

# EDISON TAN

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Worldviews • Individual Differences • Evolution

## EDUCATION

### CURRENT

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN PSYCHOLOGY

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN PSYCHOLOGY

SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

- Academic Advisor: Associate Professor Angela Leung

### MAY 2019

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN PSYCHOLOGY AND WEB COMMUNICATION (DOUBLE MAJOR)

MURDOCH UNIVERSITY

### MAY 2014

DIPLOMA IN PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCE

TEMASEK POLYTECHNIC

## HONORS AND AWARDS

AUG 2020 - NOW

**SMU POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP** – SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

APR 2022 – MARCH 2023

**SOSS PGR STUDENT RESEARCH GRANT – FY2022/2023** – SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

## APPOINTMENTS

### MURDOCH UNIVERSITY

JUL 2021 – NOW

**RESEARCH ASSOCIATE** - SUPERVISOR: DR AMY LIM

RESEARCH PROJECTS INVOLVED:

- Adaptationism and Personality
  - PI: Edison Tan
- Fifty Years of Evolutionary Psychology – Development and Application Since Ghiselin
  - PI: Edison Tan
- Terror Management of Fake News
  - PI: Dr Amy Lim

JUL 2019 – JUL 2021

**RESEARCH ASSISTANT** - SUPERVISOR: DR AMY LIM

#### **RESEARCH PROJECTS INVOLVED:**

- Terror Management of Fake News
  - PI: Dr Amy Lim
- Why So Few?: Gender Imbalance in STEM and Its impact on Female Students' Creative Performance
  - PI: Associate Professor Cheng Chi-Ying

### **SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY**

**AUG 2021 – NOW**

#### **TEACHING ASSISTANT**

**COURSE INVOLVED:**

**FALL 2021**

- Capstone Seminar (Associate Professor Angela Leung)

**SPRING 2022**

- Psychological Research Methods (Associate Professor Angela Leung)

**MAY 2020 - NOW**

**RESEARCH ASSISTANT** - SUPERVISOR: ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR ANGELA LEUNG

**RESEARCH PROJECTS INVOLVED:**

- Affect and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation: A Meta-analysis
  - PI: Associate Professor Angela Leung

**SEPT 2019 – APR 2020**

**RESEARCH ASSISTANT** - SUPERVISOR: ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR CHENG CHI-YING

**RESEARCH PROJECTS INVOLVED:**

- Dual Self-Construal and Its Impact on Work and Family in Singapore
  - PI: Associate Professor Cheng Chi-Ying
- Why So Few?: Gender Imbalance in STEM and Its impact on Female Students' Creative Performance
  - PI: Associate Professor Cheng Chi-Ying

### **NON-ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS**

**2018 – 2019, 2020 – 2021 (ACTING)**

**PRESIDENT** – MURDOCH PSYCHOLOGY SOCIETY (SINGAPORE)

### **RESEARCH INTERESTS**

#### **SOCIAL AND MOTIVATED COGNITION**

- Conspiracy Theories
- Misinformation
- Supernatural, Superstition and Pseudoscientific Beliefs
- Causal Cognition

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY**

- Climate Change Denial

## EVOLUTIONARY PSYCHOLOGY

- Evolved Individual Differences
- Evolutionary Mismatch
- Life History Theory
- Behavioural Ecology

## CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY

- Evolutionary Origin of Cultural Values

## RESEARCH METHODS

- Emerging Trends in Methods and Analysis
- Careless and Insufficient Effort Responding

## PUBLICATIONS

### JOURNAL ARTICLES

Lim, A. J., **Tan, E.**, & Lim, T. (2021). Infodemic: The effect of death-related thoughts on news-sharing. *Cognitive Research: Principles and Implications*, 6(1), 39. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41235-021-00306-0>

### CHAPTERS

**Tan, E.** & Lim, A. J. (2020) Daniel Nettle. In: Shackelford T., Weekes-Shackelford V. (Eds) *Encyclopedia of Evolutionary Psychological Science*. Springer, Cham. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-16999-6>

## CONFERENCES

### POSTERS

**Tan, E.** & Lim, A. J. (2021, February). *Mortality Salience and News Sharing Intention* [Conference presentation]. 2021 Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP) Annual Convention, Virtual.

**Tan, E.** & Leung, A. K.-y. (2022, February). *Populism and Vaccine Hesitation: Some Outcomes of Conspiracy Mentality* [Conference presentation]. 2022 Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP) Annual Convention, San Francisco, California, USA.

Ko, N. F., **Tan, E.**, Lim A. J. (2022, February). *Population Density and Cultural Tightness-Looseness on Trait Conscientiousness* [Conference presentation]. 2022 Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP) Annual Convention, San Francisco, California, USA.

# ON-GOING PROJECTS

## ADAPTATIONISM AND PERSONALITY

### SUMMARY

Contemporary research on personality and individual differences has found rich and robust findings with extensive practical implications. However, a critical aspect of personality remains elusive in our current understanding; why do we have personalities? Why do we consistently follow a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral repertoires? To answer these questions, we draw on principles of evolutionary psychology to identify the adaptive problems that shape personality as an output of a universal psychological mechanism. This project planned to examine a myriad of inputs that signal the adaptive problem and how a certain set of dispositions addresses these adaptive problems. This input may be external, environmental conditions, or internal, heritable attributes. Through this project, we hope to elucidate an origin story of personality.

### REVIEW

- Ecology as External Input to the Condition Dependent Personality Mechanism. (Literature Search)

### EMPIRICAL STUDY

- Pathogen Prevalence – Calibrating Personality over the COVID-19 Pandemic. (Data Collection)

## TERROR MANAGEMENT OF FAKE NEWS

### SUMMARY

Research on the sharing of fake news has primarily focused on how fake news spreads and the literary style of fake news. These studies, however, do not explain how characteristics of fake news could affect people's inclination toward sharing these news articles. Drawing on the Terror Management Theory, we identified a novel process that motivates news-sharing. Information that contains mortality cues may induce a potential for existential anxiety, which may be resolved by sharing news to close others in one's social network. The project aims to explore and elaborate on this plausible mechanism that fake news tends to exploit.

### EMPIRICAL STUDY

- Infodemic: The Effect of Death-Related Thoughts on News-Sharing. (Completed)
- Role of Culture in the Effects of Death-Related Thoughts on News-Sharing. (Literature Search)

## CONSPIRACY MENTALITY AND SUBJECTIVE CONSTRUCTION OF REALITY

### SUMMARY

Conspiracy mentality can be defined as the tendency to adopt a conspiratorial frame of thinking. That is, people high in conspiracy mentality tend to idealize a conspiracy plot and readily attribute plausible ill-will of the alleged conspirators as intended to produce threats serving the conspiracy. This project postulates that people with varying levels of conspiracy mentality process conspiracy theories differently. The motivated preference for a conspiracy narrative has significant implications on how individuals construct reality and view their world. We will examine how conspiracy mentality entails outcomes such as ingroup bias, scientific skepticism, climate change denial, and vaccine hesitation. We also hope to identify moderators that may attenuate the conspiracy mechanism.

### EMPIRICAL STUDY

- Exposure to Conspiracy Narrative: A Person-Situation Interaction Analysis (Master's Thesis)

- To Whom Thou Art Bound: How Chinese-American Biculturals Respond to Intercultural Conspiracy Theories. (Data Collection)
- Populism and Vaccine Hesitation, Outcomes of Conspiracy Mentality (Study 1 Completed, Pending Follow-up)

### **OTHER ONGOING RESEARCH**

- Affect and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation: A Meta-Analysis [PI: Assoc Prof Angela Leung]
- Fifty Years of Evolutionary Psychology – Development and Contemporary Application [PI: Edison Tan]