



Precarity and Healing in Japanese Animal Cafes

Amanda S. Robinson

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Room 301, 3F, Building 10, Sophia University

This project is an investigation of how young people facing precarity in Japan today use “animal cafés” to meet their need for sociality. The animal café is a business model in which customers pay by the hour to spend time relaxing with cats, rabbits, and other animals. The owners, employees and customers of these businesses are all involved in actively constructing a refuge for overstressed young people who are struggling with the social consequences of Japan’s labor deregulation. As a business that allows visitors to experience a sense of iyashi(healing) that emerge from non-discursive, relaxing connections with animals, I conceptualize animal cafés as part of the affect economy that is increasingly important as Japanese people turn to the market to meet their emotional needs.

Dr. Amanda S. Robinson is a cultural anthropologist specializing in issues of social precarity, labor, and affect, with a focus on human-companion animal relationships as a source of sociality. She received her Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Pittsburgh in 2017, and is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies at Harvard University.

Language: English / No Prior registration necessary

This talk is organized by Professor Takehiro Watanabe (FLA)

Institute of Comparative Culture (ICC) Sophia University / 7-1 Kioicho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-8554, JAPAN

+81-3-3238-4082 / +81-3-3238-4081(fax) / Email diricc@sophia.ac.jp / Web: <http://icc fla.sophia.ac.jp/>

