral since the aim and idea of the method is to stand on the side of the oppressed and work towards social change (ibid, 62, 67). Even though one researcher’s critical discourse analysis may not directly contribute to social change, the aim should still be to make some sort of difference. This is why the method works well when analysing political and social discourses with a power aspect present.

CDA is a text-oriented discourse analysis that uses linguistic tools to understand how discursive processes are formed in specific texts (ibid). Text in this context refers to both
written and spoken language, thereby there is a large focus on language and language-use within the method. However, Fairclough means that one cannot solely take in the linguistic aspects of language, the social practice is an important part of CDA, the social context that the discourse is involved in needs to be addressed and taken account of in the analysis. (ibid). The discourse and the social structure it exists in are in a dialectical relationship to each other, meaning that they rely on one another at the same time as they are separate. Questions that should be considered about this dialectical relationship are; In what social and geographical context does the given discourse perform in? Are there other discourses that effect and are effected by the discourse? What non-discourses are there that have an impact on the discourse? The order of discourse is a system where several discourses exist in the same social context, also surrounded by other practices such as non-discourses (ibid, 72). This system is structure and practice in the sense that it both forms the discourses part of it and is formed by them. This means that an order of discourse is changeable, especially when a discourse from another order enters the order (ibid, 72).

A three-dimensional framework of language use sets the base for CDA, consisting of text; linguistic structures such as speech, written text or images, discursive practices; events connected to the production and consumption of text, and social practices; the broader social context and structure which text is part of (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:68-69).

To use CDA as a research method is, apart from other forms of discourse analysis (e.g. Foucault; Laclau & Mouffe), quite welcoming since Fairclough has put an effort into producing a step-by-step guideline for using the method. As this may seem stiff and cemented, Fairclough however means that this list is to be seen as a guideline, not a legal document that needs to be followed in detail. The list will have to be altered and adjusted to every analysis made; some points may be taken away and some may be better put to use in a different order, depending on the discourse analysis being conducted (Fairclough, 1992:225). The bullet-points of Critical Discourse Analysis as a research method are:
3.2.1 Data

*Defining a Project*

Here Fairclough talks about defining the project, what is the aim of the analysis, what is the aimed for result? The emphasis of the aim in CDA should be 'critical', and surrounding injustice and inequality in society (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:14). As mentioned before, CDA is not meant to be politically neutral, the purpose of the method is to highlight oppression and the ones causing it (Fairclough, 1992:67). The discursive practice is to be defined in relation to the social practice (ibid, 226).

*The Corpus (Material)*

The material that one chooses to base the analysis on is often some sort of text (spoken or written) since the text is a central part of the framework. The material and the research questions depend on each other, they ought to reflect each other and be relevant through the analysis. What the material will look like also depends on practical aspects such as the researcher’s knowledge in the field and level of access to relevant material. To have a general outlook of the field and material available. This requires some pre-research of the order of discourse and the social context to be done by the researcher. If the domain of research is in constant change, the researcher needs to think about the time-frame when choosing material (ibid, 227).

*Enhancing the Corpus*

The corpus can be enhanced by creating a deeper understanding of the specific field though discussing the matter with researchers looking into the same field, conducting interview with people connected to the field or having panel discussions about the field or issue (ibid, 227-228).

*Transcription*

Transcription can become necessary if the material consists of spoken language. One should bear in mind that the process of transcription will take a lot of work and time and therefore plan and make room for this when deciding to choose material in the form of interviews or already existing spoken material (ibid, 229).
Coding and Selecting Samples within the Corpus

How the coding is done depends on what the material looks like and what the researcher wants to show with it. The analyst can choose between a few different strategies; to code parts of or the whole corpus as to summarise the discourse, or code the corpus in relevant topics or themes (ibid, 230). Fairclough (1992:230) however emphasises that the analysing of CDA is formed to be done with detail and on a limited volume of discourse samples. Therefore the coding and sampling of the material should be done carefully so that the most relevant and interesting parts of the material gets represented in the analysis. The selection can be focused on ‘moments of crisis’ meaning places in the material where something out of the ordinary happens, or places where the discourse is especially emphasised as to make the samples left after coding as dense as possible (ibid, 230).

3.2.2 Analysis

The step of Analysis returns back to the three-dimensional framework of text, discursive practice, and social practice. These three dimensions cannot be separated in practice, but in the step of analysis, it serves a purpose to look at them one at the time. An analysis done within this framework will start with the interpretation of the discourse practice, followed by a description of the text with a concluding interpretation of both these in the social practice (Fairclough, 1992:231). It does not have to be done in this order, the analyst will have to make a decision about the order depending on the purpose or emphasis of the analysis. Fairclough however mentions that when the focus is on process and change, it is a good idea to start with discussing the discursive practice.

Discursive Practices

The aim here is to interpret the discursive practice of the discourse through text in how it is produced, distributed, and consumed. The purpose of this is to create an understanding of the discursive practice that can be detected in the discursive samples, i.e. the coded material (ibid, 232). Question that can be asked are; What lay before this text? What other discourses does the text rely or take inspiration from? Who consumes the text and in what way? What are the
Consequences of the text? (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:81-82). This interpretation will then be justified through the following text analysis (Fairclough, 1992:232).

Text
The language-use being in focus for the CDA, a detailed analysis is done on the material using linguistic tools (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:83). A number of linguistic tools are presented by Fairclough (1992:235-237), among these are cohesion (with a focus on the rhetorical mode), grammar, word meaning, and the use of metaphors. To analyse the text in this way, gives a deeper understanding of the discourse in focus.

Social Practice
Analysing and describing the social practice is done with the objective to understand why the discursive practice, which is part of the social practice, is what it is, but also to catch sight of the effects of the discursive practice on the social practice (ibid, 237). The social practice also serves a big role as it can help to explain ideological and political effects of discourse.

3.2.3 Results
In this section, Fairclough (1992:239) goes into what happens after a work performed with CDA is published or distributed. He means that the writer/analyst can have little control over what happens with the text after it is released and how people will react to it and use it. The only thing the researcher can do is to make sure that the validity of the analysis is addressed before publishing the material.

3.3 Defining the Discourse of this Thesis
The discourse of the heteronormative family and how the Singapore Government is using it is the focus of this thesis. This discourse is not exclusive for the Singapore society but is rather something that can be relevant in most parts of the world. To understand the discourse, I will speak of it in a broader context here, to be able to apply more specifically to Singapore later on in the analysis. Fairclough (1992:65-66) takes the family as an example to show the significance of a taking the relationship between discourse and social structure into account. He means that in the (heteronormative) family, there are already set roles that can be filled;
'mother', 'father', 'child', as well as other set aspects such as the home and other possible contexts that are connected to the family and that these aspects are set by discourse. It can however be understood as that these structures are actually just created out of thin air. Fairclough argues nevertheless that this is an idealist view, and that in reality this discourse is constituted by its social structure. These expectations and portrayals we have of a family are formed by the social practice which are rooted in social norms and structures (Fairclough, 1992:66).

3.4 Material
I have deliberately chosen material that already exists, that is accessible on the internet in video and written form and that is 'okayed' by the Singapore Government to be released. Material that is 'on the record' so to speak with the Prime Minister knowing that the recordings would be public. All of the material is from after 2007, when the Penal Code was revised and the 377A section was kept.

What follows is a presentation of the material that I am going to base my analysis on. The material consists of five speeches, lectures or dialogues by or with Prime Minister (PM) of Singapore, Lee Hsien Loong. The material is chosen because they are in some way related to the question of LGB people’s rights, family values, or Singapore values on a more general level that I see as useful for this thesis. All of the material is by or with the PM, this is because the material needed to be restricted somehow so that the material did not become to big. To limit the material to the PM is also relevant since he has such an important position in the Singapore Government. One speech is of a more formal and strict character as it takes place in the Parliament and the PM is arguing as to why the 377A section should be kept in place. This speech had an obvious place in the material as the PM explicitly discusses the situation for LGB people and the 377A section. Another speech which takes place on Singapore’s National Day, has a more relaxed and joyful character. The National Day speech contains examples of how well Singapore had done during the past year within different fields as well as quite a bit of humour from the PM’s side. One of the five is a lecture that the PM held at Singapore Management University (SMU) which is noticeably well structured into themes. This lecture has contributed to the analysis mostly regarding the politics and governance of demography.
and economy. Then there are two separate dialogues that both are lead by a moderator with questions asked directly to the PM from the audience present. These two have contributed with a few different aspects to the material as in both of these cases, the PM didn’t have full control over what would be the subject of the dialogues.

3.5 Method

Here follows a description of how the methodological process of the analysis has taken place. I have gone through the material several times. The first time was when choosing the material, which meant going through more statements, speeches, lectures and dialogs with the PM than I was in going to end up with. Having a larger material from the beginning helped me see what in this material that I was actually interested in taking a more detailed look at, and in that way discarding what I wasn't as interested in. From a selection of ten speeches, interviews, lectures, dialogs and statements, I narrowed the material down to five pieces, keeping only the most relevant material for the thesis. As I have mentioned, I deliberately chose material that both existed in video and written form as well as easily accessible online.

The first time going through the material was in video form as to rather quickly get an idea if the material was of interest or not. When I have narrowed it down to five, I read through the written material, keeping an open mind as to finding themes and patterns that could be of interest in the analysis. I found that looking for keywords connected to my theoretical approach such as governance, heteronormativity, family/kinship, post-colony and nationalism, was helpful. However at the same time to not concentrate to much on details in the text as to not get stuck in things and try to see the text from a general perspective and maybe even discover new patterns and interesting concepts that I did not think of in the beginning of the process. What I also had in mind while reading the written material the first time was the three dimensional framework of critical discourse analysis; discursive practice, text and social practice. This was done to identify these three parts in the material and to bring them forward in the analysis.

After going through the material the first time, I had found three main themes that were interesting to take a closer look at and that I found relevant when thinking of the aim and
research questions of the thesis, as well as the discourse in focus; the discourse of the heteronormative family. I formed the three themes from what appeared in the material to be the three main goals that the PM and the Singapore Government has for the future of the nation. Then I went through the written material a second time to divide the material up in these three themes as well as mark possible quotes that portrayed in different ways how these themes were of interest. What I did then was to go through quotes that I had chosen with the framework of the three themes and find patterns and formations within these. What I concentrated on at this moment was again to think of how the theoretical approach could be connected with the now boiled down material to emphasise and deepen the understanding of the material.

I am aware of that the way the analysis turned out is because of how I chose to look at it and what keywords and themes that I was looking for. If another person had had the same material and a somewhat similar aim, the narrowed down material would not have looked the same. This does not have to be a bad thing as I am the author of this study, it is however good to know this and not think that what results I find in the end are universal, but rather a result of my analytical process to reach the aim that I have set up.

4 | Analysis

4.1 The Three Dimensions of Critical Discourse Analysis

Here I will talk about the framework of the material and how it is relevant for the overall analysis. This is done through the three dimensional framework of Critical Discourse Analysis with discursive practice, text and social practice in focus. The three of them are connected, but can for the purpose of presenting the framework be talked about separately (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002:86). What follows will be an interpretation of the discourse practice, a description of the text and an interpretation of both of these in the social practice (Fairclough, 321).

4.1.1 Discursive practice

The discursive practice concentrates on how the discourse, through text, is produced, distributed and consumed (Fairclough, 1992:232). All the texts that are part of the material are
performed by Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Hsien Loong. Three of the texts are speeches or lectures held solely by the Prime Minister, two of the texts are dialogs with a Q&A-format where a moderator is present and questions are asked by an audience directly to the Prime Minister (PM). All of the texts were performed in front of an audience, and are easily accessible online so they are also meant for a bigger audience than the one present in the room at the time. As the discourse I am concentrating on in this analysis is the discourse of the heteronormative family, this is what I have been looking for both when choosing the material, but also when going through the material. There are more discourses present in the material than this specific one, for example discourse of nationalism, religion and race, post-colonialism, and penal law. Since the genre of the texts are political, which is also the social context, these mentioned discourses are present and relevant in the PM’s speeches and statements, they also complement and exist together with my chosen discourse of the heteronormative family, but they will not be the main focus of the analysis. To say something about the consumption of the material is quite difficult, as I do not have access to how many people that the material have reached.

4.1.2 Text
As the material is all already available in video and written form, I have been able to take part of both these textual dimensions. For me this has been a good thing as I felt that a lot of the context is scaled of when only reading the written text. Therefore it was a benefit that I had watched the video form before reading the material as I felt that it gave me a deeper understanding of the context as well as details of the tone in the voice, pauses, facial expressions and reactions from the audience. The PM’s way of speaking includes metaphors and examples, making the material interesting to follow as he anchors it in something concrete and relatable. The texts that are speeches or lectures made by the PM consist of correct and formal language. At the same time, the PM has a relaxed approach and seems comfortable and not as if he is reading from a script. In the two dialogs, the PM is not prepared on what questions he will be answering, but also in these cases, he keeps a professional approach with the feeling of a warm and pleasant attitude. My feeling when taking part of the material and not concentrating on the substance but rather the structure, is a positive one. The PM I would say is a good speaker, he is interesting to listen to as his
speeches include a mix of serious matter and at times pleasant and thoughtful inserts as well as a bit of humour even. This does go together with the image I have seen of him beforehand, going through his Facebook page and hearing people speak of him. He is generally a loved Prime Minister who knows how to speak to the Singaporean population and he does it very well. He is firm and honest, yet personal and caring.

4.1.3 Social Practice

The social practice of the discourse in focus is the political sphere in Singapore, more specifically the practice that is performed through political events by the Government and the PM of Singapore. The texts that make up my material, and its discursive practice are included in this social practice. Singapore is a democratic country with open, general elections, however in practice with the same political party having had the power over the last 50 years. My thought here is how having the same leaders for half a century, forms the population and their perception and opinion on leadership. This is not something that I will be able to give an answer to right now, but it is interesting to keep this in mind through out the analysis and think about how the context of Singapore makes the situation distinct.

4.2 Three Themes

The analysis has been divided into three themes which represent the goals of the Singaporean Government that I have been able to map out through the material of the PM’s speeches and statements. These goals are to sustain a harmonious society, a growth of the economy and a growth of the population. Below I will dedicate some pages to go through the themes and how they are important to Singapore and also how they are to be achieved and with what tools and strategies. My theoretical approach will also be applied to these themes as they are relevantly chosen to match my analysis of the material. The discourse of the heteronormative family and how it excludes and limits LGB people is the focus of the analysis and is therefore part of all the three themes. Here forth, I will go into detail on how the three goals are presented in the material and show how the goals are pervaded by the discourse of the heteronormative family.
4.2.1 Harmonious Society

4.2.1.1 Section 377A, a population divider?

That the Singapore Government and the Prime Minister (PM) are striving towards a harmonious society where people live in peace was something that shone through in the material, words such as 'balance' and 'graciousness' were frequently used and a mindset from the PM’s side to keep the population united both as a society and as allied with the Government. The question of LGB people appears to get stuck in the middle of the visionary dream of a harmonious society where it is not welcomed or encouraged to demand and fight for social change as this disrupts the calm and stable community of Singaporeans, at least not when it comes to social change that is against the 'traditional' Singapore.

_Singapore is basically a conservative society. The family is the basic building block of our society. It has been so and, by policy, we have reinforced this and we want to keep it so. And by 'family' in Singapore, we mean one man one woman, marrying, having children and bringing up children within that framework of a stable family unit._ (Lee, 2007a)

What the PM says here sums up Singapore’s attitude towards family life, and the society as a whole, and what it is supposed to look like quite well. This is connected to the discourse that is the focus of this thesis; the discourse of the heteronormative family. That by defining 'family’ as consisting of a heterosexual couple is something natural that is not questioned. This is not something that the Government or the society, at least according to the PM, is willing to throw away any time soon. This is not surprising, knowing that Singapore is a conservative country, it is however of interest that the PM states it explicitly in this way, saying that people who are not heterosexual have nothing to do with the building of a family.

The family, or kinship system which Rubin (1975) would call it, relies on the notion of organised sexuality, i.e. the obvious norm of heterosexuality which keeps women and non-heterosexual people in place (Rubin 1975:163). Disrupting this pattern by desiring a partner of the same sex instead of the opposite then causes unbalance in the system and questions what has been unquestioned. This is dangerous when the aim is to keep a system in place,
which is what the PM is trying to do. The position that LGB people have in relation to heterosexual people can be understood through what Rubin (1984) calls a ‘hierarchy of sexual value’ where heterosexual, married couples are at the top while LGB people are much further down. Since heterosexual people are the ones on top, they get to set the tone for the discourse of sexuality, which leads to them being valued socially and politically in society. This while LGB people on the contrary have a restriction in social and political value and rights (Rubin 1984:158-159).

Through out the material, this unquestioned norm is not defined much further. This is why I wanted to start this analysis with such an explicit quote, as to set the tone for the rest of the analysis and make clear that when the PM here forth speaks of the ‘family’, it is the heteronormative family that he is speaking of consisting of a man and a woman, marrying and pursuing to reproduce.

Something that was interesting in the material was how the PM continually was giving the opposition of LGB rights a voice, saying that both sides of the issue; the LGB people and people who are anti-LGB in Singapore, need to have an equal say in the matter and that both should be listened to. This can again be connected with the ‘hierarchy of sexual value’, giving the anti-LGB people more space and value (ibid, 158). Through out the material, the PM expresses a worry for a divide in opinion to polarise the Singaporeans. He is especially concerned about the conservative’s reaction if the 377A section were to be removed as he means a coalition, that according to the PM does not exist today, would occur and become very troublesome for everyone, not least the LGB people themselves.

*If you try and force the issue and settle the matter definitively, one way or the other, we are never going to reach an agreement within Singapore society. People on both sides hold strong views. People who are presently willing to live and let live will get polarised and no views will change...* (Lee, 2007a)

The strategy that the Government has when it comes to questions around LGB is a pragmatic yet passive one. It appears that the PM wants it to look like not changing anything is the most
diplomatic choice, anybody suggesting something different (like the LGBT activists) are causing trouble and disrupting the balance. The ones who do not care so much about the law, who for the time being ‘live and let live’, will become upset if the law changes from what it is now since that would be for the Government to take action, and to definitely take a side, in the issue. The PM means that the LGB people should then be thankful in a way that there are many Singaporeans who do not take a definite stand in the issue but instead have a passive attitude and let both sides exist. As Rubin explains, that when there are many other social and political issues that need attendance like poverty and racism, discrimination of sexuality does not get on the top priority list as it can be seen as a ‘luxury problem’ (Rubin, 1984:150). LGB people are therefore seen as a group with special interest that are demanding special treatment, when there are ‘worse’ and more urgent issues that need attendance.

*It is not easy, between the pro-gay groups and the anti-gay groups. I think the gulf is quite deep and it is not easy to establish a dialogue. Unless people are prepared to have some give and take on many issues, and if each one insists that what I want is my absolute right, I think we are going to fracture and have schisms amongst ourselves. That would be very serious.* (Lee, 2015c)

The debate is risking polarisation between groups who are of different opinions. The Government is determined of treating both sides as equally relevant in the issue. What they are doing is comparing the human rights of LGB people with the right for the remaining population to not have to deal with this and by this drawing the conclusion that what is best is to let the issue rest and evolve naturally.

Here in the following extract the PM comments on same-sex marriage being legalised by the Supreme Court in the United States (US) in 2015.

*It is not our system. In our system, the Parliament decides, the Executive through the Parliament, takes the lead, legislatates and legislatates on behalf of the population. On an issue like LGBT where there are very strong views in the society, I think the legislature*
has to act very cautiously. You can pass a law but will it be accepted? Will it be respected? Will people feel that it is legitimate? (Lee, 2015c)

What the PM is suggesting is quite interesting, he is asking whether such a change in the law would be accepted and respected if the same were to be done in Singapore as it was done in the US. What he is doing when he is saying this is to push away the issue from the Government’s table to the citizens. Even though this strategy that the PM presents above is passive, he is performing a type of governance, which is the political conduct by the state of controlling, shaping and regulating the population (Rose, 1999:15). The Government is in this way controlling the body by seeming to be passive in their choice to not make a decision, when actually they are making a decision and taking a stand by leaving the law as it is.

The PM continues to comment the law change on same-sex marriage in the US 2015:

We have a much more cautious approach towards social issues [than the US, my note]. On LGBT issues, I have stated my position. It is one where we move carefully because it is really a conservative population and I think we let the views evolve with time. The population has to decide collectively rather than the government decide that I am going to go one way or the other. (Lee, 2015c)

Here the PM is explicitly transferring the responsibility of the issue to the population, saying the Government should not, and cannot, decide on this. This becomes a way of remaining ‘neutral’ in the question as he describes it as something that Government should not be involved in. Yet, I find this to be an odd way to go as the Government is already very involved as it is because of the law that they have imposed that LGB people are socially and legally restricted. This becomes a bit hard to understand, the PM says this is in the hands of the citizens, however the Government are the ones implementing and upholding the laws. Governmentality is the practice of a state conducting the population to conduct itself and through this live in an illusion of freedom (Rose, 1999:21). This is what the PM is doing when he is saying that the population has the power in this question, when the truth is rather that the
Government has full authority in the issue. This gesture is constituting the PM as a leader who values the sharing of power with the population.

*So, the question is: what do we want to do about it now? Do we want to do anything about it now? If we retain it, we are not enforcing it proactively. [...] If we abolish it, we may be sending the wrong signal that our stance has changed, and the rules have shifted. [...] Therefore, we have decided to keep the status quo on section 377A. It is better to accept the legal untidiness and the ambiguity. It works, do not disturb it.* (Lee, 2007a)

The quote above deepens the aspect of not wanting to cause polarisation in an issue that the Government regards as balanced today. However, this cannot be the case as LGB people are already today fighting for their rights, so the polarisation that the PM is afraid of, is already here. I find myself wondering what it is that the PM thinks 'works'. If he means the paradoxical situation that LGB people are in today, with not being criminalised in praxis yet not having legal right to marry or have children, then I am not sure that 'works' is the best word for him to use since the LGB community are quite loudly expressing their dislike in the matter, which the PM himself addresses in the material;

*So, supposing we move on 377A, I think the gay activists would push for more, following the example of other avant garde countries in Europe and America, to change what is taught in the schools, to advocate same-sex marriages and parenting, to ask for, to quote from their letter, ”...exactly the same rights as a straight man or woman.”* (Lee, 2007a)

This means that the LGB 'activists' are already demanding rights, and as said above, the polarisation of opinion in the issue has already started to take form. Is then the attempt from the Government’s side to openly stay 'neutral' and saying that the issue needs to evolve without the Government’s interaction, a way of quieting it down?
4.2.1.2 Race and Religion

A fundamental part of keeping a harmonious society, is to keep peace between all races and religions among Singaporeans. The population of Singapore consists of a majority of ethnically Chinese, followed by Malay, Indian, and Eurasian which the PM mentions on several occasions, talking for example about the importance of the President not always being of Chinese ethnicity for all Singaporeans to feel represented.

*Imagine, if in Singapore, only the Chinese wished each other 新年快乐; only Muslims could say Selamat Hari Raya to each another; only Indians, Hindus exchanged Deepavali greetings, and only Christians said Merry Christmas. It would be a very different, a very troubled Singapore.* (Lee, 2016a)

Above the PM expresses his concern with how Singapore would look if it was not as harmonious concerning religion as it is today, something that he means many Singaporeans may take for granted. Singapore being a multiracial and multi-religious society, harmony between different religious and ethnic groups is of great importance in the Government’s work to keep a balanced society.

There are laws and implementations in Parliament and in other parts of the society to make sure Singaporeans of different race and religion are included and represented. There is a law against discrimination of a person’s ‘religion, race, descent or place of birth’ (Constitution of the Republic of Singapore, 1965). The picture is however very different for differing sexualities, here it is not the same strive for a balance where all groups are to be included and represented. The PM makes it very clear that differing sexuality does not have the same value as different race and religion does. This is something that Rubin (1984:162) emphasises, that there is often a difference in how diverse racial and religious groups are seen compared to diverse sexuality groups. Because of this difference in attitude towards different social groups, it is ‘easier’ for a state to implement laws regarding sexuality without much questioning from the larger public, than it would be to implement laws in other areas of the private sphere.
It is interesting to try to understand the PM in the scenario of diversity. The PM is very clear on how Singapore is a place for all Singaporeans, making no difference in race and religion. Diversity within race and religion is something great and a part of Singapore that must be cherished and that Singaporeans should be proud of. When it comes to these social groups, the Government is ready to interfere and stand up against the stigmatisation and discrimination of them. I think it is quite impressive how much the Singapore society is working with these issues and how the Government is not afraid to speak out and take a stand. When it then comes to another social group, LGB individuals, that are similarly a target for stigmatisation and discrimination solely because of who they are, the situation is entirely different. The PM explains this difference in the following quote, where he acknowledge that there is an actual difference between these groups of people and how they are to be regarded;

...homosexuals should not set the tone for Singapore society. Nor do we consider homosexuals a minority, in the sense that we consider, say, Malays and Indians as minorities, with minority rights protected under the law - languages taught in schools, cultures celebrated by all races, representation guaranteed in Parliament through GRCs [Group Representation Constituency, my note] and so on. (Lee, 2007a)

From the PM’s view it is rather simple then; LGB people are not a minority, they are not a vulnerable group that are in need of extra protection or rights, other sexualities than heterosexuality should not be cherished and valued.

4.2.1.3 Keeping Singapore the way it is

There is a value in keeping Singapore Singaporean. The PM gives out a warning on not letting oneself get to caught up in what the rest of the world, especially the West, is doing. Singapore needs to decide for themselves what a good path to follow is.

On issues of moral values with consequences to the wider society, first we should also decide what is right for ourselves, but secondly, before we are carried away by what other societies do, I think it is wiser for us to observe the impact of radical departures
from the traditional norms on early movers. [...] Does it lead to a more successful, happier, more harmonious society? (Lee, 2007a)

What is a harmonious society? According to the PM, a harmonious Singapore presupposes that Singapore can stand on its own legs and make decisions regardless of other societies and not get carried away when something appears as attractive somewhere else.

...today if you look at Western Europe, the marriage as an institution is dead. Families have broken down, the majority of children are born out of wedlock and live in families where the father and the mother are not the husband and wife living together and bringing them up. And we have kept the way we are. I think that has been right. (Lee, 2007a)

Keeping the monogamous, heterosexual family model when other countries didn’t, has proved to be successful for the society according to the PM. But this example that the PM brings up takes it even further than just the heterosexual family. The problem is not only that other countries have started to recognise same-sex relations and parenthood, even the heterosexual relationship and parenthood are done in an immoral manner as marriage has totally lost its status. As has been mentioned above, marriage is of great importance in the Singaporean society and way of living. A thought here is that if the laws were to be changed and Singapore started allowing LGB people to marry and have children, this radical move may risk the harmonious society Singapore has managed to establish during the last decades. Marriage as an institution between a man and a woman would have no meaning anymore just as it has happened in the West. This is saying something about how implemented the heteronormative family discourse is in the Singapore society. Since the obvious norm is heterosexual, this is unquestioned. Instead what is questioned is how the norm is performed and saying that the heterosexual couple is just one part of the bigger kinship system (Rubin, 1976:163).

The Singapore identity is strong and something that the PM says has been built up gradually.
...the question of identity of a sense of pride of being Singaporean, of wanting to be Singaporean, of wanting Singapore to have a future. How do we strengthen this identity and the character of our nation and our society? How do we reinforce what makes us unique as Singaporeans, help each of us to do well and help Singapore as a whole to do well? (Lee, 2015b)

Nationalism becomes as a way of feeling the Singapore identity and wanting Singapore to do well. Why is the nation of such great importance? With the theory that Anderson (2006:6) has of the nation as an imagined community, this focus on the nation becomes hard to understand. However, Anderson also means that nations are not definite or set in stone, and can therefore be changed or even seize to exist (ibid, 4). In the case of Singapore, nationalism then becomes a tool to achieve a strong, united Singapore, which is a necessity if Singapore wants to continue existing as the nation it is today.

Graciousness meaning we are about each other, we feel for each other, we are not just in a rat-race, but we are in a team together. (Lee, 2015c)

Graciousness as a part of the Singapore culture, sums up what I have been talking about here. with a combination of balance, showing respect, not stirring things up and leaving things be. The PM talks about the Singapore population as a team, what does this say about the way he sees the citizens? A team is united, knows each other well, can work together towards that same goal. This is quite a beautiful way of describing a population, I think. But is this also part of the visionary dream of a harmonious society that is mentioned above that traps LGB people in the middle? The PM wants the population to be united and together to the extent that he becomes blind for the issues that some of them are facing, precisely caused of people not being united and supporting each other. I see it as that the PM is so concentrated on the goal of a harmonious society, and that he already has decided the solution that he can’t see beyond it and notice that there may be other ways of accomplishing this, and maybe other people that he needs to take into consideration, such as LGB people and other vulnerable groups within the Singapore society.
The PM is emphasising how united Singapore is and that keeping it this way is crucial for Singapore’s continued existence as a peaceful society. This is the society they have been working on and that Singaporeans should be proud of.

*We are all Singaporeans together, we all eat at hawker centres [food courts, my note] from time to time, we all visit the same places, even when we go on holiday, we do not go on such drastically different places for holiday and we meet each other overseas. That is the right sort of society we want to be.* (Lee, 2015c)

In this quote above, the PM uses the example of that Singaporeans all eat at hawker centres and travel to the similar places. These examples become more than just examples, but more as metaphors for what the Singapore society is. Singaporeans are more alike than they may think, this is something to cherish and value. Polarisation then becomes a threat to this harmony.

*Will we be stronger as one people? Will the Singapore Spirit grow? Will we feel more pride and togetherness as Singaporeans? That depends on how we respond to the challenges and crises that will come our way.* (Lee, 2016a)

The PM means that it is a difficult task that Singapore has ahead, to keep this harmonious society that they have accomplished and not get lost on the way in polarisation and differing opinions.

*We are a nation where every Singaporean has a place.* (Lee, 2016a)

Where is the place for LGB people in Singapore? The PM truly believes that the LGB people have been given space and that they should be thankful. They have the same rights and duties as all Singapore citizens. The Government has promised to not enforce section 377A on homosexual men, technically all Singaporeans are ‘equally’ permitted to marry and reproduce, as long as this is done with a person of the opposite sex. I think this is much of what it boils
The Government is saying, we are treating everyone equally, but this is what the problem is.

4.2.1.4 Summary

The PM defines the notion of family as a union between a man and a woman who are married and have the intention to reproduce. At the same time as he is declaring this, he is eliminating any chance of same-sex couples to be seen as a family. There is only one way to have a family in Singapore according to the PM, and that is by following the heteronormative family discourse. This is an explicit focus on marriage as part of the discourse of the heteronormative family. The PM compares to the West where marriage as an institution is dead. The PM wants Singaporeans to be in charge of their future and not be influenced and feel the need to follow in the footsteps of the West.

The PM has a desire to keep a united Singapore without schisms and fractures that threaten to polarise the population and thereby threaten the harmonious society. He is especially concerned with the opinion of the conservative and anti-gay side, whom he means will be very displeased if LGB people were to be given more rights. This when there already is polarisation because of differing views on the issue, so the fracture that the PM is afraid will take place, has already happened. The PM’s strategy here is to appear as passive and neutral and let the situation evolve on its own, when the Government actually has power in this and is in this way using their governance to lead the population where they want them, having them think they are in charge.

Peace between different religions and races in Singapore, is a fundamental part of achieving a harmonious society as a whole, this is something that is very important to the Government. The discussion is however very different when talking about differing sexualities which are not protected or valued the same way as diversity in race and religion is. This is explained by the PM as that LGB people are not seen as a minority group that need specific protection and rights. They are rather seen as a special interest group.
There is a value in sticking to Singaporean morals and standards and not just following what the West is doing. The Singaporean identity is a big part of a harmonious Singapore, that the Singaporeans feel pride in their country and wanting to do their best to contribute to it. The PM comes back to the importance of staying united, stressing the fact that Singaporeans are more alike than they may think and that they are all equal. The key to a harmonious society then is to keep peace among Singaporeans and valuing the Singaporean identity with its moral norms.

4.2.2 Economical Growth

Singapore is a small nation, both land wise and population wise with a population reaching 5,6 million in 2016 (Department of Statistics Singapore, 2017). Having a strong economy is therefore of outmost importance of the continued existence of Singapore as a nation, which the PM explains in the following quote.

*We have a difficult task cut out for us but we have no choice because bigger countries, if you do not perform so well, you have the hinterlands, you have resources in the ground, you can survive. We do not have anything but ourselves.* (Lee, 2015b)

Singapore has close to no natural resources, what they build their economy on is to a large scale the port, which the PM several times states in the material is the second busiest one in the world, after Shanghai. The port relies on that shipping companies choose to transport their goods through Singapore, hence the growth and evolvement of this industry is then of high importance to Singapore as a nation. By saying that Singapore has nothing but the people that make up the country, nationalism becomes an important aspect of keeping the country united and with it the population’s will to contribute for the nation’s greater good. The nation thought of as an imagined community that is constructed to keep the nation together and at the same time differentiate it from other nations (Anderson, 2006:6).

It is also as if the PM sees the population as a natural resource, since Singapore doesn't have any. What does this say and how would this way of regarding a population effect how the
country is governed? My hypothesis is that the PM sees the citizens are components of a bigger cohesion with the goal of making this cohesion more successful.

*If 30 years from now, we can still be prospering, still be united and still have that drive to do better. Then I think we have done very well.* (Lee, 2015a)

The PM is inviting the population to create the future of Singapore together with him to be able to prosper, be united and have a drive to do better, and be a part of something bigger that works together for a common goal.

*We have reached a high level in terms of GDP. Our per capita GDP is as high as Japan but we have to find a way to continue to grow in order that we can improve our people’s lives.* (Lee, 2015b)

Here the PM takes in a social aspect of why the growth of the economy is crucial, to improve Singaporean’s lives. This can also be seen as a reason why the Singaporeans would want to care about the economy; if Singapore as a nation is successful, it will have a direct impact on them. If Singapore united takes a stand to improve the economy, it will reward everyone in the nation. Therefore you must as an individual contribute, to be able to take part of the success to come. This can be connected to what Rose (1999:95) is saying about governance and that the relationship between government and population is circular. The Government’s mission is to support and improve people’s lives, but in turn, the people will have to respect the laws and regulations that the Government have set up to be able to take advantage of the welfare that the Government is creating.

The biggest threat to Singapore not being able to reach the economic growth that is intended is disruption in the work field. New companies and technologies replaces the ones that have always been in business. The PM takes the example of Uber and other similar services that are jeopardising the continued existence of taxi services.
What do we do in Singapore? We can respond to disruptive change like this in two ways. We can close ourselves off, try to stop people from using the new technology. You must do things the way you have always done it. So Uber out, Grab out. Any new services coming along, no to it too. We impose restrictions, we protect their old ways, the taxi companies and we force everybody to stick to that. [...] The other way is to embrace change. Let the disruption happen. You cannot stop it but you can adjust to it. (Lee, 2016a)

When the PM is talking about the issue of disruption, he pinpoints what the Government means that Singapore is about. Economical growth is important, without it Singapore would not exist with the nation being a small red dot, as the PM often describes it, in the middle of Asia with powerful countries around it. Singapore needs to stick out to be heard and be taken seriously. The threat of either being forgotten on the map or taken over by another state, with totally different interests than Singapore, is real and the PM and Government knows this very well. The history of colonisation is still very fresh in their minds. Colonisation is often spoken of, in a European context, as something that happened in a different place and a different time, and is thereby marked as a phenomena that is far away from the reality that exists now (McClintock, 1995:11). This is not the case for Singapore, the colonisation happened right there, and only stopped happening about 50 years ago.

The solution that the PM has for the problem of disruption, is interesting to compare to how he thinks social issues such as LGB questions should be dealt with. He means that in economical aspects, the Government must encourage and help companies adapt to a new business landscape and not fall behind and get stuck in old and conservative ways of doing things. This attitude is very different, actually the complete opposite of how the question of LGB people is dealt with when the normative, conservative and cautious approach is seen as the best way to go about the issue.

As the following quote will tell us, Singapore is a successful country in many ways, the economical journey the nation has done since independence in 1965 up till today can quite
objectively be said to be extraordinary. Even the PM recognises that this is something out of
the ordinary, especially for a small country like Singapore.

*Is it to be expected that the population of 3.5 million citizens and maybe a million
foreign workers will have the best airline in the world, the best airport in the world, one
of the busiest ports in the world, a financial centre which is one of three or four key
financial centres in the world and an education, healthcare and housing system which
gives us a per capita GDP which is at least by World Bank calculations if you look at
PPP (Purchasing Power Parity), higher than America or Australia or Japan?* (Lee,
2015a)

The economy is a central aspect in several places in the material, specifically when the PM is
speaking of the history of Singapore and how the state has progressed from 1965 up until
today circa 50 years later. The PM puts it as that Singapore has done very hard work to get to
where they are today, he talks of how they have gone from coved down by Malaysia, not
being able to make their own decision or follow their own agenda for Singapore’s interest.
Then how Singapore fought for independence and got it and became masters of their own
destiny. However he also throws in that it would not have gone in this direction without a bit
of luck. The following quote is commenting the scenario he has described in the former quote.

*It’s an entirely unnatural state of affairs and one which we should count our blessings
for, if not every day at least every election.* (Lee, 2015a)

This mindset of not taking what you have for granted is something that is well implemented in
the material, that there is a very fine balance that allows the current political and economical
situation to exist and that it easily can be taken away, with for example war, bad relations with
other countries, or divides within the society itself.

The effort behind Singapore’s economical success has been according to the PM, to always
stay ahead when it comes to business, keep a close eye out to the surrounding world and not
fall behind within fields that are of value for Singapore’s economy, such as education and technology.

*When it comes to issues like the economy, technology, education, we better stay ahead of the game, watch where people are moving and adapt faster than others, ahead of the curve, leading the pack. And when necessary on such issues, we will move even if the issue is unpopular or controversial. [...] not everybody supports the Government, but we decide this is right, we move.* (Lee, 2007a)

Here the PM makes it very clear in what direction Singapore intends to move in and that the Government will do what it takes to improve the growth of the economy even when the population is not on board, the citizens will have to trust the Government in that they know what they are doing. Foucault (1980:119) is saying that power is never purely repressive, then it would not be obeyed. There is always an agenda behind power, and the possessor of the power will in some way believe that they are using the power wisely. Foucault’s theory on power is helpful in this scenario as it becomes easier to understand the intentions behind the Government’s actions. The Government’s intension is to perform politics that are favourable for Singapore as a nation and its population and their view is that in some areas of politics, the Government will have a better understanding and knowledge about the matter and make decisions without asking the public beforehand.

Earlier when looking at what it takes to achieve a harmonious society, the PM insisted on the importance for Singapore of being cautious and not jump into changes regarding controversial social issues, for example regarding LGB (Lee, 2007a). However, it is looking very differently here when he is speaking of things like economy, technology and education, then he is saying that the Government knows what is best for the population as a whole and that the citizens of Singapore will have to trust them on this. In this case, he is not afraid that the population will not accept, respect of feel that the Governments decisions are legitimate. It is of interest to try to understand this complete difference in the performance of politics.
4.2.2.1 Summary

In this section that has concentrated on the economical growth of Singapore, a pattern can be detected as the PM goes from explaining how Singapore is a small country with no resources except for its population yet presenting how well Singapore is doing despite this, having a GDP measurable with Japan. He then concludes it all with that part of the success can be seen in how the Government has dealt with economical challenges, taking action fast when needed. As he is doing this, he is lifting himself as a good, and even essential, leader and asking the Singapore population to join him in building a Singapore for the future. Nationalism and wanting to be part of a successful community are central aspects in the PM’s strategy here.

The PM talks of how Singapore is vulnerable towards other countries, and how the need for a united and strong nation can keep Singapore from either being forgotten in the global context or taken over by another state. The memory of the colonial times are hence fresh in the PM’s mind. The PM is in this way creating a discourse of vulnerability and that Singapore could seize to exist tomorrow if they are not careful.

How Singapore is going to keep up an economical growth even in the future is to stay ahead within business, education and technology, and through having a good and strong leadership from the Government and PM’s side, not afraid to take action when needed for the greater good of the nation.

4.2.3 Growth of the Population

The lack of growth in population has been and is still today a problem that Singapore is struggling with. In fact, the PM describes the population issue as a more serious issue than the issue of economical growth.

*Population issues come to the fore. The economy can go up, the economy can go down but in the long run demography is destiny.* (Lee, 2015b)

The Government is taking this very seriously, but what is it that makes demography an issue for Singapore? At the time when this material was produced (2015), the PM states that the
total fertility rate was around 1.2, with the goal of reaching 1.5. The PM mentions how a low fertility rate creates an ageing population and how this is a threat and therefore wanting to achieve a younger population with more children being born. A shrinking population becomes a threat to the nation as a whole. With no babies being born, there can be no future existence of Singapore as a nation. There is a focus on the nation where nationalism becomes a tool to make the population boost, but the nation is also what is going to be damaged if the population doesn't manage to go up.

With the added pressure of an ageing population, the economical aspect becomes present.

*We have been able to grow our workforce because we have had a young population. After the war [World War II, my note] baby boomers were born. They came of age, they entered the workforce and they became productive. [...] I have nothing. Just my people and the sweat of our brow and that is what we have to do.* (Lee, 2015b)

In the quote above it becomes clear that the growth of the population indeed is connected to the economy and productivity. Without a population growth, Singapore will not be able to keep the economic growth up either. It then really is an issue that effects the whole nation and its existence. So what is the solution then according to the PM?

*Ultimately the best and indeed the only fundamental solution for Singapore is for more Singaporeans to marry and after they marry to have more children and that is a message to all of you too.* (Lee, 2015b)

The answer is marriage followed by having children, and of course staying in Singapore while all this is done. Even though the PM is saying this with warmth and a bit of humour (which I realise doesn't really come across in written form), this is nevertheless the fundamental solution for Singapore’s demographical problem. I think it is of interest that the focus is on marriage, this not only shows how influential the discourse of the heteronormative family is, but it even takes it a step further putting weight on the marriage, that child bearing presupposes that marriage comes first. It also presupposes a heterosexual relationship, this is
something that is the unquestioned norm of what a family looks like (Rubin, 1975:163). As the PM declares in a quote above in the theme of 'Harmonious Society’, that in Singapore a family consists of a man and a woman, marrying and having children (Lee, 2007a), the sexuality must be heterosexual, there is no space for anything else. It becomes easier to grasp the PM’s resistance to non-heterosexual relationships, since with these presumptions it means that there will be no children produced in them. The key is marriage, and marriage is exclusive for heterosexual people. This is however a problem that Rubin talks about; that sexuality for a long time has been associated with solely biology and has discarded its social and historical context (Rubin, 1984:150).

An ageing population is as mentioned a threat to Singapore’s continued success, the PM puts the problem in perspective to the society as a whole;

*We are going to be growing older faster than nearly any other society in the world. I ask you, taxes, with this picture, with that graph, who is going to pay the taxes to spend on whom? [...] The economy, how do we stay prosperous and vibrant and forward looking? Our defence, who is going to man the SAF [Singapore Armed Forces, my note]? Who will defend us? (Lee, 2015b)*

Here the PM connects the threat of an ageing population with the economy. Demography and economy are definitely related. He also says that not only will the economy be effected, the military defence will too be effected if there is not enough people to man it. As has been mentioned before, Singapore sees itself as vulnerable in the relation to other countries, having a physical defence towards the risk of being attacked or occupied, is of great importance. Here the issue of the population comes down to the continued existence, but also continued safety of the nation in regard to being able to defend it.

In the following quote, the PM mentions the more social aspects of what an ageing population could mean for Singapore.
The whole tone of the society instead of being young and forward-looking, would be pessimistic, oriented to the status quo or even looking towards a glorious past. I think that is a sad place to be in. (Lee, 2015b)

The PM wants the Singapore society to stay young and vibrant. It is here quite easy for me as the analyst to question whether the PM is not being contradictory towards himself. When he is speaking of some social issues, such has rights of LGB people, he has quite the opposite take from promoting a forward-looking and vibrant attitude, advocating specifically for keeping the status quo. It is interesting to have such different views when it comes to different issues. However, I do realise that the PM does not see this as contradictory, but that the two issues of an ageing population and a radical issue such as LGB questions cannot be compared.

In the following quote, the PM addresses what needs to be done to raise the total fertility rate.

This is a fundamental issue. We talk about it lightly, we joke about it but it is a fundamental issue and we have to do more to help Singaporeans to get married, to have babies to take care of their families, and baby bonuses help but it’s not just money. It is also the practical arrangements, the values, the attitudes, the social understandings which we reach which help people to have kids, helping young couples to get their house, helping parents with care giving, promoting flexible work arrangements, providing affordable and high quality healthcare, childcare, reducing stress in our education system. (Lee, 2015b)

Since the Government’s solution to the problem with the population is marriage, this is where they are putting in the resources. All the above contributions are meant to make it easier and more attractive for heterosexual couples to decide to have children. It is as if the PM has decided that marriage is what they are focusing on, therefore he is unable to see any other solutions, which just could be to let same-sex couples become parents. However, since the PM also exclusively sees marriage and child bearing as something heterosexual, same-sex parenthood does not even occur to him, as mentioned before and referring to Rubin
who gives the explanation to this being that sexuality is still strongly connected with biology. My thought here is that the PM must be aware of that there are ways that same-sex couples can become parents, however this is strongly out of the picture as it goes outside of what is 'natural', since reproduction is 'naturally' connected with heterosexuality.

In what follows, the PM describes what an important aspect it is for Singaporeans to want to settle down and have children and what that kind of society should look like.

...then I think there will be the social matrix, the basis on which people will say, ‘Yes, I want to get to married, I want to start a family. One kid is nice, two is better, two are nice, three would be even better.’ (Lee, 2015c)

The Oxford Dictionary defines 'matrix' as 'the cultural, social, or political environment in which something develops' (Oxford Dictionary). The PM then means that if Singapore can united come together and create a social environment and community where families want to have children will be a great thing for Singapore’s population. The emphasis is on Singaporeans creating the future of the nation together towards a common goal.

So then a combination of people getting married and having children, and wanting to do this in this social matrix the PM is talking about and to raise their family while staying in Singapore is the ultimate solution that would solve Singapore’s population issue.

The Government is apart from working hard to get the fertility rate up, also trying to make the population want to stay in Singapore, here the PM talks of this problem and how the Government is dealing with it.

We all speak English, we all are educated. Amongst the young generation, probably about half have a university degree of some sort or other. Many doors are open. So we can only keep this place together as long as people want to stay here and I think that is a challenge. You want to stay here if you can develop your own aspirations, your own ambitions and careers if you want to bring up a family here, and if you believe that here it is your home. If you believe that, you will make this place work. (Lee, 2015a)
That Singaporeans are leaving Singapore to live their lives in other parts of the world is a real threat to the population growth. So then the PM and the Government knows that they have to make life in Singapore more valuable for Singaporeans, or else they will leave to a more convenient, open place in the world. As he says, Singaporeans are comfortable abroad, they are not scared of what exists outside of the small Singapore island.

4.2.3.1 Summary

The demography and how to make the population grow is one of the Singapore Government’s most essential problems. The solution that the Government has is that more babies need to be born and to attract Singaporeans to stay in Singapore. With the first solution, marriage is a central, and even necessary, part. The focus on Singaporeans having more children, is from the perspective of population growth quite understandable; more babies born equals a growth in number of citizens. However the fact that marriage as it appears in the material, has such a natural focus is of interest here. What is also of interest is this unquestioned norm that parents need to be heterosexual, when there in fact are ways for non-heterosexual couples to reproduce. Not only does the Government want to encourage Singaporeans to reproduce, but they also give them a clear framework as to how this ought to be done. Marriage, which is unquestionably heterosexual, is an obvious part of the family discourse.

The PM’s second solution is to make Singaporeans want to stay in Singapore, which then has to be done by making Singapore more attractive than the alternative, which is the rest of the world. Singapore being a small country, this can be a difficult task. The strategy that the PM and the Government have chosen to go with is asking Singaporeans to think about where home truly is, stressing the importance of knowing one’s roots and where one belongs, wanting Singaporeans to really think about what is important in life, with the desired answer being to get married and raise a family while staying in Singapore.

5 | Result of the Analysis

What follows in this part of the thesis are the results that I have taken forward from the process of the analysis. Since the analysis is divided into the three themes, I will start out with
shortly presenting the results in each of the themes, followed by a discussion where I speak of all the themes and what is interesting to say about them in relation to each other.

For Singapore to become a *harmonious society*, there are a few aspects that need to be regarded. Family building is something that the PM explicitly is saying leads to a harmonious society. The family is the framework of the society and marriage is an obvious part of this. In this discourse of the family, LGB people do not fit in, as marriage and childbearing are naturally connect with it, and LGB people do not have the right to either get married or have children. Marriage and building of a family is hence exclusively for heterosexual people. LGB people should thereby not set the tone for the Singaporean society, they are allowed to exist but not demand rights or influence others with their 'lifestyle'. The PM means that for the LGB people’s own sake, they should lay low on demanding for more freedom as this will only upset conservative people and make it harder for LGB people to live their lives. Polarisation between LGB people and people who are anti-LGB will create fractures in society and that will not lead to a united, harmonious Singapore. The Singapore identity and the nationalism and moral value that comes with it, is what the PM says unites Singaporeans. The fact that Singapore’s population is multiracial and multi-religious is what makes Singapore unique and this is something to value and be proud of. However the scenario for other social groups, like LGB people, is not seen the same way as they are not recognised as a minority group that is in need of special protection and rights.

For a continued *economical growth*, Singapore needs to stay ahead of the game when it comes to education, technology and business, helping companies to adapt to new technologies and not stagnating the economical field in old patterns and ways. The society needs to stay together, trust their Government that they will do what’s necessary for the nation’s economy to prosper for the sake of the Singaporeans. In turn the Government asks the citizens to trust them and do their part in this; working hard and stay united and loyal to the nation to be able to be strong towards possible inner and outer threats. Singapore as it exists today is not to be taken for granted, the success has required hard work and will need continued hard work and good leadership, to be able to exist even in the future.
The most important aspect of achieving a population growth for Singapore, is for the citizens to get married and start having children. Marriage must come before having children, it is a fundamental part of the discourse of family in Singapore. Except for this, Singaporeans are encouraged to stay in Singapore and build their lives there. Singaporeans are so open and internationally comfortable that they don't have a problem moving around in the world. The PM thinks this is a good thing, but he nevertheless asks his fellow Singaporeans to reflect over where home truly is, with the hope for the answer to be Singapore.

5.1 Discussion
The analysis starts out with the theme and goal of the Singapore Government to achieve a harmonious society. This order was set purposely as this is the goal that is the most widespread over the whole society. The two other goals are more specific to the economy contra the population. The goal of a harmonious society is also more vague and abstract than the two which are quite concrete and straightforward in what they mean. The three goals that the Singapore Government has for the nation, are all connected and rely on one another to achieve the vision of a greater Singapore. LGB people are not part of this vision as they (and their lifestyle) are in the way. Something that appeared as a key to this vision in all three themes was the importance of the heteronormative family model. However it is not only a model of guidance for the citizens of Singapore, it is basically also the antidote to 'LGB lifestyle' and influence upon the rest of society. Therefore, to use the discourse of the heteronormative family becomes a way of solving the LGB 'problem' that is standing in the way for Singapore’s larger goals, that is to create and maintain a harmonious society with a growth of the economy and the population.

Changing the law on same-sex marriage and parenthood would risk this heteronormative family model, which in turn risks the harmonious society. Marriage as something exclusively between a man and a woman would lose its meaning and the concept would have to be redefined. This means that changing the laws, would not only effect LGB people, but the whole structure of the Singaporean society, and this is something that the PM does not want to see happen.
A common goal for all the themes is to improve Singaporean’s lives and make Singapore a place that Singaporeans are proud to call home. I believe that it is here of value to try to understand the aim of the Government’s discourse of governance. What the Government wants is to create a nation that can improve the citizens’ lives. They have not adapted the discourse of the heteronormative family out of pure evil to make life difficult for LGB people. The Singapore Government is, like most powerful institutions, trying their best to use the power they possess to do good. As Foucault (1980) states, power is rarely used with the sole intention to oppress. Power can be strong and legitimised especially because of the reason that it does not only do this, it produces context and discourse so as to make things understandable and create a framework where people can exist together. The Singapore Government is with this perspective conducting politics that they think will be favourable for as many Singaporeans as possible.

A continuous pattern in all three themes is the significance for Singapore to be their own nation that does not copy or follow what other nations are doing, especially in the West. The Singapore identity plays on nationalism and to value the system of norms and moral that have been part of the framework to build Singapore. I want to make a post-colonial connection here to what McClintock (1995) is stating about that imperialism is often talked about as something that happened in another time and another place. For Singapore that just recently celebrated 50 years of independence, this is far from accurate. The PM stresses several times that the nation needs to stay united to be able to mark their place in the world and not risk being taken over by other, bigger nations as this has happened in the past. However, the PM’s use of this discourse of a constant threat can be discussed. With it he creates a general notion that Singapore could overnight seize to exist, and the way to prevent this is for the Government to have its population’s trust and confidence. The PM is showing how Singapore would not be what it is today without the strong leadership that has taken place since independence and in this asking the Singaporeans to join him and the Government towards a brighter future for the whole nation.

McClintock also discusses the notion of a nation being ’post’ colonial and what this actually means. How ’post’ is Singapore? The country has for example chosen to keep Victorian laws
in their Penal Code and state in the same breath how the colonial times have formed the Singapore identity. And even now when Singapore no longer is occupied by colonisers, who has replaced these? McClintock means that after the colonisers have left, the ones who take over are often rich, powerful men with high status. How does this change the situation for the citizens with less status, rights and power? They get new colonisers in a way (McClintock, 1995).

I would like to discuss the governance regarding LGB people and how the Government is unwilling to abolish section 377A with really only the reason to not cause polarisation and schisms among groups of different opinion. What can be the reason for the Singapore Government to stick to this passive and natural path? What is really hindering them from going on the conservative path and criminalising LGB behaviour and acts all together and enforcing the law that they have implemented? Or, go in the complete opposite direction by giving LGB people total freedom and show what an open and allowing society Singapore is, as the PM declares several times through out the material? These are questions that I am wondering about, and I am also questioning how long the Government will be able to stay put on the ’neutral’ path. Since the Government has decided to let the issue evolve organically, one may wonder why the issue is even brought up? My hypothesis is that the Government senses the pressure and threat of the non-heterosexual values coming to tear Singapore as it is today down. Therefore the Government is forced to bring these issues up and ’do something’ and at the same time do nothing, stay neutral. They are addressing the problem and raising it up for debate, saying that the Singaporeans need to be involved in the decision-making of this, but know beforehand that they are going to continue to push the rights of LGB people down. They are making it seem like the Government is openminded as they are touching this difficult subject and are not afraid to talk about sensitive matters.

There are quite a few occurrences in the analysis where the PM advocates for a forward looking and openminded approach to political aspects, such as ways to boost the economy, and when speaking of the rights and protection of religious and racial groups. This way of condemning the alternative to restrict change, being small-minded and sticking to the old way of doing things in these two examples, is exactly the Government’s attitude on how LGB
issues should be dealt with. How come there is such a big difference in mentality between these issues? I think the answer is that the PM does not see this as contradictory and means that these issues should not, and cannot, be compared. LGB people are not seen a minority group that is in need of special rights and protection. The PM sees it as the Government is treating all Singaporeans equal, why should LGB people then have extra rights? I believe that this focus on equality is a fundamental aspect of the Government’s unwillingness to change the current situation for LGB people.

6 | Conclusion
6.1 Returning to the Aim and Research Questions
In this concluding part, I intend to go back to the aim and research questions presented at the beginning of the thesis and discuss whether I have reached my aim and answered the research questions through the process of the thesis. The aim has been to explore the discourse of the heteronormative family performed by the Singapore Government, and how LGB people would be a threat to this. This was to be done with the support of the following research questions:

- How is the governing of the Singapore Government performed through policies of family relations? More specifically, what role does heteronormativity and the notion of family play in Singapore Government’s governance?
- Does the fact of Singapore being a post-colony effect the laws of the Singapore State and in that case how?
- What role does nationalism play in the governance of Singapore?

I chose to formulate the aim with ‘explore’ rather than ‘understand’ or ‘explain’ as it became clear quite early in the process that that would be a difficult task. This probably would have required an interview with the Prime Minister himself, which I believe indeed would have been an interesting encounter. Therefore I chose to explore the Singapore Government’s governance of the nation through the discourse of the heteronormative family, especially regarding LGB people.
What I have discovered is that the situation is arbitrary and quite difficult to put into words. However I will hereby give it a try. To refer to the first research question, the family is of outmost importance in Singapore, and not just any family but a family consisting of a heterosexual couple, being married and having the intention to reproduce. What stands out here is of course that it has to be a man and a woman forming a family, but perhaps even more that marriage is such an obvious part of family building. This was something that I had not suspected beforehand, but that illustrated well the way the Singapore Government governs through policies of family relations. The notion of family, combined with heteronormativity plays the role of forming and leading the citizens in how they ought to live their lives for the purpose of a harmonious society.

The case of Singapore being a post-colony was something that I wanted to explore and see how this aspect had affected the way that Singapore is governed. Singapore has decided to keep the section 377A, forbidding homosexual acts, which is left from when Singapore was under the Victorian Empire, but has in other ways chosen to take a step away from the tradition of the this time. What I found in the analysis was a mixture of the PM saying that Singapore should remember and value their history of being a colony, since this has brought with it a British framework of moral and order. At the same time he states that we need to remember the times when Singapore was not independent of the reason that the Singapore that exists today cannot be taken for granted, so in this way more as a warning of that another state could easily do this again. I would say that Singapore is effected by its colonial history, and that the PM is using this discourse as a way of reminding the population of not taking things for granted and to be thankful for how Singapore has turned out this successful despite its colonial past. It is also a way to excuse having laws in the Penal Code that goes against human rights, like section 377A, but also the fact that Singapore Law executes the death penalty by hanging (Criminal Procedure Code, 2016), which is also something that is left from the Victorian times.

Connected to the post-colonial aspect of Singapore, comes nationalism. I noticed how nationalism was a central part in the analysis of the material and wanted to explore this notion further. In the case of Singapore, nationalism becomes the tool to create a strong and united
state where Singaporeans want to stay and build their lives. Nationalism does play a big role in the governing of Singapore in this way. Similarly to the discourse of the heteronormative family, nationalism is both the tool and aim of the Government to restore a strong nation.

LGB people are a threat to the heteronormative family as they question the norm of heterosexuality that has for long been unquestioned. It is a group that according to the PM risks polarising the society as it brings out differing opinions in the population and thereby threatening the harmonious society Singapore is striving for. By not changing the law in favour for LGB people, he is satisfying the conservative population for now. The question is how long the PM and the Government will be able to do this as the LGB community are starting to get restless in this arbitrary situation they are forced to live in (Pink Dot, 2017).

6.2 Returning to the Literature Review

I would like to return to the discussion of Bosia (2014), as well as Fraser (1995) and Butler (1997) around recognition and redistribution along with the cultural and political. The Singaporean LGB have somewhat of a cultural recognition, limited but still there, they are allowed to exist and there are pubs and clubs which are for LGB people. However they have no political recognition or redistribution in the form of legal rights. Any sexuality that differs from heterosexuality is seen as ‘merely cultural’, and as a group with special interests. So gay clubs exist, they are seen as not so harmful for the society as a whole, the mentality around them is similar to what Bosia (2014) presents about the cultural being somewhat accepted; something like ‘let them do their thing, better they are in one place than out in public spaces’. But when LGB people start demanding legal and political rights, that’s where the line is drawn, then it starts disturbing the Singapore values and moral that the nation has built up. This is similar to what Bosia (2014) is discussing about how some cultural aspects are ok, but to demand for political rights is crossing the line.

Butler (1997) states how the heterosexual relationship has taken patent on the discourse of building a family. This is what the PM is doing when he is saying that marriage and reproduction is only for heterosexual people, because of the ‘natural’ reason that it takes a man and a woman to produce a child. However, this is not true as same-sex couples can
become parents. This is nevertheless discarded as it in any case does not follow the ’natural’ way of building a family, hence the heteronormative way. This also implements the attitude that non-heterosexual people are abnormal in relation to heterosexuality, and that they are not only left out, but rather play a role in the naturalisation of heterosexuality as being the contrast to this (Butler, 1997).

The discussion Spade (2013) brings forward can be related to the fundamental focus Singapore has on marriage. Since marriage in Singapore is both something crucial and something that is exclusively for heterosexual people, the stigmatisation and freezing out for LGB people is very explicit. The LGB community in Singapore is demanding equal rights regarding marriage and becoming parents, which then Spade would say is contra productive as marriage is in itself a form of oppression. Perhaps Spade has a point here, that if the Singapore Government is advocating for the importance of marriage, why would LGB people want to have anything to do with it? However on the other hand, if same-sex marriage would be legalised, the heterosexual occupation of marriage would seize and marriage would have to be redefined. I think that this would be a great win for the LGB community, as well as for Singapore as a whole which would have to start questioning the unquestioned norm of heterosexuality.

6.3 Further and Future Research

What I would have like to have done, if I had had the time and resources, would be to make a more thorough discourse analysis with material perhaps including interviews and including more of the social practice as to explore the aim even further and wider. There could also have been a comparison done to other nations that are in similar arbitrary situation as Singapore, such as Russia, Poland, Hungary or Indonesia. Something that I also would have wanted to explore further is the arbitrariness of a difference in same-sex laws regarding men and women. What is the reason behind this? The PM of Singapore does not comment the difference. How can a law like this pass without objection? Even though the Singapore Government is conducting politics that are restricting LGB people, this arbitrariness is not something that can be referenced to any facts, it could hence only be explained in moralistic value.
In my opinion, more research should be done about the situation for LGBT people that are oppressed by the State they live in, especially in countries like Singapore that have the resources to change the situation for LGBT people, yet choose not to. I think this needs to come up into the light and be discussed more than it is today in the academic world.

6.4 An Insight in the Situation for LGB People Today

The development of these issues that the LGB people in Singapore face due to the Government’s way of governing is going to be interesting to follow as it feels like things are starting to move. Pink Dot, which is a Singaporean LGBT organisation, arranges every year a gathering in Singapore for all LGBT persons and allies of LGBT for ‘supporting the freedom to love’ (Pink Dot, 2017). This year, the Government has formed a law forbidding international companies to sponsor political events such as Pink Dot without the approval from the Government (Hui, 2016). This was a big setback for the organisation as most of its previous sponsors where big international companies including Google, Apple, Facebook and Visa (Sin, 2016). What happened was that over a hundred local companies stepped in wanting to sponsor the event, gaining a lot of attention to Pink Dot nationally (Hui, 2017). With Singaporean companies, which have economic interests, show this kind of support and risk consumers boycotting them and their products, it is a guess from my side that it will have some sort of effect in the Singaporean society as a whole. One hypothesis is that companies in this case will influence the state, or even force the state to take action as it will no longer be politically sustainable to push LGB people down. As a Leong (2017) has stated in an article on the ban on international sponsors, the Governments aim to restrict and limit the success of Pink Dot just might have the counter effect of Singaporeans in support of LGBT are stepping up even more for their rights.

But this time, I feel like I finally have a chance to get excited about something. And I have the ban on foreign involvement to thank for awakening my dormant activist.

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