

Americans, WHY do you Do These Things?
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Transcript: <https://dontveter.com/ec/japan4.pdf>

When Mr. Eats came to my parents house for the first time everything was going smoothly until ...

Hello everyone! It's Mrs. Eats. When I went to America I enjoyed so many things like the food and the cultures and etc. and I especially enjoy the people.

But there were some things that Americans did I couldn't understand, so let's talk about things Americans do that confuse Japanese.

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Are you ready for furuguri and that?

Body gestures. In the US I saw two people talking to each other on the street and I thought the way they communicate using gesture was very, very fascinating.

Hey, John, I have a band you know. What kind of music do you play? Rock of course. That's so cool, How's your band?

So it was very, very interesting to see. They are using their whole bodies to talk to each other.

And I have to wonder, what if I tie their hands and feet, would they be able to talk?

Hey, Joe I have a band you know. What kind of music do you play? What? What are you trying to say? I don't understand. What kind of music ... ?

Cursing everywhere in the US. I heard f-word everywhere, on a train, in the bathroom, and in the restaurants and I'm pretty sure that they are not talking about Wendy's First Kitchen. We love FAKKIN.

I've worked with foreigners before but I've never heard them curse, however [after] staying in America about two weeks, I started to understand that, hmm, cursing is part of American's lifestyle.

And, of course, not everybody curses.

Mr. Eats doesn't really curse but for Americans cursing is not to say something bad, but also, you know, [they are] expressing their emotions as well.

When we study English in Japan, teachers always tell us ~~that~~ do not use cursing, do not curse people, okay.

Because if you use it, you're gonna be in trouble in America.

And, of course, we do have cursing in Japanese, but those cursing words are mainly used by little kids or yankee which is a low-level gangster, and of course in anime and manga. Oh shit!

Shorts in the winter. I saw a lot of men wearing shorts in the winter not only in the US but also New Zealand and Australia.

My very first impression was, why aren't they cold?

But apparently I was not the only one who was wondering why a lot of men wear shorts in winter and I did some research on it.

So the research shows that the Caucasians have slightly higher temperatures than Japanese and also it's something to do with the amount of muscle Caucasians have and Japanese have less.

So don't Japanese wear shorts in winter? Not really, we have a very strict rule about clothes, you should only wear clothes that match the season.

So, speaking of shorts, when I was studying in New Zealand I was so surprised to see a bus driver ~~were~~ wearing shorts.

I really thought he forgot to wear his pants. It looked like he was walking around in his underwear.

So, when my mom saw a bus driver with the shorts, she immediately covered her eyes and told me

In Japan, we have no uniforms that you have to wear shorts, so taxi drivers, bus drivers, train conductors, delivery men, they all wear long pants.

That's why when I saw a bus driver in shorts it really freaked me out.

Americans confuse Japanese culture with other Asian cultures.

One day when I was on Uber, the Uber driver was a very, very, friendly guy and then he asked me where I was from.

So I told him, "I'm from Japan". And, he said, really? Konnichiwa.

My buddy loves Japan, he loves Japanese food, and he told me how Japanese foods are so tasty, like tempura sukiyaki, topponyaki, blah, blah, and then he was very, very, friendly.

I really, really enjoyed talking to him.

As I was getting out of the car he said, hey sayonara!

This is not what Japanese people do when they say sayonara or goodbye.

In Japan we don't do this, I've only seen this gesture in uh, Kung Fu movies and stuff and I was, like, very confused.

Not only this hand gesture [was confusing], when I went to a Japanese restaurant in America I saw a lot of Chinese lanterns everywhere and they had a plus-sized Asian man's statue.

I asked Mr. Eats, “Who is this guy?”, and he told me, oh, that's a Buddha?

Really? He looks very different from Japanese Buddhas.

But in Japan we have the same phenomenon. For example, in Japan when you go to a French restaurant, you might be served German food for example.

And I think a lot of Japanese think Europe is a one giant country, which is not true, right?

So in Europe there are a lot of countries there and all the culture cultures and languages are different, but for Japanese people Europe is like a giant, one giant big country.

Americans put their feet on everything.

I saw this very, very, interesting scene on an American drama ~~that~~ [where] the businessman was putting his feet on his desk.

And I really thought, okay, this must be his last day at work so he can make his desk really dirty. He didn't really care. That's ~~how~~ [what] I thought.

Sometimes I saw people putting their feet on the chair in front of them.

So why was I so shocked to see this American guy putting his feet on the desk?

It's because in Japan people think tables and desks are sacred places so those places are for studying and to do serious business.

And not only that, we think feet are very dirty so, it's it's a big no-no to put something dirty on a sacred place.

So when Mr. Eats came to my parents house for the first time he was very polite.

He knew Japanese culture here, and knew Japanese etiquette too.

When he arrived he took off his shoes and he even brought a gift for my parents.

And instead of, you know, giving my parents a hug or shaking hands, he bowed like Japanese do, like this.

I was very impressed, oh, Mr. Eats [was doing] great and everything was going smoothly until

I can't tell [you] how shocked I was! My mom was holding a tray but she dropped it.

And my dad said to me, “Bring me my sword”, so I was so panicking and immediately told Mr. Eats, ~~take~~ [put] your feet down now!

So I explained [to] my dad [that] that's their culture and he kind of understood.

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Wow! This is my favorite, osaka sofu.

Let's see if it really tastes like Japanese takoyaki. [It] smells like really, really, real takoyaki and then also it tastes like a real takoyaki except [for] the texture.

It's very, very, crunchy like a corn pop, but tastes like real takoyaki. Wow!

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When we were driving around in America, I was looking out of the windows and then [I was] feeling, like wow, this is America!

This is something I saw on TV or dramas. I was so excited until I heard so many [people] honking [their horns] everywhere.

When I first heard so many [people] honking at the same time, I even thought, "Is war going to start or something?"

I actually thought a lot of people are fighting each other on the street.

So, I had an image of a typical American [as] ~~people~~-kind and friendly and, you know, [they] make jokes ~~every~~ [all the] time.

When I heard so much honking, I thought maybe when they drive they turn into a different person.

So, the reason why I was so shocked to hear a lot of honking everywhere in America, is in Japan honking should be done only for emergency use.

We are not supposed to honk pedestrians, for example, or car in front of you. This is actually illegal, you get fined ~~by~~ [for] doing it.

But there are some Japanese people who do honk like, American style too, so I saw a lot of drivers when they honk in Japan they tried to honk as as kindly as possible.

But even though ~~how~~ [no matter how] softly you press ~~this honking~~ but [the horn], in the end the sound is the same.

But, they, they, try really, really lightly [to honk the horn].

So in Japan, if they hear a lot of honking on the street people will feel like, oh, there must be a big accident or something.

Sitting on tables. The first time I saw this I was so shocked.

When I was in high school there was a very cute American teacher, Maggie. Maggie was very polite and beautiful. Everybody loved her. And then during the lesson she was teaching us ~~some~~ [about] English pronunciation.

And suddenly Maggie sat on the empty desk. Mr. Yamada, he was upset.

So she sat on Mr. Yamada's desk and all the class got frozen and the boys around the Yamada's desk.

And I know Maggie didn't understand why we were so shocked and boys started laughing and then you know the ~~Japanese~~ [students] didn't really explain to her.

So after the lesson all those pervert boys were talking, Yamada's so lucky he can feel Maggie's warmth on his desk. Oh, I wish my desk was there.

But all the girls were saying, we couldn't believe what ~~just~~-we just saw in the classroom.

We thought Maggie is so, you know, polite and [that she knows] Japanese etiquette ~~a lot~~ but we were so shocked to see her sitting on the desk.

And later, I saw the former president Mr. Obama sat on his desk, then I finally [realized], okay, that's their culture, it's okay for Americans to sit on a desk.

So as I mentioned before, tables and desks are such sacred places ~~so~~ [that] we are not supposed to sit on them and we have to keep them really nice and clean.

My mom used to tell me, if I sat on a table or desk, I'm gonna get a big pimple on my butt.

Bouncing legs. This is something I saw in the US very often.

People were sitting in a chair and one leg was bouncing up and down. I was very surprised to see that so often.

When Mr. Eats and I first starting dating, he was doing this [from] time to time and I told him not to do it.

He looked very confused, but now Mr. Eats doesn't do it, but he said whenever he sees some people bouncing their leg he feels it's strange.

And he told me a story that there was a guy next to him on a plane was bouncing his leg [during the] whole flight.

So in Japan, bouncing the legs is called bimbo yusuri. Bimbo means poor people and yusuri means shaking.

Bimbo in English: noun

1. A person, typically a woman, regarded as being intellectually vacuous and having an inordinate interest in appearing sexually seductive.

Some people say that in Edo Period there were a lot of poor people and then those poor people were very cold because they didn't have enough clothes and or they didn't have enough food so they were always shaking like this.

That's why for Japanese people, bouncing the leg is not very good manners.

Alright, everyone thanks for watching [and] I'll see you in the next video. Okini!