



Department of Psychology
The University of Hong Kong
香港大學心理學系

Oct
3
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Departmental Seminar

Experimental Insights into Avoidance of Learnt Fear and Generalization of Extinction Learning



Dr. Alex H K Wong

Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology
Department of Psychology, Education and
Child Studies
Erasmus University Rotterdam

11:00a.m. – 12:00noon

Function Room, 11/F
The Jockey Club Tower
Centennial Campus
The University of Hong Kong

Abstract

Avoidance is typically adaptive as it prevents threat onset, thus protecting one from harm. However, it becomes pathological when used excessively in the absence of realistic threat, causing significant daily impairments, as commonly observed in clinical anxiety.

Avoidance of learnt fear refers to a response that prevents the onset of a feared stimulus or situation, thereby preventing the onset of an expected threat that follows. For example, a socially anxious individual avoid attending a conference, thereby preventing social interactions and averting an expected threat of getting humiliated. Despite its prevalence and maladaptive qualities in clinical anxiety, this behavior remains understudied. This talk presents a series of studies exploring avoidance of learnt fear and its implications. It will also touch base on recent advances in extinction learning, a mechanism core to exposure-based treatments for clinical anxiety.

About the Speaker

Alex Wong is an Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. He did his PhD at University of New South Wales and a postdoc at University of Würzburg in the field of human fear conditioning. He then went to the Netherlands and took up a faculty position at Erasmus University Rotterdam.

His research centers on understanding the etiology and treatment of clinical anxiety through experimental means. His current research interests focus on elucidating the mechanisms of fear avoidance and the generalization of extinction learning, topics that will be presented in the seminar.

Zoom Meeting (For participants who couldn't attend the Seminar in person)

<https://hku.zoom.us/j/6985555998?pwd=V05yTGJWNTIzazd2OFZ0Q3FRcHVkdz09>

Meeting ID: 698 555 5998 | Password: Psyc

~ All are Welcome ~



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