Model Emotion:
Android Perspectives on Affect in Japan
a virtual lecture by **Daniel White**

Since at least the 1980s, robotics engineers in Japan have explored not only what robots can teach us about being human, but also how robots might serve humans' emotional needs. Toward this end, engineers engage in practices of "emotion modeling" when designing social robots by building psychological, mechatronic, algorithmic, and even ethical models of artificial emotion. Because these affective capacities implemented in robots draw on social as much as machine models for emotion, practices of emotion modeling produce complex agents with novel perspectives on affect. Considering findings from both human and robot interlocutors, this talk asks how so-called "androids" understand affect in human-robot interactive settings. Based on ethnographic observations of engineers building robots with emotional intelligence, as well as of the application of robots in public, pedagogical, and religious settings, the lecture explores what robotic perspectives on affect contribute to anthropological research on the emotions in contemporary Japanese technocultures.

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online**

https://japanologie.univie.ac.at/onlinelectures

Daniel White is a visiting scholar in the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge. Currently he investigates practices of emotion modeling in the development of affect recognition software, social robots, and artificial emotional intelligence in Japan and the UK.