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Clubs, Dolls and Entertainment: Representation of Japan in Popular English-language Magazines

English-language magazines in Japan, targeting primarily foreign visitors and residents as their audience, are united by one mission: to promote a better understanding of Japan. Such magazines' *raison d'être* has been justified by their coverage of various aspects of Japan, from traditional culture, history and social issues to entertainment and tabloid news. It is therefore logical to anticipate that such magazines would serve as 'a bridge' connecting English-speaking foreigners and local residents in Japan. However, in recent years the scope of coverage has largely shifted towards entertainment and popular culture, which as a result portrays only one side of Japan and therefore creates a very limited and superficial knowledge of the country. Through analysis of several popular English language magazines, such as *Metropolis*, *Weekender* and *J-Select*, this paper aims to illustrate the danger of 'image creation' persisting in today's popular English-language magazines in Japan. Such 'image creation' results not only in the failure to promote a better understanding between foreigners and local residents in Japan, but ironically, builds a more solid wall between 'us' – the foreigners and 'them' the Japanese.