

Dr Justin Chun-Him LAU

[ORCID](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

Education

- Ph.D. (Anthropology) The Australian National University
 - M.Sc. (Anthropology and Development), London School of Economics and Political Science
 - B.A. (First Hons) (Social Anthropology) University of Sussex
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Professional Experience

Postdoctoral Fellow, Asia Research Institute, NUS

Research Area/Topic/Discipline

Waste; Circular Economy; Care; Infrastructure; Feminist STS

Short Biography

Justin Lau is a social anthropologist interested in the culture of disposal and environmental anthropology. His main areas of research interest include discard studies, feminist STS, and disability studies. His doctoral research explores the material imaginaries and multispecies infrastructures of circular economies in Cambodia. He is currently formulating a research project on limestone mining and critical minerals in Asia. It examines the dynamics between extractivism and conservation in a limestone mountain in Cambodia.

Publications

- Forthcoming “Making (Spectral) Kin, Not Plastics: A Critique of Mother Nature Rhetoric,” *Environmental Humanities*.
- 2024 “Cultural Probes: A Speculative and Creative Method for Environmental Research,” (first author with Michelle Wing-Tung Cheng) *Local Environment*, 29(3), 386-398.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13549839.2024.2310658>

- 2023 "Towards a Care Perspective on Waste: A New Direction in Discard Studies," *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, 41(8), 1592-1608. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23996544211063383>
- 2022 "Mediating Response-ability in Planning: The Elusiveness of the Cambodia Waste Management Report," *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, 23(3), 213-231. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14442213.2022.2032817>
- 2021 "A Review of Growth Mindset Intervention in Higher Education: The Case for Infographics in Cultivating Mindset Behaviors," (third author with Michelle Wing-Tung Cheng and Man-Lai Leung) *Social Psychology of Education*, 24(5), 1335-1362. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-021-09660-9>

Book Review

- 2024 *Waste Worlds: Inhabiting Kampala's Infrastructures of Disposability* by Jacob Doherty, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9655.14225>
- 2021 *Waste and Wealth: An Ethnography of Labor, Value, and Morality in a Vietnamese Recycling Economy* by Minh T.N. Nguyen, *Exertions Society for the Anthropology of Work*. <https://doi.org/10.21428/1d6be30e.d7d2b11a>
- 2020 *Avian Reservoirs: Virus Hunters and Birdwatchers in Chinese Sentinel Posts* by Frédéric Keck. *LSE Review of Books*. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/lsereviewofbooks/2020/05/21/long-read-review-avian-reservoirs-virus-hunters-and-birdwatchers-in-chinese-sentinel-posts-by-frederic-keck/#search>

NON-TRADITIONAL RESEARCH OUTPUTS

- 2022 "Should You Feel Bad About Your Pandemic-Era Plastic Waste?" (first author with Michelle Wing-Tung Cheng) *SAPIENS*. <https://www.sapiens.org/culture/covid-plastic-waste-individual-responsibility/>
- 2019 "When Harmony Silences Resistance," *SAPIENS*. <https://www.sapiens.org/culture/hong-kong-harmony/>

Awards/Grants and Distinctions

AWARDS

- 2025 Best PhD Thesis Prize, Australian Anthropological Society
- 2024 Sir Raymond Firth PhD Research Prize, The Australian National University
- 2024 Postgraduate Conference Award, Asian Studies Association of Australia

GRANTS

- 2025 Asia Study Grants, Harold S. Williams Trust, National Library of Australia
- 2025 Book Manuscript Workshop Grant, National University of Singapore
- 2024 Vice-Chancellor's Travel Grant, The Australian National University
- 2024 Student Extracurricular Enrichment Fund, The Australian National University
- 2023 Australian Network of Student Anthropologists Scholarship, Australian Anthropological Society.