SOSS Insights
A newsletter of the SMU School of Social Sciences
Issue 2, August 2021

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Artist impression of the building under development on A-South 3 plot of land, for illustration purposes only.
Thought Leadership

David Chan
Professor of Psychology; Director, BSI

- Invited Panelist and Moderator. Engaging Communities and Building Resilience. World Cities Summit, Singapore, 2021. Video of session: [https://youtu.be/CT77iK4_eMI](https://youtu.be/CT77iK4_eMI)


Winston Chow
Associate Professor of Science, Technology and Society

- Invited speaker for Conversations for Awareness on Religion and the Environment (CARE) Seminar 2 – “We Are Sinking. Can We Stop Climate Change?” 7 April, 2021 ([http://icbuddhism.org/c-a-r-e/](http://icbuddhism.org/c-a-r-e/))


Thought Leadership

Hoe Su Fern
Assistant Professor of Arts and Culture Management


Paulin Straughan
Dean of Students; Professor of Sociology (Practice); Director, Centre for Research on Successful Ageing (ROSA);

22 April 2021 - The Health of Asia Webinar: Panellist member The incidence of chronic ailments appears to have reduced last year. What is your sense of the current state of wellbeing in Singapore?
## SOSS Research at a glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Numbers (Jan – Jun 2021)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal publications</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other publications</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events – Public Lectures, Invited Talks, Seminars, etc</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference presentations</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research grants awarded</td>
<td>7 (S$1.006 million)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Immigration is often seen as a danger to countries because it threatens to undermine their fundamental values, most notably freedom and national self-determination. In this book, however, Chandran Kukathas argues that the greater threat comes not from immigration but from immigration control. He shows that immigration control is not merely about preventing outsiders from moving across borders. It is about controlling what outsiders do once in a society: whether they work, reside, study, set up businesses, or share their lives with others. But controlling outsiders—immigrants or would-be immigrants—requires regulating, monitoring, and sanctioning insiders, those citizens and residents who might otherwise hire, trade with, house, teach, or generally associate with outsiders. The more vigorously immigration control is pursued, the more seriously citizen freedom is diminished.

https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/978069189680/immigration-and-freedom
Memoirs on Pauperism and Other Writings: Poverty, Public Welfare, and Inequality
Notre Dame Press, February 2021

The collection includes new translations of Tocqueville’s works, including the first English translation of his Second Memoir, the original Memoir, a letter fragment considering pauperism in Normandy, and the “Pauperism in America” index to the Penitentiary Report.

Alexis de Tocqueville was one of the most important thinkers of the nineteenth century, and his thought continues to influence contemporary political and social discourse. In Memoirs on Pauperism and Other Writings, Christine Dunn Henderson brings all of Tocqueville’s writings on poverty together for the first time: a new translation of his original Memoir and the first English translation of his unfinished Second Memoir, as well as his letter considering pauperism in Normandy and the “Pauperism in America” appendix to his Penitentiary Report.

By uniting these texts in a single volume, Henderson makes possible a deeper exploration of Tocqueville’s thought as it pertains to questions of inequality and public assistance. As Henderson shows in her introduction to this collection, Tocqueville provides no easy blueprint for fixing these problems, which remain pressing today. Still, Tocqueville’s writings speak eloquently about these issues, and his own unsuccessful struggle to find solutions remains both a spur to creative thinking today and a caution against attempting to find simplistic remedies.

Memoirs on Pauperism and Other Writings allows us to study his sustained thought on pauperism, poverty assistance, governmental assistance programs, and social inequality in a new and deeper way. The insights in these works are important not only for what they tell us about Tocqueville but also for how they help us to think about contemporary social challenges. This collection will be essential not only to students and scholars of Tocqueville’s thought, nineteenth-century France, and political economy, but also to all those interested in the issues of public assistance, associative life, voluntary associations, and charities.

https://www.worldscientific.com/worldscibooks/10.1142/11836
Introduction to Psychology: An Asia Edition
Cengage Learning Asia Pte. Ltd, 2020

Introduction to Psychology heeds the increasing awareness of psychology as an understanding of people not just in North America and Western Europe, but also around the world. The text covers examples that Asian students can relate to and empirical studies that are aimed at understanding cultural influence on people’s thought, emotions, and behavior. Each chapter presents particular research studies in detail, including limitations in some examples. It helps to hone students’ critical evaluation of psychological research evidence. In addition, the case studies providing everyday contexts for students to practice application of the theories and findings are also discussed in the book to enable a better understanding of concepts.

https://www.cengageasia.com/TitleDetails/isbn/9789814896276
Winston Chow


Matthew Hammerton

Lily Kong


Ngoei Wen-Qing

David Ocón
Publication Highlights – Journal Articles

Journal Articles (1 Jan – 31 Jul 21) extracted from ISIS Publications as at 2 Aug 21

**Humanities**

**Justin Tse**


**Fiona Williamson**


**Orlando Woods**


Publication Highlights – Journal Articles

**Humanities**

**Orlando Woods**


**Political Science**

**John Donaldson**


**Devin Joshi**


**Ishani Mukherjee**


**Jacob Ricks**

Publication Highlights – Journal Articles

Journal Articles (1 Jan – 31 Jul 21) extracted from ISIS Publications as at 2 Aug 21

Psychology

Andree Hartanto


Angela Leung


Jacinth Tan

Hwajin Yang


Sociology

Andy Chang

Alwyn Lim

Qian Forrest Zhang


Lien Centre for Social Innovation

Tania Nagpaul
Events

SOSS Inaugural Research Camp  
9 April 2021

PRESENTATION BY ASSISTANT PROFESSOR CHENG CHENG

Wealth Accumulation by Hypogamy in Own and Parental Education in China

Educational hypogamy (wives having more education than their husbands) is increasingly relevant in many societies, given the reversal of the gender gap in education. Prior research has studied how marital sorting on couples’ own education shapes their individual earnings trajectories. Few have examined the implications of marital sorting on parental education for family-level economic well-being. To address this gap, this study examines how household wealth accumulation varies by different types of hypogamy on the basis of couples’ own and parental education. Using data from the 2010–2018 China Family Panel Studies and multilevel growth curve models, we examined how household wealth trajectories over years of marriage differ by types of hypogamy. Hypogamy in the child generation (wives having more education), hypogamy in the parent generation (wives having more parental education), and hypogamy in both generations (wives having more own and parental education) were compared to hypogamy in neither generation (wives having neither more own nor parental education). Results suggest that hypogamy in either the child or parent generation accumulated more total wealth and housing wealth than hypogamy in neither generation. Hypogamy in both generations experienced the fastest gains in total wealth. These findings underscore the crucial roles of the wife and her natal family in household wealth accumulation and shed light on the long-term implications of hypogamy based on the education of two generations for wealth stratification.

PRESENTATION BY ASSISTANT PROFESSOR DEAN DULAY

The Search for Spices and Souls: Catholic Missions as Colonial State in the Philippines

This paper argues that colonial religious missions functioned as governance institutions, establishing law and order and building fiscal and infrastructural capacities in territories they controlled. Exposure to missionary governance then led to long-run improvements in state capacity and development. As de facto states, missions established fiscal order and provided public goods in the periphery when expansion, and hence state-building, was too costly for secular bureaucrats. This argument is tested in the context of the Spanish colonization of the Philippines. This paper finds that exposure to Catholic missions during colonization is associated with higher levels of state capacity and economic development today. Furthermore, missionary governance led to superior long-run outcomes than secular governance. A variety of mechanisms—infrastructure, structural transformation, education, and culture—explain these results. The implications of this theory of missionary governance are applicable to frontier missions across the colonial world.
SOSS Inaugural Research Camp
9 April 2021

PRESENTATION BY ASSISTANT PROFESSOR ANDREE HARTANTO

Prosocial Spending and Life Satisfaction in Older Adults: A Multilevel Approach

Can money buy happiness? Spending money on others – termed prosocial spending – has been recently found to promote affective and cognitive aspects of subjective well-being. However, several research gaps remained including issues related to differential effects of prosocial spending recipients, ecological validity, confounding variables, and diminishing marginal utilities. The current study aimed to address the research gaps using the Singapore Life Panel (Vaithianathan, Hool, Hurd, & Rohwedder, 2018), a monthly panel study that followed a representative cohort of more than 12,000 Singaporeans aged between 50 and 75 every month for five years. Our multilevel modeling showed significant positive within-person associations between life satisfaction and prosocial spending, either by spending on cash gifts to close others or donating to charity, even after controlling for demographics and intraindividual variability in monthly income and personal spending. We also found a diminishing marginal utility of donations, but not for cash gifts to close others, for life satisfaction. Implications of the results will be discussed.

PRESENTATION BY ASSISTANT PROFESSOR SEULKI LEE

What Drives the Perceived Legitimacy of Collaborative Governance?
An Experimental Study

While the legitimacy of a governing entity has long been studied in traditional government contexts, few studies have examined the legitimacy of contemporary governing arrangements. This study explores the perceived legitimacy of collaborative governance from a citizens’ perspective. We use a preregistered online survey experiment to test the effect of three factors—representation, performance information, and issue complexity—on the perceived legitimacy of a collaboration. Findings from 1,470 U.S. respondents provide empirical evidence that representation and positive performance information influence citizens' perceptions of collaborative governance legitimacy, while issue complexity has little impact. Additionally, heterogeneous treatment effects were found: respondents with low trust in public organizations factor representation more into their legitimacy perceptions of collaborative governance, while those with high trust in public organizations show little influence of representation. This study concludes with theoretical and practical implications of the findings and provides suggestions for future research on legitimacy in networked governance settings.
Events

The Bersih Movement and Democratisation in Malaysia
Speaker: Dr Khoo Ying Hooi, Head and Senior Lecturer, University of Malaya
29 January, 2021

National Constitutions Between Global and Local
Speaker: Dr Tom Ginsburg, Leo Spitz Professor of International Law, Professor of Political Science, University of Chicago
4 February, 2021

Urban Technologies
Speaker: Professor Saskia Sassen, Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology, Columbia University
18 February, 2021

The Art and Science Involved in Telling a Great Story
26 February, 2021

Nora’s Daughters
Speaker: Dr Hu Ying, Professor, East Asian Studies, University of California
27 February, 2021

Crowdsourcing Dictatorship in Thailand
Speaker: Dr Aim Sinpeng, Senior Lecturer, University of Sydney
12 March, 2021

G-Plus Governance for a Multiplex World
Speaker: Dr Amitav Acharya, NESCO Chair in Transnational Challenges and Governance; Distinguished Professor, School of International Service, American University
19 March, 2021
Events

Ethics and Social Corporate Responsibility Speaker Series
25 March, 2021

Ecological Writing: A Conversation with Diana Fu and Mok Zining
1 April, 2021

The State Of Filipino Millennials: An ALTERNATIVE VIEW
Speaker: Dr. Jayeel S. Cornelio, Associate Professor and Director, Development Studies Program, Ateneo de Manila University
9 April, 2021

Litigate or Not: Public Preferences for International Court in Territorial Disputes in the Philippines
Speaker: Dr. Xiaojun Li, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, University of British Columbia
15 April, 2021

Book Launch: Immigration and Freedom by Chandran Kukathas
10 May, 2021

Asian Cinema and the Cultural Cold War International Conference 2021
20 May - 22, 2021
Ming-Hong investigates why people often fail to consider alternative perspectives and how they can promote and maintain their open-mindedness. He also researches the consequences of openness to alternative perspectives. For instance, his study demonstrates that when team members express their different opinions as debates rather than disagreements, they experience higher levels of receptivity to dissenting opinions and are willing to share more task-relevant information. This research clarifies the inconsistent effects of task-relevant conflict on group processes and offers a useful implication for conflict resolution: team members should express their willingness to debate over different opinions. Moreover, his investigation shows that compared with decision-makers who rely on their instincts to make judgments, decision-makers who tend to explore all the available options before making decisions are more likely to create perceptions of openness, which elicits perceivers’ intention to collaborate with the decision-makers.

Furthermore, many organizations have requested their employees to perform their work remotely and adopt computer-based technologies to collaborate and exchange work-relevant information due to the outbreak of COVID-19. To fit the modern trend of organizational behavior, Ming-Hong is examining how people can optimize their communication openness, enhance collaboration, and promote information exchange via social media or computer-based technologies. His current research also aims to offer practical suggestions on how people can effectively communicate and collaborate during digital communication.
My research interests are roughly split into three substantive “areas” that have become increasingly self-referential with time. Each of these areas is rooted in my disciplinary “home” of geography but they can also be seen to reach out to cognate disciplines such as sociology, communications and new media studies, urban studies, and even psychology. By reaching out, my aim is to bring a geographical sensitivity to ideas of space, place and territory to issues of broader social scientific concern, and, in doing so, to forge a research agenda that speaks from geography, but which is not necessarily limited to geography.

The first is well-established and is concerned with exploring the ways in which religion engages with the market, and the marketisation of religion in response. Borne out of my PhD research, which explored the growth of evangelical Christianity in Sri Lanka, a central concern has been to understand the ways in which religious groups work in, through and around the secular to remain relevant to society. Since my PhD, I have focussed attention on Singapore, and have explored how religious groups manage the migrant-led diversity found within their congregations in a way that balances religious values with the need to remain commercially, socially and spiritually viable. Most recently, I have returned to Sri Lanka to explore the effects of the BRI on religious groups in the country.

The second area considers, in broad terms, how digital technologies are reconfiguring our relationships with people and place. Notable in this regard has been my work on smart cities, and how the idea of smart citizenship might open up, or close down, the potential for more inclusive cities. Other work in this area has seen me explore how the heterotopic possibilities of augmented reality mobile games like Pokémon Go can lead to the gamification of place and the reimagination of publicness; how the digital decoupling of space-time can give rise to new forms of “digital geopolitics”; and how digitally mediated experiences of voluntourism can foreground new expressions of what it means to “care”. I am currently working on projects that involve developing understandings of smart cities in a global comparative perspective, and rethinking the assumed link between gacha games and gambling in a more critical light.

The third area is embryonic, and explores how the affective potential of the body might open up new pathways to self-realisation, social formation, and even citizenship. My work so far in this area has been concerned with the spiritual potential of the roots reggae soundsystem, the emergence of “affective cosmopolitanisms” through the practice of dancehall, and the comedic value that exists at the nexus of representational and non-representational registers of identity.
Psychology major undergraduates Ng Hok Shan, Matthew (Year 4), Nadyanna Binte Mohamed Majeed (Year 4), and Verity Lua Yu Qing (Year 3) were up against competitors from renowned universities all over the world when they clinched the top spot in the 2021 Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) Research Paper Competition for the Undergraduate Category.

The ICPSR Research Paper Competition aims to highlight exemplary research papers based on quantitative analysis that uses ICPSR data. This prestigious international competition draws participants from various disciplines in the field of social sciences in universities around the world. The trio’s paper titled “Is trait self-esteem a resilience factor against daily stressors? A multilevel analysis” explores the role of self-esteem resilience as a protective factor against the effects of the daily experience of stressors (e.g. missing the bus or forgetting to charge one’s phone) and how it affects one’s emotional reactivity. The results of the paper showed that self-esteem did not help to reduce emotional reactivity to daily stressors.
Achievements - Awards

SPSP Annual Convention Undergraduate Student Poster Award

Gloria Lai Junyan (Year 3) and Nadyanna Majeed made their mark at the 2021 Society for Personality and Social Psychology's (SPSP) Annual Convention when they filled both the Winner and Runner-up spots for the Undergraduate Student Poster Award.

The SPSP Annual Convention took place from 9 to 13 February 2021, on a virtual platform where both Gloria Lai and Nadyanna Majeed presented their posters based on research papers they had previously written. As the only SPSP award at the undergraduate level, the Undergraduate Student Poster Award reviews submissions from students internationally to screen for poster presentations that are characterised by excellence in research, clarity in presentation, and personal knowledge demonstrated in a discussion with judges at the Annual Convention.

As suggested by the title, Gloria’s poster, “Who’s a good boy? A multilevel meta-analysis on human-animal interaction and human prosociality” is based on a research paper that took into consideration all previous research on the topic of human and animal interaction, and its effect on whether humans were more prosocial or not. The paper concluded that animals do play a small, albeit significant role in promoting prosocial traits and behaviours in humans.

Also clued in by the title “Always look on the bright side of life? Optimism as a resilience factor against emotional reactivity to daily stress”, Nadyanna’s poster summarised findings from a research paper that looked into whether optimists are less emotionally reactive to daily stressors compared to pessimists. The eight-day daily diary study that utilised multilevel analyses revealed that optimism attenuated the impact of daily stressors on positive, but not negative, feelings. The nuanced findings were further parsed out when taking into account the role of neuroticism.

Congratulations Nadyanna, Matthew, Verity, and Gloria, on winning these prestigious Awards!
Lee Kong Chian Fellowship

Established in 2014 using the Lee Kong Chian Fund for Research Excellence from the Lee Foundation, the Fellowship acknowledges and rewards faculty who have an excellent research record and hold great promise. Congratulations to the SOSS awardees for their achievements!

Andree Hartanto
Assistant Professor of Psychology (Education)

Hwajin Yang
Associate Professor of Psychology

Ijlal Naqvi
Associate Professor of Sociology

Ulas Onur Ince
Associate Professor of Political Science

Ishani Mukherjee
Assistant Professor of Public Policy

Fiona Williamson
Associate Professor of Science, Technology and Society

Orlando Woods
Associate Professor of Humanities
Achievements – External Research Grants

MOE Tertiary Education Fund

PI: Cheng Chi-Ying, Associate Professor of Psychology
Project title: Not for Girls?: Gender Imbalance in STEM and Its impact on Female Students’ Creative Performance

PI: Yang Hwajin, Associate Professor of Psychology
Project title: An evaluation of SMU’s experiential learning programme (“SMU-X”) and its multifaceted impact on students and graduates

Co-PI: Angela Leung, Associate Professor of Psychology
Project title: How Time-Oriented Projections Foster Creativity and Social Innovation

Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment

PI: Aidan Wong, Assistant Professor of Humanities (Education)
Project title: Longitudinal Study to Quantify and Qualify the Impact of the EPR framework for E-waste in Singapore

Co-PI: Angela Leung, Associate Professor of Psychology
Project title: Creating Community Awareness of Food Sustainability through Insects
Faculty New Admin Appointments

The School of Social Sciences is delighted to announce the following faculty new admin appointments with effect from July 2021:

Ijlal Naqvi
Associate Professor of Sociology
Associate Dean (Curriculum and Teaching)
Lee Kong Chian Fellow

Hwajin Yang
Associate Professor of Psychology
PGR Coordinator

Steven Burik
Assistant Professor of Philosophy (Education)
Basket Coordinator for Modes of Thinking
The School of Social Sciences is delighted to announce the following promotions:

Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure
with effect from July 2021

Fiona Clare WILLIAMSON
Associate Professor of Science, Technology and Society
Office: SOL #04-016
Tel: 6828 0418
Email: fwilliamson@smu.edu.sg