



## JAPAN Bibliography

### National Clearinghouse for United States-Japan Studies

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<http://www.indiana.edu/~japan/biblio/stereotypes.htm>

## Stereotypes of Japan in the United States

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This bibliography summarizes books, journal articles, and lesson plans that address stereotypes of Japan as expressed in United States' media and popular culture. Since films are such an important part of popular culture in Japan as well as in the United States, this bibliography includes links to information about how some recent Hollywood movies have portrayed Japanese history and society. See the related *Japan Digest* "Japan in the U.S. Press: Bias and Stereotypes"

(<http://www.indiana.edu/~japan/Digests/press.htm>) for a detailed description of the extent of bias and the frequent reliance on stereotypes in major United States newspapers.

### General Works

#### *American Misconceptions about Japan FAQ*

<http://www.faqs.org/faqs/japan/american-misconceptions/>  
A FAQ page that deals with common misconceptions and stereotypes attributed to Japanese culture by those in the United States. The page is an edited collection of newsgroup postings.

#### *Asian Media Watch*

<http://www.asianmediawatch.net/>

This website provides news about Asian and Pacific Islander Americans (APIA) media portrayals including an effort to monitor television and film for offensive or controversial content, campaign against offensive programming, and promote better APIA media representation.

*The Asian Mystique*. Prasso, Sheridan (2005). Public Affairs Press. ISBN: 1-586482-14-9

The main objective of the book is to identify common Western stereotypes of Asians, consider the source of these generalizations, and discredit them with examples from the life stories of various Asians from a range of backgrounds.

*The New Japan: Debunking Seven Cultural Stereotypes*. Matsumoto, David. (2002). Intercultural Press. ISBN: 1-877864-93-5.

This book draws upon Japanese and Western sources to explore both classic and contemporary views of Japanese culture. The seven cultural stereotypes addressed are: collectivism, consciousness of others, perceptions of self, emotionality, the "salaryman," education and lifetime employment, and marriage.

*The New Stereotypes of Anime and Manga. An Essay*.

EX: The Online World of Anime and Manga, v2 iss. 8.

[http://www.ex.org/2.8/45-essay\\_stereotypes.html](http://www.ex.org/2.8/45-essay_stereotypes.html)

Discusses how true are the stereotypes of big-breasted women, sex, and gore in anime and manga; and common aspects of anime and manga most people do not see.

#### *Restrictive Portrayals of Asians in the Media and How to Balance Them*

<http://www.manaa.org/articles/stereo.html>

Offers a list of restrictive Asian portrayals that are constantly repeated in the mainstream media and an explanation of why each is objectionable. Notes the list is designed to encourage Hollywood's creative minds to think in new directions--to help storytellers create more interesting roles for actors by avoiding old, stale images.

*Transcending Stereotypes: Discovering Japanese Culture and Education*. Finkelstein B; Tobin, J.J.; Imamura, Anne E. (eds.) (1991). Intercultural Press. ISBN: 0-933662-93-9.

This book offers readings and interpretive introductions to provide educators planning to study, travel, or work in Japan with a capacity to interpret and observe Japanese culture and education for the first, second, or third time.

### Lesson Plans

#### *Empowering Children in the Aftermath of Hate. Scapegoating: An Activity for Middle School Children.*

<http://www.courttv.com/choices/empowering/lesson6.html?sect=3>

The purpose of this activity is to examine how stereotyping, prejudice and discriminatory practices can lead to unfairly blaming individuals and groups for events when, in reality, the cause or causes are unclear or when the blame actually belongs elsewhere. This lesson also provides students with an introduction to the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

#### *The Geisha and Japanese Women: Western Stereotypes*

<http://www.aems.uiuc.edu/HTML/ChalkGuides/Mme.Butterfly.html>

One of 26 guides to Japanese films, this lesson plan for grades 9-12 offers reading and viewing selections based on the libretto and 1995 film version of Giacomo Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, as the lead work for a humanities unit. Discusses themes, the story, and teaching approaches.

#### *The Media in U.S.-Japan Relations: A Look at Stereotypes.*

Mukai, Gary (1994). Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education. See

<http://spice.stanford.edu/publications/10110/> for more details.

Using historical and contemporary images and themes seen in U.S. and Japanese media, the curriculum introduces students to how the media sometimes creates and perpetuates stereotypes and shapes opinion in its dissemination of information.

*Of Samurai and School Kids: Examining Stereotypes*  
Patience Berkman (Newton Country Day School). Newton,  
MA: 1996. (JT-097). See

<http://www.smith.edu/fceas/japan/jt.htm> for more lesson plans on Japan.

This unit, for grades 9 and higher, contains several lesson plans, including: "Recognizing Stereotypes," "Exploring the Samurai Image: The Business World and the Media," and "Exploring Stereotypes about Education in Japan." Includes teacher directions and student handouts. Available for loan to educators in the New England region of the United States.

*The Simpsons in Japan: A Lesson on Stereotypes*

<http://iteslj.org/Lessons/Meilleur-Simpsons.html>

The episode "Thirty Minutes Over Tokyo" can be used to identify particular characteristics in each of the characters, to discuss the use of stereotypes, and to generate discussions on travel expectations. This particular lesson plan is designed for one or two classes for upper-intermediate level students, but can be easily shortened or tailored for higher-level students.

### Recent Hollywood Films

See our *Japan Digest* "Using Film to Explore History" (<http://www.indiana.edu/~japan/Digests/film.html>) for a discussion of how films can provide a useful perspective on history and how to find appropriate films for classroom use.

#### The Last Samurai (2003)

*How True to History is Tom Cruise's The Last Samurai?*

<http://www.willamette.edu/~rloftus/LastSamurai.htm>

"From the opening voiceover and title to the final scene, *The Last Samurai* is an historical disaster.... There was real drama and adventure in late nineteenth century Japan that could have been even more powerful, but instead we get a pastiche of *Dances With Wolves*, *Karate Kid*, *Kagemusha* and *Shogun*."

*Lessons of The Last Samurai*. Ericson, Joan E.; Matson, Jim (2004). *Education about Asia*, v9 n2 Fall 2004. See

<http://www.aasianst.org/EAA/EAA-9-2.htm> for table of contents.

This article argues that the film offers opportunities to engage students and to illustrate how popular perceptions provide points of departure for a more intelligent, critical appraisal of Japanese history and myths. Identifies 10 areas (or lessons) where, as the film's director admitted, "history took a backseat to drama."

*The Last Samurai*

<http://www.asianmediawatch.net/samurai/index.html>

Part of *asiamediawatch*™, this web page presents excerpts (and links to the full text) of a preview of the film published in *Asia Pacific Arts Magazine*; a commentary published in the *Asian American Movement Ezine*; and a letter from a concerned reader on Asia Media Watch's positive stance on the film.

#### Lost in Translation (2003)

*Campaign - No Votes for "Lost In Translation."*

<http://www.lost-in-racism.org/>

Claims the film dehumanizes the Japanese people by portraying them as a collection of shallow stereotypes who are treated with disregard and disdain, that the film has no meaningful Japanese roles, nor is there any significant dialogue between the main characters and the Japanese.

*Totally Lost in Translation*

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,3604,1130137,00.html>

Review of the film published in *The Guardian*. The subtitle is: "The anti-Japanese racism in Sofia Coppola's new film just isn't funny."

*Lost in Translation*. (Film Review). Minear, Richard H. (2004). *Education about Asia*, v9 n1 Spring 2004.

See <http://www.aasianst.org/EAA/EAA-9-1.htm> for table of contents.

Notes that the film focuses on the human interaction between the two Caucasian leads, but suggests it "could have been much more. It could have brought Japan and the Japanese within the ambit of the human. It could have treated its jet-lagged, underdeveloped leads as symptomatic of a greater human dilemma."

#### Mr. Baseball (1992)

*Hollywood Films in Class: The Case of Mr. Baseball*.

Chalfen, Richard (2001). *AEMS News and Reviews*, v4 n4 Sum 2001. Full text at

<http://www.aems.uiuc.edu/PDF/SummerNews2001.pdf>

Proposes that Hollywood films as cultural products can be effectively used in college courses as "pictorial cultural documents." Argues that students must be challenged to think about goals and techniques of producers in creating and marketing the film and that students may be encouraged to watch the films in small groups as homework assignments.

*Studying Japan with Hollywood Films: Show "Mr. Baseball" in Class*. Chalfen, Richard (2003). *Education about Asia*; v8 n1 Spr 2003.

See <http://www.aasianst.org/EAA/EAA-8-1.htm> for a table of contents.

Suggests that with appropriate preparation, Hollywood films can be used in the classroom with considerable success. Discusses the use "Mr. Baseball" in a Temple University undergraduate course entitled "American Culture in Japan."

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