

SOSS Insights

The research newsletter of SMU School of Social Sciences

Issue 10, August 2025

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Thought Leadership



Lily Kong

President, SMU;
Lee Kong Chian Chair Professor of Social Sciences

Keynote/Plenary Addresses and Panel Speaker/Moderator

- (2025) Panel Speaker, “(Universities) Becoming more efficient and financially sustainable”, Worldwide Universities Network and ASEAN University Network Presidents’ Forum, 21 May 2025, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong
- (2025) Guest-of-Honour Address, “Urban Resilience: Beyond Systems to Social Strength”, Future Resilient Systems Symposium 2025, 23 April 2025, ETH Singapore SEC Limited, Singapore
- (2025) Moderator, “Singapore Perspectives” Dialogue with Mr Edwin Tong, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth & Second Minister for Law, 20 January 2025, Sands Expo and Convention Centre, Singapore

Opinion Editorials

- Kong, L. Higher education is under siege. It needs to reinvent itself, The Straits Times (23 June 2025)

Featured Interviews

- “INSIGHTS: In Conversation with Professor Lily Kong: Rethinking Learning in an AI-Driven World”, Nord Anglia Education, 29 April 2025,
- “Rethinking Diversity, Reimagining Education: Interview with Professor Lily Kong”, Inconvenient Questions, 18 March 2025
- “Consider This: Hawker Economy — Small Traders, Big Impact”, Astro AWANI, 20 February 2025,

Other Articles

- Kong, L.; Coates, H. (2025), “How should universities serve the 100-year life span?”, *University World News*
- Kong, L.; Coates, H. (2025), “Universities enable the 100-year life”, *Higher Education Futures Lab*
- Kong, L. (2025), “Education for the 100-year life”, *The Edwin Group*

Thought Leadership



Kenneth Benoit

Dean, School of Social Sciences;
Professor of Computational Social Science

- Panellist at the Humanities Scholarship and Programme (HSP) Symposium 2025, 17 March 2025



William A. Callahan

Professor of Political Science;
Academic Director of Politics, Law & Economics (PLE) major

- Conversation with diplomats at the UK's Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (London, January 2025), and made a presentation on "Chinese foreign policy in the New World (Dis)Order" to 30 foreign service officers at the FCDO (June 2025).
- Presented paper on "Chinese foreign policy in the New World (Dis)Order" to 30 foreign service officers at Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), London, 5 June 2025.



Matthew Hammerton

Associate Professor of Philosophy;
Basket Coordinator for Modes of Thinking

- Podcast guest, 'Why Meaning Matters for Happiness', *Happiness Science Labs*.
- 'To have kids or not? Four ways to look at it', *The Singapore Women's Weekly* (coauthored with Kalpana Vignehsa).
- Guest, 'In defense of workism', *The Philosopher's Zone*, ABC Radio National.
- "Workism isn't the enemy", *The Straits Times*, 4 June 2025

Thought Leadership



Andree Hartanto

Associate Professor of Psychology;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow

- Op-ed titled “[Netflix raised prices again. But cancelling may be harder than you think](#)”, The Straits Times, 28 May 2025



Yasmin Ortiga

Associate Professor of Sociology

- “[Filipino seafarers invest in the Philippines. They shouldn’t be punished for it.](#)”, GMA News Online, 14 June 2025



Tan Sor Hoon

Professor of Philosophy

- “[China, feminism, and the legacy of Confucius](#),” *The Big Ideas*, Institute of Arts and Ideas, (translated into Chinese and posted on [Rujiaawang](#) 儒家网) on 24 January 2025



Brandon Yip

Assistant Professor of Philosophy;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow

- Interview by John Templeton Foundation, “[How Not to Be a Know-It-All, Navigating Disagreements Without Forsaking Your Core Beliefs](#)”, 1 April 2025

SOSS Research At A Glance

January to June 2025



56 Publications

(Journal articles and book chapters)

10 Other Publications



25 Events

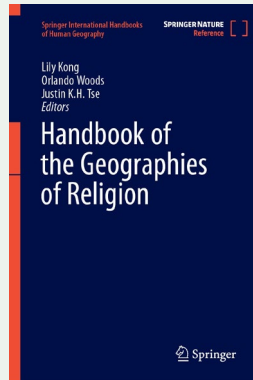
Public Lectures, Invited Talks, Seminars, etc

14 Conference Presentations



3 Research Grants (\$46, 014)

Publication Highlights - Books



Handbook of the Geographies of Religion



Lily Kong

President, SMU;

Lee Kong Chian Chair Professor of Social Sciences

This international and interdisciplinary handbook offers a comprehensive and an in-depth overview of contemporary research, theory, and practice in the geographies of religion in various parts of the world and with different populations. The book showcases the major theoretical interventions in the field and the debates about the existential constitution of sacred space and what this means for secularization. It outlines the most significant geographical themes related to these new developments, with their implications for how to think about landscapes, space, bodies, and worlds. The book also discusses the future of the field, especially in the realms of encounters and ethics, economies and markets, institutions and organisations, movements and migrations, and media and mediums. It also offers views from disciplines outside of geography, including from sociology, anthropology, religious studies, and media and communications, which demonstrates the contributions of geographers of religion to wider intellectual conversations and debates.

<https://link.springer.com/referencework/10.1007/978-3-031-64811-3>

Publication Highlights

(Journal Articles and Book Chapters)

Humanities

Lily Kong

Grimley, E., Woods, O., & Kong, L. (2025). Forging more-than-Indian citizenship pathways: (inter)national education, religious values, and new frontiers of multicultural belonging in Singapore. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 1-19.

Kong, L., Woods, O., and Tse, J (2025), "The End of the Beginning for the Geographies of Religion?" in *Handbook of the Geographies of Religion*, Springer International Handbooks of Human Geography, Springer Nature Switzerland AG, pp. 1-8, Chapter 1.

Kong, L. (2025), "Geography and Religion: Trends and Prospects" in *Handbook of the Geographies of Religion*, Springer International Handbooks of Human Geography, Springer Nature Switzerland AG, pp. 191-206, Chapter 12. Republished from *Progress in Human Geography* (2022), 14, no. 3: 355-371.

Kong, L. (2025), "Geography/Religion: Not Tabula Rasa, but Terra Incognita" in *Handbook of the Geographies of Religion*, Springer International Handbooks of Human Geography, Springer Nature Switzerland AG, pp. 207-212, Chapter 13.

Kong, L. (2025), "Mapping "New" Geographies of Religion: Politics and Poetics in Modernity" in *Handbook of the Geographies of Religion*, Springer International Handbooks of Human Geography, Springer Nature Switzerland AG, pp. 251-276, Chapter 16. Republished from *Progress in Human Geography* (2001), Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 211-233. DOI: 10.1191/030913201678580485.

Kong, L. (2025), "(In)Coherence and the Absent Present: 1990s and the Geographies of Religion" in *Handbook of the Geographies of Religion*, Springer International Handbooks of Human Geography, Springer Nature Switzerland AG, pp. 277-282, Chapter 17.

Kong, L. (2025), "Global Shifts, Theoretical Shifts: Changing Geographies of Religion" in *Handbook of the Geographies of Religion*, Springer International Handbooks of Human Geography, Springer Nature Switzerland AG, pp. 585-612, Chapter 35. Republished from *Progress in Human Geography* (2010), Vol. 34, No. 6. Pp. 755-776. DOI: 10.1177/0309132510362602.

Kong, L. (2025), "From the Outside In: Global Shifts and Changing Geographies of Religion" in *Handbook of the Geographies of Religion*, Springer International Handbooks of Human Geography, Springer Nature Switzerland AG, pp. 613-618, Chapter 36.

Tse, J, Kong, L. and Woods, O. (2025), "Conclusion: Geographies of Religion as Integrative Study", in *Handbook of the Geographies of Religion*, Springer International Handbooks of Human Geography, Springer Nature Switzerland AG, pp. 1249-1256, Chapter 70.



Lily Kong
President, SMU;
Lee Kong Chian Chair Professor of Social Sciences

Publication Highlights

(Journal Articles and Book Chapters)

Humanities

Matthew Hammerton

Hammerton, M. (2025). What Is Wrong with Workism?. *Journal of Applied Philosophy*.

Tan Sor Hoon

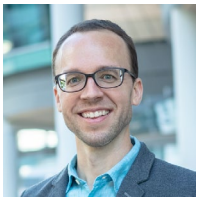
Tan, S. H. (2025). Confucian relationality in dysfunctional family relations: challenging oppression and self-centered individualism. In *Relationality across East and West* (pp. 89-112). Routledge.

Tan, S.H. (2025). "Diversities Within Diversities" in Ingrid Robeyns (Ed.), *Pluralizing Political Philosophy: Economic and Ecological Inequalities in Global perspective*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2025.

Brandon Yip

Yip, B. (2025). The ambivalent wisdom of moral disgust. *Philosophical Psychology*, 1-26.

Yip, B. (2025). Honing the haptics of the heart: A new defence of the perceptual Theory of emotion. *Erkenntnis*, 1-24.



Matthew Hammerton

Associate Professor of
Philosophy; Basket
Coordinator for Modes of
Thinking



Tan Sor Hoon

Professor of Philosophy



Brandon Yip

Assistant Professor of
Philosophy;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow

Publication Highlights

(Journal Articles and Book Chapters)

Political Science & Public Policy

William A. Callahan

Callahan, W. A. (2025). From Visual Securitization to Visual Governance. *The Oxford Handbook of International Political Sociology*, 254.

Beomgeun Cho

Cho, B., Noh, I. H., Roggio, A. M., & Luna-Reyes, L. F. (2025). Exploring the impact of collaboration processes on policy networks success: A case study of food policy councils. *Public Management Review*, 27(1), 241-272.

Cho, B., & Kim, H. (2025). Breaking up male-dominated collusive arrangements: Women's representation in bureaucracy and corruption. *Public Administration*, 103(1), 201-219.

Antong Liu

Liu, A. (2025). Understanding sociability through Mandevillean pride: comments on Robin Douglass's Mandeville's Fable. *History of European Ideas*, 51(1), 157-161.

Ishani Mukherjee

Mukherjee, I., & Ho, D. (2025). Data and digitalization in energy efficiency policy design: the case of Singapore. In *Handbook on Governance and Data Science* (pp. 93-108). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Howlett, M., Giest, S., Mukherjee, I., & Taeihagh, A. (2025). New policy tools and traditional policy models: better understanding behavioural, digital and collaborative instruments. *Policy Design and Practice*, 8(1), 121-137.

Jacob Ricks

Ricks, J. I., & Hicken, A. (2025). Voting for winners and losers in a hybrid regime: How Thailand's 2023 election shaped voter opinion. *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, 18681034251341319.



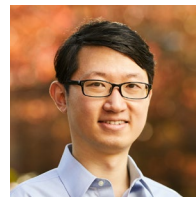
William A. Callahan

Professor of Political Science; Academic Director of Politics, Law and Economics (PLE) major



Beomgeun Cho

Assistant Professor of Public Policy; Lee Kong Chian Fellow



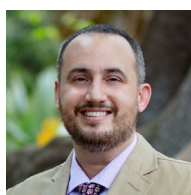
Antong Liu

Assistant Professor of Political Science; Lee Kong Chian Fellow



Ishani Mukherjee

Associate Professor of Public Policy; Programme Director, Master of Sustainability; Policy Lead, SMU Urban Institute



Jacob Ricks

Associate Professor of Political Science

Publication Highlights

(Journal Articles and Book Chapters)

Psychology

Andree Hartanto

Ho, J. Q., Hartanto, A., Koh, A., & Majeed, N. M. (2025). Gender Biases within Artificial Intelligence and ChatGPT: Evidence, Sources of Biases and Solutions. *Computers in Human Behavior: Artificial Humans*, 100145.

Hartanto, A., Kasturiratna, K. T. A., Kothari, M., Goh, A. Y., Quek, F. Y., & Majeed, N. M. (2025). Investigating the effect of full and partial social media abstinence on fear of missing out and well-being outcomes: A daily diary experimental approach. *Psychology of Popular Media*.

Chua, Y. J., Hartanto, A., & Majeed, N. M. (2025). Trait mindfulness is associated with enhanced daily affectivity and cognition independent of daily stressors exposure: Insights from large-scale daily diary studies in the US and Singapore. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 237, 113044.

Goh, A. Y., Hartanto, A., Kasturiratna, K. S., & Majeed, N. M. (2025). No Consistent Evidence for Between-and Within-Person Associations Between Objective Social Media Screen Time and Body Image Dissatisfaction: Insights From a Daily Diary Study. *Social Media+ Society*, 11(1), 20563051251313855.

Chia, A. Y., Hartanto, A., Wan, T. S., Teo, S. S., Sim, L., & Kasturiratna, K. S. (2025). The Impact of Childhood Sexual, Physical and Emotional Abuse and Neglect on Suicidal Behavior and Non-Suicidal Self-Injury: A Systematic Review of Meta-analyses. *Psychiatry Research Communications*, 100202.

Kasturiratna, K. S., Chua, Y. J., & Hartanto, A. (2025). A multifaceted nudge-based intervention to reduce smartphone use: Findings from a randomized cross-over trial. *Mobile Media & Communication*, 20501579251323246.

Quek, F. Y. X., Yang, H., & Hartanto, A. (2025). Neuroticism predicts constructive conflict resolution styles in conscientious individuals: evidence from self-reports and observer ratings. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 104625.

Ho, J. Q., Hu, M., Chen, T. X., & Hartanto, A. (2025). Potential and pitfalls of romantic Artificial Intelligence (AI) companions: A systematic review. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 19, 100715.

Hung, J. W., Hartanto, A., Goh, A. Y., Eun, Z. K., Kasturiratna, K. S., Lee, Z. X., & Majeed, N. M. (2025). The efficacy of incorporating Artificial Intelligence (AI) chatbots in brief gratitude and self-affirmation interventions: Evidence from two exploratory experiments. *Computers in Human Behavior: Artificial Humans*, 4, 100151.

Oh, V. Y., Hartanto, A., Ho, R. M., & Tong, E. M. (2025). Dispositional religiosity predicts increased incidence of mixed emotions: Evidence across five studies spanning two countries. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 01461672251337120.



Andree Hartanto

Associate Professor of Psychology;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow

Publication Highlights

(Journal Articles and Book Chapters)

Psychology

David Chan

Quek, F. Y. X., Tan, K., & Chan, D. (2025). Understanding the physical health associations of intra-individual variability in life satisfaction among older adults. *Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being*, 17(4), e70055.

Cheng Chi-Ying

Dai, X., Lee, D., & Cheng, C. Y. (2025). Multicultural experience and young Chinese people's subjective well-being: An indirect effect through self-construal. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 105, 102135.

Norman Li

Yong, J. C., Aziz, I. A. S., Xiao, H., & Li, N. P. (2025). Interactive effects of intrasexual competitiveness, same-sex competition, and physical attractiveness on temporal discounting. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 232, 112843.

Groome, S. S.*, Shevlane, L., & Li, N. P. (forthcoming). Religious beliefs: Punitive Religion Impact On. In T. K. Shackelford (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Religious Psychology and Behavior*. New York: Springer.

Groome, S. S., Shevlane, L., & Li, N. P. (2025). Prosocial Behavior: Punishing God. In *Encyclopedia of Religious Psychology and Behavior* (pp. 1-11). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.

Ko, N. F., & Li, N. P. (2025). Religion: Evolutionary Foundation for. In *Encyclopedia of Religious Psychology and Behavior* (pp. 1-6). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.

Koh, I.H.Y., Li, N.P. (2025). Archetypes. In: Shackelford, T. (eds) *Encyclopedia of Religious Psychology and Behavior*. Springer, Cham.

Koh, I.H.Y., Li, N.P. (2025). Costly Signaling Theory. In: Shackelford, T. (eds) *Encyclopedia of Religious Psychology and Behavior*. Springer, Cham.

Li, N. P., & Lim, A. J. Y. (in press). Competitive stress and life history mismatch. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*.

Groome, S. S.*, Shevlane, L., & Li, N. P. (forthcoming). Religious beliefs: Punitive Religion Impact On. In T. K. Shackelford (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Religious Psychology and Behavior*. New York: Springer.

Jacinth Tan

Tan, J. J., & Tai, A. Y. (2025). Perception of socioeconomic status: A meta-analysis of manipulations. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 01461672241305506.



David Chan
Professor of Psychology;
Director, BSI



Cheng Chi-Ying
Associate Professor of
Psychology



Norman Li
Professor of Psychology;
PGR Coordinator, PhD
Psychology Programme



Jacinth Tan
Assistant Professor of
Psychology;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow

Publication Highlights

(Journal Articles and Book Chapters)

Psychology

Lester Sim

Chia, A. Y., Hartanto, A., Wan, T. S., Teo, S. S., Sim, L., & Kasturiratna, K. S. (2025). The Impact of Childhood Sexual, Physical and Emotional Abuse and Neglect on Suicidal Behavior and Non-Suicidal Self-Injury: A Systematic Review of Meta-analyses. *Psychiatry Research Communications*, 100202.

Tse, H. W., Yan, J., Sim, L., Zhang, M., Wen, W., Song, J., & Kim, S. Y. (2025). Parallel ethnic identity development of Mexican-origin adolescents and mothers under the influence of neighborhood Latinx concentration and ethnic-racial diversity. *Identity*, 25(1), 38-54.

Chen, S., Xu, Y., Sim, L., Wen, W., Ip, K., Clendinen, C. A., & Kim, S. Y. (2025). Associations of neighborhood contexts and family-level hair cortisol concentration within Mexican immigrant families. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, 176, 107426.

Kenneth Tan

Tan, K., & See, Y. H. M. (2025). Social influence in close relationships. In *Research Handbook on Social Influence* (pp. 313-328). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Quek, F. Y. X., Tan, K., & Chan, D. (2025). Understanding the physical health associations of intra-individual variability in life satisfaction among older adults. *Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being*, 17(4), e70055.

William Tov

Cheong, G., Tov, W., Choo, R. W. M., Tan, M., Lau, L. K., Lim, W. S., ... & Straughan, P. T. (2025). Exploring the relationship between intrinsic capacity and social participation in healthy ageing: Evidence from Singapore. *The Journal of nutrition, health and aging*, 29(5), 100524.

Yang Hwajin

Quek, F. Y. X., Yang, H., & Hartanto, A. (2025). Neuroticism predicts constructive conflict resolution styles in conscientious individuals: evidence from self-reports and observer ratings. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 104625.



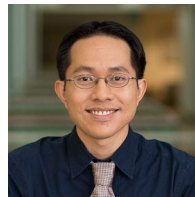
Lester Sim

Assistant Professor of Psychology



Kenneth Tan

Assistant Professor of Psychology



William Tov

Associate Professor of Psychology; Deputy Director, Centre for Research on Successful Ageing (ROSA)



Yang Hwajin

Associate Professor of Psychology; Associate Dean (Research); Lee Kong Chian Fellow

Publication Highlights

(Journal Articles and Book Chapters)

Sociology

Cheng Cheng

Wang, S., & Cheng, C. (2025). Who is using flexible work arrangements among couples? A longitudinal analysis of the disparities between gender, parenthood, and occupations. *Social Science Research*, 127, 1.

Liu Jiaqi

LIU, J. M. (2025). Diaspora politics and a rising China: Ambivalent ties amid geopolitical changes.

Yasmin Ortiga

Liao, T. F., & Ortiga, Y. T. (2025). Do Birds of a Nest Flock Together? A Study of Home Provinces and Migration Paths among Filipina Domestic Workers in Hong Kong. *International Migration Review*, 01979183251343887.

Paulin Straughan

Cheong, G., Tov, W., Choo, R. W. M., Tan, M., Lau, L. K., Lim, W. S., ... & Straughan, P. T. (2025). Exploring the relationship between intrinsic capacity and social participation in healthy ageing: Evidence from Singapore. *The Journal of nutrition, health and aging*, 29(5), 100524.

Straughan, P., Tan, Y. W., Tiew, Z., Zheng, Z., Ngu, R., & Hiah, W. T. (2025). Ageing in Place—The Key to Receiving a Superaged Society. *Populations*, 1(2), 7.



Cheng Cheng

Assistant Professor of Sociology



Liu Jiaqi

Assistant Professor of Sociology



Yasmin Ortiga

Associate Professor of Sociology



Paulin Straughan

Dean of Students; Professor of Sociology (Practice); Director, Centre for Research on Successful Ageing (ROSA); Urban Fellow, SMU Urban Institute

Publication Highlights

(Journal Articles and Book Chapters)

Sociology

George Wong

Lowe, J., & Wong, G. (2025). Calibrated structures of feeling: Cultural citizenship and the reproduction of the military in Singapore. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 13675494251351762.

Forrest Zhang

Wu, M., & Zhang, Q. F. (2025). Producer-oriented and consumer-oriented alternative food networks and rural revitalization in China: Distinct trajectories and variegated impacts. *Habitat International*, 156, 103289.

Zhang, Q. F., & Hu, Z. (2025). Can industrial agriculture be resilient to external shocks? Industrial agriculture in diversified clusters in rural China. In *Commodity Chains under Pressure* (pp. 78-98). Edward Elgar Publishing.



George Wong

Assistant Professor of
Sociology (Education)



Forrest Zhang

Associate Professor of
Sociology;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow

Events



The inaugural address and symposium on Computational Social Science organized by the SMU School of Social Sciences was held on 22 April 2025. This symposium explored the transformative impact of AI on social science, examined how it reshaped research methodologies, challenged foundational disciplinary definitions, and introduced new subjects for study in AI-integrated world. AI is not only a tool for data analysis but also an evolving subject of inquiry, influencing everything from economic models and financial systems to sustainability initiatives and social norms.



Opening Remarks by
Mr Peter Ho, Chairman of
the Social Science
Research Council



Welcome Address by
Professor Lily Kong,
SMU President and
Lee Kong Chian Chair
Professor of Social
Sciences



Professor Kenneth Benoit, Dean, SMU School of Social Sciences and
Professor of Computational Social Science, delivering his inaugural Lecture titled "AI
and the Future of Social Science"



Keynote: AI and the Transformation of Economics and Financial Sciences by **Professor Thomas Sargent**, W.R. Berkley Professor of Economics and Business, New York University Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences (2011)

Events

SOSS Research Camp

24 January 2025



Presentation by William Tov

**Associate Professor of Psychology; Deputy Director,
Centre for Research on Successful Ageing (ROSA)**

How much can life satisfaction change in older adult Singaporeans?

As global populations age, understanding the stability and potential for change in life satisfaction (LS) among older adults is critical for improving well-being. This study examines LS trends in Singapore's ageing population using high-frequency data from the Singapore Life Panel, a monthly survey of approximately 7,000 respondents conducted by the Centre for Research on Successful Ageing (ROSA). By leveraging over 100 waves of survey data, we assess LS stability using a STARTS (Stable Trait, Autoregressive Trait, and Momentary States) analysis. Results indicate that LS is relatively stable over short periods (e.g., one year). However, systematic and meaningful changes in LS emerge over longer time frames (e.g., 6 years). Such changes may be due to evolving life circumstances. These findings have critical implications for policies and interventions aimed at enhancing well-being. Short-term interventions may produce temporary improvements, but sustainable, long-term changes may require a focus on gradual, enduring shifts in lifestyle and social support. This study underscores the importance of extended monitoring periods to capture meaningful changes in LS and informs strategies to improve well-being in an ageing society.



Presentation by Ohjae Gowen

Assistant Professor of Sociology

Deinstitutionalizing Overwork and Women in the Workplace

The organizational practice of long work hours has been theorized as a significant obstacle to advancing gender equity in the labor market. A key premise of this claim is that institutional environments that promote overwork—beyond the individual choice to work long hours—are one of the root causes of labor market gender inequality. This study leverages South Korea's implementation of the 52-hour workweek rule, which regulated long work hours in 2018, to examine a causal pathway through which institutional overwork may exacerbate gender inequality: the exclusion of women from the workplace. Using data from the restricted-access Regional Employment Survey (2016-2019), I employ a difference-in-differences design to assess changes in the proportion of female workers in firms affected by the rule. I find that firms subject to the rule experienced a greater increase in the proportion of female workers compared to those not affected—by about 1.1 percentage points, or 4.1 percent from the pre-policy level, within a short time frame. An analysis of heterogeneous effects supports the mechanism that female full-time employees, particularly mothers, are more likely to retain their jobs as a result of the regulation. Deinstitutionalizing overwork through government regulations can foster more inclusive workplace environments for women and potentially reduce the gender gap in full-time employment rates, underscoring the crucial role that workplace time demands play in shaping gender inequality.

Events

SOSS Research Camp

24 January 2025



Presentation by Jacqueline Ho
Assistant Professor of Sociology

“Am I Being a Good Parent?” School Choice as Parental Responsibility

School choice is a site of social reproduction. Parents, particularly middle-class parents, are strategic agents who deploy their capital towards securing spots in their preferred schools, thus reproducing educational inequalities in the next generation. At least, this is the dominant framework through which scholars conceptualise parental involvement in school choice. However, in foregrounding parents’ strategies and agency, this view obscures the social context within which parents become agents. Rather than simply being driven by individual “preferences” or “mindsets” to compete for certain schools, I show how parents operate in relation to social scripts that hold them responsible for their choice of a school. Choosing a school, then, is not simply about securing certain outcomes for their children; it is also about constructing an identity as a responsible parent. I draw on interviews with 50 middle-class parents in Singapore, a context where there are conflicting scripts about what responsible school choice looks like. While many parents view competing for a good school as the responsible thing to do, policymakers have in recent years advised parents to take a more relaxed approach towards their educational choices. Against this backdrop, I examine the variation in how parents justify their choices in their attempt to claim identities as responsible parents, and suggest that this identity work may constitute another site of inequality in the school choice process.

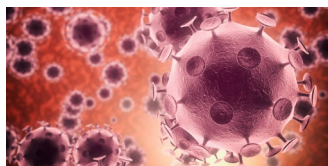


Presentation by Brandon Yip
Assistant Professor of Philosophy; Lee Kong Chian Fellow

Should you ‘wow’ your ‘yuck’? Exploratory reflections on the Ethics of Wonder

Wonder is an epistemic emotion: to wonder is to confront something that lies beyond the fringes of our current understanding, prompting a need for cognitive accommodation and motivating us to explore and to know. I want to examine and question two claims about wonder: (1) that one can (and should) experience wonder at pretty much everything (grains of sand, the universe, the fact of one’s existence) and (2) that wonder provides a wide range of benefits: increasing well-being, humility, promoting better inquiry. While the oft cited objects of wonder are grand scenes of nature, the emotion is also elicited by darker and more disturbing things: demagogues, the socially transgressive, Nazis, Jews, the destruction of the Twin Towers. What does the fact that wonder can be elicited by such events suggest about the sort of emotional appraisal that wonder is? Is it fitting to experience wonder towards such things? Does this sort of dark wonder promote the same sorts of psychological benefits that natural wonder promotes? This presentation suggests tentative steps towards answering these questions.

Events – SOSS Seminars



How Has COVID-19 Affected Americans' Views of China and Chinese Views of the U.S.?

Speaker: Yu Xie, Bert G. Kerstetter '66 University Professor of Sociology
Princeton University
16 January 2025

AI, Inequality, and the Future of Work

Speaker: Kate Vredenburg, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method, London School of Economics
23 January 2025

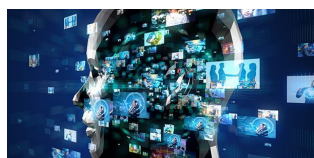
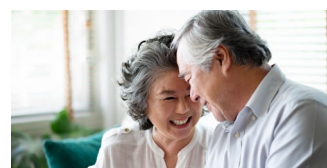


Thinking Visually, Researching Visually, Teaching Visually: Ten Years of Visual International Politics at LSE

Speaker: Darren Moon, Senior Learning Technologist,
London School of Economics and Political Science
18 February 2025

Charting the Course: Heterogeneity and Pathways to Well-Being in Later Life

Speaker: Jonathan Louis Chia Jie Sheng, PhD Candidate, SMU
3 March 2025



What's the Point of "Trustworthy AI"? (And a Sceptical Reply)

Speaker: James Edgar Lim, Research Fellow, NUS Centre for Biomedical Ethics
12 March 2025

Events – SOSS Seminars



What is Philosophy good for today?

Speaker: Franklin Perkins, Professor of Philosophy,
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa ; Editor, Philosophy East and West
21 March 2025

SMU-NTU Joint Sociology Seminar

Presenters:

- Stephen Campbell, Associate Professor, Nanyang Technological University
- Jiaqi Liu, Assistant Professor of Sociology, SMU

22 March 2025

**SMU-NTU
Joint
Sociology
Seminar**

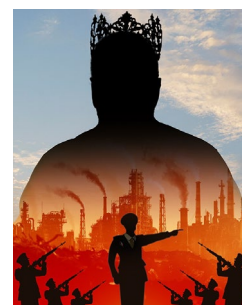


Proposing a Triple-Blind Peer-Review Process

Speaker: Shawn Pope, Associate Professor of Business Strategy,
IÉSEG School of Management
11 April 2025

Who is the Modern Tyrant?

Speakers: Haig Patapan, Professor, Griffith University
15 April 2025



A Possible Path of Comparative Philosophy and Contemporary Philosophical Innovation

Speaker: Zang Fengyu, Dean, School of Philosophy,
Renmin University of China
16 April 2025

Events – SEA Seminars

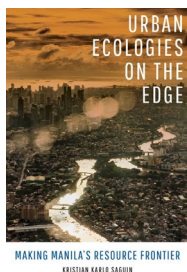


The Multiplex Age: Order and Disorder in the 21st Century

Speaker: Amitav Acharya, Distinguished Professor (SIS-Global Inquiry), American University
13 January 2025

Frustrated Expectations, Time Horizons, and Trust in Elections

Speaker: Nicholas Kuipers, Assistant Professor of Politics, Princeton University
15 January 2025



Urban Ecologies on the Edge: Making Manila's Resource Frontier

Speaker: Kristian Karlo Saguin, Associate Professor of Geography, University of the Philippines Diliman
7 March 2025

China's International United Front Strategy for Mapping Its Multilateralism in ASEAN and the 16+1

Speaker: Chung Chiu-Huang, Professor, National Chengchi University
14 March 2025



Corruption Cycles in Vietnam: Collusion or Extraction?

Speaker: Tuan-Ngoc Phan, Assistant Professor, Fulbright University Vietnam
4 April 2025

Events – SOSS PhD Seminars



Harnessing a Paradox Mindset to Straddle Two Worlds: Linking Paradox Mindset, Identity Integration, and Personal Outcomes in Low-SES College Students

Speaker: Dai Xiaoyu, PhD candidate in Psychology, School of Social Sciences, SMU
17 April 2025

Threads of Time: A Lifespan Perspective on Temporal Simulations, Self-Continuity and Meaning in Life

Speaker: Jonathan Louis Chia Jie Sheng, PhD candidate in Psychology, School of Social Sciences, SMU
6 May 2025



Environmental Influences of Zero-Sum Thinking and Its Outcome

Speaker: Edison Sora Tan, PhD candidate in Psychology, School of Social Sciences, SMU
19 May 2025

What Makes an Experience Meaningful: A Process/Outcome Approach

Speaker: Clement Lau Yong Hao, PhD candidate in Psychology, School of Social Sciences, SMU
19 May 2025



To Mitigate or Adapt? A Construal Level Perspective on Agenda Setting for Climate Action

Speaker: Ng Shu Tian, PhD candidate in Psychology, School of Social Sciences, SMU
29 May 2025

Events – BSI Seminars



Loving Me Before We: Lay Belief of Whole Self and Relationship Readiness

Speaker: Yang Yingjia, PhD Candidate, SMU
11 February 2025

Promises of language technologies for behavioural scientists: An example from the psychology of attitudes

Speaker: Joe Simons, Principal Scientist II, Institute of High Performance Computing (IHPC), Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR)
25 March 2025



Morality At The Margins: Social Class Shapes Moral Complexity

Speaker: Jacinth Tan, Assistant Professor of Psychology, SMU
1 April 2025

Faculty Spotlight



Antong Liu
Assistant Professor of Political Science;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow

As a political scientist in general, Antong is interested in the psychological and institutional mechanisms that incentivize or thwart individuals' political action (e.g., voting, self-organizing, protesting, law-breaking, and revolt).

As a normative political theorist in particular, he firmly believes in the intersubjective nature of meaning and meaningfulness of the human world, which often underlies the vocabularies for people to think and talk about politics. This means that, in addition to all the *how* questions that social sciences investigate (namely, questions on correlation and causation), he is keen on examining the *what* questions, whose changing answers by different people constantly shape and reshape our perception of the essence, foundation, and normative end-goal of socio-political phenomena. Accordingly, his main area of research is the history of political thought, a constant source of inspirations for thinking about such *what* questions and transcending the horizon of the present.

Corresponding to these broad research interests of his, Antong is currently working on three major topics, order-ranked below according to their level of completion.

1. His under-review book project, entitled *The Sense of Honor: Political Resistance and Early Modern Political Theory*, offers a comprehensive examination of the sense of honor, an elusive and hence ill-understood moral and political motivation, in early modern Western political thought. The main purpose of this examination is three-fold. First, it aims to excavate the neglected but inspiring ways in which influential thinkers such as Rousseau, Adam Smith, and Kant conceptualize the sense of honor and defend it as an irreplaceable motivation for modern citizens to undertake self-restrained resistance to humiliating social and political injustice. Second, it aims to challenge the dominant narrative today that indiscriminately treats the early modern era as the twilight of honor and honor itself as intrinsically toxic and anti-democratic. Third, it aims to encourage moral, social, and political psychologists to take the sense of honor seriously, especially in light of its close connection to much widely studied ideas and phenomena such as resentment, humiliation, dignity, and resistance.
2. Attempting to expand the scope of the above book project without being tediously repetitive, Antong is actively examining the institutional implications of the love of reputation and the fear of shame in ancient Chinese and modern Japanese political thought. In the case of ancient China, the focus is on whether something intrinsic to the said motivations of would-be imperial subjects may facilitate or hamper the formation of an absolute monarchy. In the case of modern Japan, the focus instead is on whether the said motivations that characterize the bygone era may remain useful in resisting existence-threatening expansionism from advanced foreign civilizations. The ultimate goal of this project is to assess the theoretical possibility for individuals' honor and shame to help political regimes avoid two extremes: despotism and collapse. Some findings on the institutional role of reputation in Han Feizi's political thought have recently been published, and the relevance of shame to modern nation-building in Fukuzawa Yukichi's political thought is currently under investigation.
3. In light of ongoing democratic backsliding in several Western democracies, Antong is also preliminarily exploring the topic of political corruption in Western history of political thought. The aspiration, however, lies not in optimistically finding out potential ways to reverse such corruption but in interrogating the meaning, essence, and scope of the very idea of corruption and tracing the pessimistic theoretical tradition in the West that treats political corruption as irreversible.

Alongside these major topics, Antong also has a working paper that questions the purported naturalness of compassion in Rousseau's political thought as well as another that highlights the role of face-to-face confrontation in what can be called Adam Smith's developmental psychology.

Faculty Spotlight



Brandon Yip

Assistant Professor of Philosophy;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow

Brandon Yip is a philosopher whose research spans moral psychology, epistemology, and meta-ethics, with an eye to how these connect with broader questions in social philosophy. His work is driven by engagement with and reflection on empirical and interdisciplinary work.

Brandon sees philosophy as a collaborative enterprise and is eager to connect with colleagues across disciplines—particularly those in psychology, sociology, political theory, and related fields.

There are four aspects to his research program.

1. The Nature of Emotion

Brandon develops a philosophically and empirically informed account of the nature of emotion. He defends a perceptual view of emotion, namely, that emotions are ways of perceiving value in the world. In a recent paper, he introduces a novel version of the view that likens emotion to tactile rather than visual perception and outlines a developmental account of emotion influenced by psychologists such as Michael Tomasello.

2. Emotions in Social and Moral Life

He also investigates specific emotions such as shame, disgust, humour, and wonder, and their roles in our moral and social practices. For example, he argues in a recent paper that feeling shame when perceived wrongly by others may not be irrational but forms a key part of what makes certain relationships meaningful. In another forthcoming paper, he challenges dismissive views of moral disgust, suggesting that it harbours an ambivalent wisdom as a result of its intimate connection to the complex normative orders we inhabit. His current projects include new work on the ethics of wonder and an empirical study on the relationship between wonder and affective polarisation.

3. Interactions between Normative Domains

A third line of inquiry explores how different normative domains — aesthetics, epistemology, morality — interact. In one forthcoming paper, he argues that moral virtue can heighten comic insight, countering the common assumption that moral seriousness dulls humour. In another ongoing project, he is developing a view about belief and wrongdoing, suggesting that some beliefs — like those that reflect racist stereotypes — fail to meet the standards of knowledge, not just morality.

4. Intellectual Humility and Public Discourse

Finally, Brandon works on the nature of intellectual humility and its relationship to disagreement and public discourse. Most accounts of intellectual humility are about owning one's limitations. However, in a recent paper, he sketches a novel version of intellectual humility as the deliberate withholding of one's epistemically entitlements. This account, he argues, makes sense of the virtue of intellectual humility in the context of the oppressed and marginalised.

Research Centres

Centre for Research on Successful Ageing

ROSA published three peer-reviewed academic articles and two research briefs that expand the team's understanding of emerging topics such as intrinsic capacity, ageing-in-place, and caregiving. The team secured a one-year extension of the Ministry of Education (MOE) Tier 3 project through June 2026 and committed to nurturing the Singapore Life Panel for an additional two years, until June 2027. These milestones have helped secure research partnerships with various organisations, including SkillsFuture Singapore, the National University of Singapore's Institute of Policy Studies, Frasers Centrepoint Asset Management Limited, and Gold Ridge Private Limited. Finally, the team has been shortlisted for the next phases of 2 grant applications: the MOE Tier 3 grant and the Ministry of National Development's Cities of Tomorrow grant call. These developments underscore ROSA's mission to drive transformative change in Singapore's ageing ecosystem by translating evidence into policy innovations that improve the quality of life for older adults.

Lien Centre for Social Innovation

LCSI has several ongoing impact assessment studies with various foundations and corporations. The Centre has partnered with Tote Board on several projects over the last five years, the latest of which is their Greater Impact Forward Together (GIFT) Programme, an initiative that aims to grow sustainable Impact Management and Measurement (IMM) practices in the social sector, by supporting NPOs to incorporate these principles into their organizational strategies.

In partnership with Associate Professor Eugene Tan of SMU School of Law and the Asia Venture Philanthropy Network (AVPN), LCSI launched a Governance Maturity Framework (GMF), a unified framework for measuring governance maturity for impact organizations across 6 countries in Asia with diverse legal landscapes and cultures.

Achievements – Awards/Recognitions

2025 Ranking of the Best Social Sciences and Humanities Scientists in the World (Research.com)

- Professor Lily Kong – ranked in [Social Sciences](#)
- Professor Kenneth Benoit – ranked in [Political Science](#)
- Professor Norman Li – ranked in [Psychology](#)
- Professor David Chan – ranked in [Psychology](#)



Lily Kong
President, SMU;
Lee Kong Chian
Chair Professor of
Social Sciences



Kenneth Benoit
Dean, School of
Social Sciences;
Professor of
Computational
Social Science



Norman Li
Professor of Psychology;
PGR Coordinator, PhD
Psychology Programme



David Chan
Professor of Psychology;
Director, BSI

Achievements – Awards/Recognitions



Beomgeun Cho

Assistant Professor of
Public Policy;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow

Winner of the inaugural Kyujin Jung Memorial Research Award at the annual 2025 conference of American Society for Public Administration.



Ohjae Gowen

Assistant Professor of
Sociology

Han, Sinn Won, Gowen, Ohjae, and Brinton, Mary C. (2024). "When mothers do it all: Gender-role norms, women's employment, and fertility intentions in post-industrial societies." *European Sociological Review*, 40(2): 309–325.

- Nominated for the 2025 Rosabeth Moss Kanter International Award for Research Excellence in Work and Family.



Nathan Peng

Assistant Professor of
Political Science
(Education)

Winner of East Asian Social Policy Network's "Best Paper Award for Early-Career Scholar Work" for paper titled "Lingering Detachments: How Socialization of Narratives Past Still Affect Social Policy Success Today".



Tsai Ming-Hong

Associate Professor
of Psychology

Rees, L., Tsai, M., Kopelman, S. & Hu, H., (2024) "Can Confidence Influence Persuasiveness in Disagreements by Conveying Competence versus Dominance? The Moderating Role of Competitiveness", *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research* 17(2), 153-181.

- Winner of the 2025 Negotiation and Conflict Management Research (NCMR) Paper of the Year award

Achievements – Awards/Recognitions

Lee Kong Chian Fellowship



Beomgeun Cho
Assistant Professor of
Public Policy



Andree Hartanto
Associate Professor of
Psychology



Antong Liu
Assistant Professor of
Political Science



Patick Quinton-Bown
Assistant Professor of
Political Science



Annika Rieger
Assistant Professor of
Sociology



Yang Hwajin
Associate Professor of
Psychology; Associate
Dean (Research)



Brandon Yip
Assistant Professor of
Philosophy



Forrest Zhang
Associate Professor of
Sociology

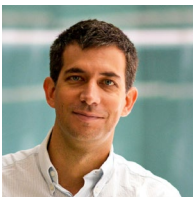
Achievements – Research Grants

SMU Internal Research Grant – MOE AcRF Tier 1



PI: **John Donaldson**, Associate Professor of Political Science

Project title: The “Barbados Puzzle”—Uncovering a unique pathway towards Urban Economic Vitality



PI: **Ijlal Naqvi**, Associate Professor of Sociology; Associate Dean (Curriculum & Teaching)

Project title: Evaluation Study of a Participatory Budgeting Pilot Exercise Conducted at the Town Council Level in Singapore



PI: **George Wong**, Assistant Professor of Sociology (Education)

Project title: Queer(ing) Safe Spaces: Urban Place-making and Co-Existence among LGBTQIA+ Communities in Global City Singapore

Achievements

The School of Social Sciences is delighted to announce the following:

Appointment to Tenure Track with effect from July 2025



Andree Hartanto

Associate Professor of Psychology;

Lee Kong Chian Fellow

Office: #04-05

Email: andreeh@smu.edu.sg

Student Achievements

The School of Social Sciences is proud to share the following student achievements:



Lain Shae Goh
School of Social Sciences
Class of 2028

- Two accepted abstracts for oral presentations at the 2025 American Psychological Association Convention (APA 2025)
“Operationalising intersectionality in Psychology: SPLICE-ing it up!” and
“Psychological intersections in queer physical spaces”
- One accepted abstract at the 2025 Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues Conference (SPSSI 2025)
“Integrating Intersectionality with SPLICE into Community Work: Lessons from Singapore.”