

Minyoung Choi

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Education

Ph.D. in Psychology University of California, Irvine Advisor: Oliver Sng Co-advisor: Linda J. Levine	Present
M.A. in Psychology Yonsei University Advisor: Eunkook Mark Suh	2018
B.A. in Psychology Yonsei University	2016

Research Interests

Evolutionary approaches to group psychology and subjective well-being, weighing the costs and benefits of group living across ecological conditions.

Publications

- Boyd-Frenkel, K. A., **Choi, M.**, & Sng, O. (2025). Nuanced in theory, tricky in practice: Falsifiability, timing, and curvilinearity of Tier 1 and 2 effects. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 48, e102.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X25100964>
- Sng, O., **Choi, M.**, & Ackerman, J. (2025). The ecology of relatedness: How living around family (or not) matters. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 128(6), 1243-1270.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/pspa0000428>
- Sng, O., **Choi, M.**, Williams, K. E. G., & Neel, R. (2025). The directed nature of social stereotypes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 128(3), 477-507. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pspa0000425>
- Choi, M.**, Karnaze, M. M., Lench, H. C., & Levine, L. J. (2023). Do liberals value emotion more than conservatives? Political partisanship and lay beliefs about the functionality of emotion. *Motivation and Emotion*, 47(3), 364-380. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-022-09997-4>

Selected Manuscripts in Preparation

*equal contributions

†mentees

Choi, M., Sng, O., & Suh, E. M. (in preparation). Do relationships or money matter for life satisfaction? Depends on how much disease there is.

- Choi, M., Sng, O., & Ackerman, J.** (in preparation). Who is the “ingroup”? The influence of mortality and resources on group boundaries.
- Choi, M., Sng, O., Iino-Seiki, N., & Campos, B.** (in preparation). Ecological relatedness matters more when living around genetically close relatives.
- Choi, M., & Suh, E. M.** (in preparation). Why do happy people help more? Happiness increases perceived similarity between kin and strangers.
- Choi, M.^{*}, Lee, S.^{*†}, Estes, K. D., Relihan, D. P., Holman, E. A., & Silver, R. C.** (in preparation). Social identification with victims amplifies traumatic stress through media exposure of mass tragedy.

Conference Presentations

Symposia

Forgotten Roots: How the Ancestral Past Shapes Social Behaviors

Society for Personality and Social Psychology (February 2025; Denver, CO, USA)

- Chair: Minyoung Choi
- Speakers: Minyoung Choi; Douglas Kenrick; Norman Li/Amy Lim; Ian Hohm

When Others Help or Hurt Our Well-Being: How and Why

Society for Personality and Social Psychology (February 2024; San Diego, CA, USA)

- Chair: Minyoung Choi
- Co-chair: Oliver Sng
- Speakers: Minyoung Choi; Jacinth Tan; Geoff MacDonald; Jinseok Kim

Oral Presentations

[†]mentees

- Choi, M., Sng, O., & Suh, E. M.** (2026, February). *Do relationships or money matter for life satisfaction? Depends on how much disease there is.* Flash talk at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Happiness and Well-Being Preconference, Chicago, IL, USA. [Accepted]
- Choi, M., Sng, O., & Suh, E. M.** (2025, December). *Do relationships or money matter for life satisfaction? Depends on how much disease there is.* Invited talk presented at the International Conference on Life Education and Well-Being, Tai Po, Hong Kong.
- Choi, M., Sng, O., & Ackerman, J.** (2025, February). *Who is the “ingroup”? The influence of survival threats on group boundaries.* Symposium talk presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Denver, CO, USA.
- Sng, O., **Choi, M.**, Williams, K. E. G., & Neel, R. (2024, October). *The directed nature of social stereotypes.* Symposium talk presented at the Society for Experimental Social Psychology, Santa Fe, NM, USA.
- Choi, M., Sng, O., & Suh, E. M.** (2024, August). *Relationships matter less (but money matters more) for well-being in pathogen-prevalent ecologies.* Invited talk presented at the Ecological Society of America, Long Beach, CA, USA.
- Choi, M., Sng, O., & Ackerman, J.** (2024, May). *Who is the “ingroup”? The influence of mortality and resources on group boundaries.* Single-presenter talk presented at the Human Behavior and Evolution Society, Aarhus, Denmark.
- Choi, M., Sng, O., & Ackerman, J.** (2024, May). *Who is the “ingroup”? The influence of mortality and resources on group boundaries.* Single-presenter talk presented at the California Workshop on Evolutionary Social Science, Santa Barbara, CA, USA.
- Choi, M., Sng, O., & Suh, E. M.** (2024, February). *Disease prevalence predicts variability in determinants of life satisfaction: Social versus financial resources.* Symposium talk presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, San Diego, CA, USA.

- Choi, M., Sng, O., & Suh, E. M.** (2024, February). *Disease threats shape whether friends or money matter for well-being*. Invited talk presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Advances in Cultural Psychology Preconference, San Diego, CA, USA.
- Brotherson, C.[†], **Choi, M.**, Williams, K. E. G., & Sng, O. (2023, November). *People's stereotypes of those moving between harsh and hopeful environments*. Single-presenter talk presented at the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minoritized Scientists, Phoenix, AZ, USA.
- Brotherson, C.[†], **Choi, M.**, Williams, K. E. G., & Sng, O. (2023, August). *People's stereotypes of those moving between harsh and hopeful environments*. Single-presenter talk presented at the UCI Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship Symposium, Irvine, CA, USA.
- Choi, M., Sng, O., & Suh, E. M.** (2023, May). *Disease prevalence predicts variability in determinants of life satisfaction: Social versus financial resources*. Single-presenter talk presented at the Human Behavior and Evolution Society, Palm Springs, CA, USA.
- Sng, O., **Choi, M.**, & Ackerman, J. (2023, May). *The ecology of relatedness: How living around family (or not) matters*. Symposium talk presented at the Human Behavior and Evolution Society, Palm Springs, CA, USA.
- Choi, M., Sng, O., & Ackerman, J.** (2023, April). *Who is the "ingroup"? The influence of mortality and resources on ingroup boundaries*. Symposium talk presented at the Western Psychological Association, Riverside, CA, USA.
- Choi, M., & Levine, L. J.** (2023, March). *Do liberals value emotion more than conservatives? Political partisanship and lay beliefs about the functionality of emotion*. Single-presenter talk presented at the Society for Affective Science Intergroup Emotions Preconference, Long Beach, CA, USA.
- Sng, O., **Choi, M.**, & Ackerman, J. (2022, October). *The ecology of relatedness: How living around family (or not) matters*. Symposium talk presented at the Society for Experimental Social Psychology, Philadelphia, PA, USA.
- Levine, L. J., **Choi, M.**, Karnaze, M. M., & Lench, H. C. (2022, October). *Do liberals value emotion more than conservatives? Political partisanship and lay beliefs about the functionality of emotion*. Symposium talk presented at the Society for Experimental Social Psychology, Philadelphia, PA, USA.
- Do, C.[†], **Choi, M.**, & Sng, O. (2022, May). *Do more siblings lead to more sibling rivalry? A cross-cultural investigation*. Single-presenter talk presented at the UCI Undergraduate Research Symposium, Irvine, CA, USA.
- Chin, T.[†], **Choi, M.**, & Sng, O. (2021, May). *Social influences on individuals' life history strategies*. Single-presenter talk presented at the UCI Virtual Undergraduate Research Symposium, Irvine, CA, USA.
- Choi, M., Sng, O., & Suh, E. M.** (2020, July). *The ecology of happiness: Money matters more in pathogen-prevalent areas*. Symposium talk presented at the Asian Association of Social Psychology, Seoul, Republic of Korea.
- Choi, M., & Suh, E. M.** (2018, November). *Why do happy people help more? Happiness increases similarity perception between kin and strangers*. Single-presenter talk presented at the Korean Social and Personality Psychological Association, Chuncheon, Republic of Korea.

Poster Presentations

*equal contributions

[†]mentees

- Choi, M., Sng, O., & Iino-Seiki, N., & Campos, B.** (2026, February). *Ecological relatedness matters more when living around genetically close relatives*. Poster at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Evolutionary Psychology Preconference, Chicago, IL, USA. [Accepted]
- Shin, J., **Choi, M.**, & Mauss, I. B. (2025, February). *Resource scarcity diminishes the perceived desirability of happy people*. Poster presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Denver, CO, USA.
- Choi, M., Sng, O., & Ackerman, J.** (2025, February). *Who is the "ingroup"? The influence of mortality and resources on group boundaries*. Poster presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Evolutionary Psychology Preconference, Denver, CO, USA.

- Choi, M.**, Sng, O., & Suh, E. M. (2025, February). *Do relationships or money matter for life satisfaction? Depends on how much disease there is*. Poster presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Happiness and Well-Being Preconference, Denver, CO, USA.
- Koo, H. J., **Choi, M.**, Goldy, S. P., & Sng, O. (2024, February). *Social density breeds competition and mistrust*. Poster presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Advances in Cultural Psychology Preconference, San Diego, CA, USA.
- Lee, S.^{*†}, **Choi, M.**^{*}, Estes, K. D., Holman, E. A., & Silver, R. C. (2023, November). *The role of shared identity in predicting distress via media exposure*. Poster presented at the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, Los Angeles, CA, USA.
- Ma, S.[†], **Choi, M.**, & Sng, O. (2023, May). *The influence of the number of children on stereotypes of life history strategy*. Poster presented at the UCI Undergraduate Research Symposium, Irvine, CA, USA.
- Lee, S.[†], **Choi, M.**, & Silver, R. C. (2023, May). *The role of shared social identity and traumatic stress following mass violence*. Poster presented at the UCI Undergraduate Research Symposium, Irvine, CA, USA.
- Choi, M.**, Sng, O., & Ackerman, J. (2023, February). *Who is the “ingroup”? The influence of mortality and resources on ingroup boundaries*. Poster presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Atlanta, GA, USA.
- Choi, M.**, Sng, O., & Suh, E. M. (2023, February). *Disease prevalence predicts variability in determinants of life satisfaction: Social versus financial resources*. Poster presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Evolutionary Psychology Preconference, Atlanta, GA, USA.
- Chin, T.[†], **Choi, M.**, & Sng, O. (2023, February). *Can the life history strategies of others influence our own life history strategies? A test of three hypotheses*. Poster presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Evolutionary Psychology Preconference, Atlanta, GA, USA.
- Chin, T.[†], **Choi, M.**, & Sng, O. (2022, May). *Social influences on individuals' life history strategies*. Poster presented at the California Workshop on Evolutionary Social Science, Fullerton, CA, USA.
- Choi, M.**, Sng, O., & Suh, E. M. (2022, February). *The ecology of happiness: Money matters more in pathogen-prevalent areas*. Poster presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, San Francisco, CA, USA.
- Choi, M.**, Karnaze, M. M., & Levine, L. J. (2022, February). *Do liberals value emotion more than conservatives? Political partisanship and lay beliefs about the functionality of emotion*. Poster presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Emotion Preconference, San Francisco, CA, USA.
- Chin, T.[†], **Choi, M.**, & Sng, O. (2022, February). *Social influences on individuals' life history strategies*. Poster presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, San Francisco, CA, USA.
- Choi, M.**, Lim, N., & Suh, E. M. (2019, July). *Altruism as an emotion-regulating tool for extraverts*. Poster presented at the Asian Association of Social Psychology, Taipei, Taiwan.
- Cha, Y., **Choi, M.**, Choi, S., Baek, S., Jang, D., & Suh, E. M. (2019, February). *The effect of life history strategy on third party punishment*. Poster presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Portland, OR, USA.
- Choi, M.**, & Suh, E. M. (2017, November). *Happiness promotes prosocial behavior toward strangers via perceived similarity between kin and non-kin*. Poster presented at the Cognition, Behavior, and Evolution Network, Leiden, The Netherlands.
- Choi, S., **Choi, M.**, & Suh, E. M. (2017, August). *What makes us stronger? The influence of scarcity on persistence following success and failure*. Poster presented at the Korean Psychological Association, Seoul, Republic of Korea.

Honors and Awards

Inaugural Research Spotlight Award <i>Society for Affective Science Intergroup Emotions Preconference</i>	2023
Graduate Travel Award <i>Society for Personality and Social Psychology</i>	2023

Excellence in Mentorship Award
School of Social Ecology, University of California, Irvine

2022, 2023

Fellowships and Grants

Social Ecology Academic Progress Fellowship 2025
School of Social Ecology, University of California, Irvine

Social Ecology Dean's Quarterly Fellowship 2024
School of Social Ecology, University of California, Irvine

Virtual Conference Grant 2021
Associated Graduate Students, University of California, Irvine

Brain Korea 21+ Scholarship 2016 – 2017
National Research Foundation of Korea

National Grant for Outstanding Students 2015
Korea Student Aid Foundation

Dean's List 2014 – 2015
Yonsei University

Training

Summer Institute for Social and Personality Psychology (SISPP) 2023
The Psychology of Intergroup Relations course, led by Dr. Steven Spencer and Dr. Dominic Packer
Hosted by the Society for Personality and Social Psychology

Service

University & Departmental Service

Department of Psychology, University of California, Irvine

Graduate Statistical Workshop Coordinator (Stats & Snacks Committee; Fall 2022 – Spring 2023)

Graduate Recruitment Volunteer (Graduate Recruitment Committee; 2021, 2022)

Graduate Lab Manager (EVOlution, Culture, and Stereotyping Lab; Fall 2020 – Spring 2022, Spring 2024)

School of Social Ecology, University of California, Irvine

Invited Discussion Panelist (Honors Program; Fall 2021, Winter 2022)

Professional Service

Association for Psychological Science Student Caucus (APSSC)

Student Grant Competition Reviewer (2023)

Society for Personality and Social Psychology

Outstanding Research Award Reviewer (2022)

Ad hoc Manuscript Reviews

Journal of Personality and Social Psychology
Psychological Science
Personality and Individual Differences
Nature
Scientific Reports

Teaching Experiences

Graduate Teaching Assistant

University of California, Irvine

Abnormal Psychology (Spring 2025)
Naturalistic Field Research (Spring 2024)
The Science and Practice of Compassion (Online; Fall 2023)
Evolutionary Psychology (Spring 2023)
The Social Animal (Winter 2025, Winter 2023, Spring 2022, Winter 2022, Winter 2021)
Lifespan Developmental Psychology (Online; Fall 2021)
Developmental Psychopathology (Online; Spring 2021)

Yonsei University

Psychology of Personality (Fall 2017)
Marriage and the Family (Spring 2017)
Group Counseling (Fall 2016)

Guest Lecturer

University of California, Irvine

Evolutionary Psychology (Spring 2024) “*The Evolution of Happiness*”
The Social Animal (Winter 2023) “*The Science of Happiness*”
Evolutionary Psychology (Spring 2023) “*The Evolution of Happiness*”

Mentorship

Cilicia Brotherson, <i>Undergraduate, Hunter College</i>	2023
Sono Lee, <i>Post-baccalaureate, University of California, Irvine</i>	2023
Sophia Ma, <i>Undergraduate, University of California, Irvine</i>	2022 – 2023
Catherine Do, <i>Undergraduate, University of California, Irvine</i>	2021 – 2022
Tiffany Chin, <i>Undergraduate, University of California, Irvine</i>	2020 – 2023

Affiliations

American Psychological Association
Association for Psychological Science
Society for Personality and Social Psychology
Human Behavior and Evolution Society
Korean Psychological Association
Korean Social and Personality Psychological Association
Asian Association of Social Psychology

Skills

Language: Korean, English, R

Quantitative: Multilevel model, Fixed effects model, Path analysis

Statistical Software: R, SPSS, jamovi, Stata, HLM

References

Available upon request.