

KELLYNN WEE

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EDUCATION

PhD in Anthropology University College London	2020-2026
Master of Social Science in Sociology National University of Singapore	2016-2018
Bachelor of Social Science in Sociology & English Literature Minor in Gender Studies National University of Singapore	2010-2014

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

PhD Research University College London	2020-2026
- Dissertation: <i>Playful Narratives: An ethnography of tabletop roleplaying games in Singapore</i> - Carried out 20 months of in-depth ethnographic research on analogue play cultures in Singapore through participant observation and 38 semi-structured qualitative interviews - Published two peer-reviewed book chapters and a journal article based on this research, engaging with topics such as the anthropology of play, emergent play in collaborative storytelling, and postcolonial imaginaries in Southeast Asian apocalyptic games - Designed and published the game <i>Move Quietly and Tend Things</i> as funded by the Association of Southeast Asian Studies (UK), which has been played in UK games festivals and is part of university teaching curricula in Canada and the United States	
Research Associate Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore	2015-2020
- Led qualitative fieldwork across multiple long-term, multi-sited research projects on low-waged labour migration in Indonesia and Singapore; published several articles in peer-reviewed journals based on this work, including multiple first-author publications - Designed and implemented research projects, including conceptual development, methodological design, fieldwork, and qualitative analysis - Employed a range of qualitative methods, such as participant observation, in-depth and paired interviews, and policy tracing; analysed large datasets using NVivo and Dedoose in both independent and collaborative research settings - Participated actively in migrant advocacy support and civil society activity relating to this research, organising monthly public research forums and contributing to NGO reports aimed at enshrining domestic workers' right to a day off, spurring reforms surrounding the migration industry, and strengthening construction workers' injury claims	

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Guest Facilitator University College London	March-June 2024
Designed and taught two workshops using game-based learning for <i>Peopling the Gap</i>, a UCL BSc Anthropology student-led pilot project exploring race, surveillance and violence in higher education	

Postgraduate Teaching Assistant | University College London 2023-2024

- Facilitated weekly tutorials on anthropological research methods for 20–30 BSc Anthropology undergraduates; assessed summative coursework, including essays and multimodal projects, providing structured academic feedback

Guest Lecturer | University College London 2023, 2024

- Gave invited lectures in the MA Digital Anthropology core course to postgraduates (titled “Digital Gaming and Play”, 2023; and “An Anthropology of Play and Games”, 2024)

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Convenor | AnthroPlay 2023-present

- Initiated a UK and European academic network on the anthropology of play and games, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and research exchange
- Coordinates network communications (including mailing list moderation and dissemination of opportunities) and co-organises a seminar series in collaboration with the Royal Anthropological Institute

Communications and Project Officer | Centre for Humanities Education, UCL 2023-2024

- Edited, proofread, and published blog content; collaborated with stakeholders to plan engaging posts, produce event summaries, and create staff interview features while maintaining website updates
- Managed digital communications, including social media content, scheduling, and platform optimisation; coordinated cross-posting; supported broader communications strategy and university-wide newsletters
- Supported event logistics, including Eventbrite management, venue booking, audience outreach, creation of promotional materials (digital and print), and gathering feedback data
- Assisted in project and grant administration by monitoring progress, advising on impact and visibility, and contributing to reporting for stakeholders and funders

Editor | Press Start Journal 2023-2024

- Supported student-led academic games journal with editorial processes, including identifying and assigning peer reviewers, providing constructive author feedback, and copyediting manuscripts to publication standard

Communications Director | Association of Southeast Asian Studies UK 2023-2024

- Led communications and public engagement activity for ASEAS, developing digital communications strategies that significantly expanded organisational reach and scholarly engagement, including a 519% increase in Facebook reach and a 48.7% increase in X/Twitter followers within six months
- Moderated ASEAS’s online community, supporting 6,000 Facebook members through dissemination of calls for papers, funding opportunities, job vacancies, seminars, workshops, and other information
- Wrote ASEAS’s monthly membership newsletter (Mailchimp), collating content on organisational activities, conferences, scholarships, grants, and academic opportunities to strengthen member engagement, build community and collaborations, and showcase developments in the field
- Developed collaborative relationships with UK- and internationally based Southeast Asian Studies organisations to support the delivery of seminars, conferences, and scholarly events, including a major international conference in Jakarta (2023)

Managing Editor | Asian Journal of Social Science 2022-2023

- Assessed manuscript submissions for suitability, clarity, and originality; proofread articles prior to publication; supported editorial decision-making processes
- Coordinated communication between authors, editors, and production teams to ensure timely publication of peer-reviewed journal issues
- Assisted in managing editorial workflows and production timelines, including organising book reviews and supporting overall journal operations

Communications Officer | Migrating out of Poverty Consortium [concurrent role] 2015-2017

- Translated complex research into accessible, audience-targeted communications by leading the development of multimedia outputs, blog content, policy briefs, and public-facing events to inform policy and broaden public engagement
- Managed and grew digital platforms, including website and social media channels; launched and maintained a Mailchimp newsletter achieving a 50% open rate (vs. ~25% sector average)
- Led delivery of multimedia projects (short films, photo exhibitions) in collaboration with creative and civil society partners; organised screenings, exhibitions, and outreach events reaching ~2,000 attendees
- Produced policy communications, including writing, designing, and editing briefs and infographic reports for global civil society stakeholders and policymakers

PUBLICATIONS: PLAY AND GAMES

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

Wee, Kellynn. 2024. "If it's held dear, it'll get pushed through": Transmedia narratives, play cultures, and soft canon in tabletop role-playing games (TTRPGs). *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 27(5): 675-693. DOI: 10.1177/1367877924124440

Book Chapters

Wee, Kellynn. (Forthcoming). "Play, Testing: Games as Anthropological Method." In *The Routledge Handbook for the Anthropology of Play and Games*, edited by F.P. McDonald and N. J. Mizer. Routledge.

Wee, Kellynn, and Manuel, Thomas. 2026. "Playing and Publishing the Apocalypse in Southeast Asia: An Interdependence of Hope and Necessity." In *Essays on Indie Tabletop Roleplaying Games*, edited by S. Hedge. North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc.

Wee, Kellynn. 2024. "Bittersweet Utopias." In *Utopia on the Tabletop*, edited by Jo Lindsay Walton. Sussex: Ping Press.

Wee, Kellynn. 2024. "Defamiliarising D&D: Playing out Western fantasy in Singapore." In *50 Years of D&D*, edited by P. Sindhu, M. Carter and J. Zagal. Massachusetts: MIT Press.

Public Engagement

Wee, Kellynn. 2021. 'Homebrewing Asia: How Dungeons & Dragons in Singapore Is Remaking Western Fantasy'. *Anthropolitan*. 11 October 2021. <https://anthropolitan.org/2021/10/11/homebrewing-asia-how-dungeons-dragons-in-singapore-is-remaking-western-fantasy/>

PUBLICATIONS: MIGRATION

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

Wee, Kellynn, Lam, Theodora, Spitzer, Denise, and Yeoh, Brenda S. A. 2023. Love's Labour's Cost? Gendered Migration and Intimate Labour in Asia. *Gender, Place and Culture*. DOI: 10.1080/0966369X.2023.2179025

Spitzer, Denise, Lam, Theodora, Wee, Kellynn, and Yeoh, Brenda S.A. 2022. Close Encounters: Migrant Bodies, Workplace, and Intimate Labour in Asia. *Gender, Work and Organization* 29(3): 897-905. DOI: 10.1111/gwao.12837

Wee, Kellynn and Yeoh, Brenda S.A. 2021. Serial Migration, Multiple Belongings and Orientations Toward the Future: The Perspective of Middle-Class Migrants in Singapore. *Journal of Sociology* 57(1): 94-110. DOI: 10.1177/1440783320960521

Ortiga, Yasmin, **Wee, Kellynn**, and Yeoh, Brenda S.A. 2021. Connecting Care Chains and Care Diamonds: The Eldercare Skills Regime in Singapore. *Global Networks* 21(2): 434-454. DOI: 10.1111/glob.12281

Wee, Kellynn, Goh, Charmian, and Yeoh, Brenda S.A. 2020. Translating People and Policy: The Role of Maid Agents in Brokering Between Employers and Migrant Domestic Workers in Singapore's Migration Industry. *International Migration Review* 54(4): 992-1015. DOI: 10.1177/0197918319897570

Yeoh, Brenda S.A., Goh, Charmian and **Wee, Kellynn**. 2020. Social Protection for Migrant Domestic Workers in Singapore: International Conventions, the Law, and Civil Society Action. *American Behavioral Scientist* 64(6): 841-858. DOI: 10.1177/0002764220910208

Wee, Kellynn, Goh, Charmian, and Yeoh, Brenda S.A. 2019. Choreographing the Rhythms of Encounter in Singapore's Maid Agencies. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 45: 109-122. DOI: 10.1111/tran.12332

Wee, Kellynn, Goh, Charmian, and Yeoh, Brenda S.A. 2018. Chutes-and-Ladders: The Migration Industry, Conditionality, and the Production of Precarity among Migrant Domestic Workers in Singapore. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 45 (14): 2672-2688. DOI: 10.1080/1369183X.2018.1528099

Wee, Kellynn, Vanyoro, Kudakwashe, and Jinnah, Zaheera. 2018. Repoliticizing International Migration Narratives? Critical Reflections on the Civil Society Days of the Global Forum on Migration and Development. *Globalizations* 15 (6): 795-808. DOI: 10.1080/14747731.2018.1446600

Palmary, Ingrid, De Gruchy, Thea, Ashraf, Ali, Koh, Chiu Yee, **Wee, Kellynn**, Goh, Charmian, and Yeoh, Brenda. 2018. How Unpopular Policies are Made: Examples from South Africa, Singapore and Bangladesh. *International Migration* 57 (4): 254-268. DOI: 10.1111/imig.12505

Goh, Charmian, **Wee, Kellynn**, and Yeoh, Brenda S.A. 2017. Migration Governance and the Migration Industry in Asia: Moving Domestic Workers from Indonesia to Singapore. *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 0: 1-33. DOI: 10.1093/irap/lcx010

Koh, Chiu Yee, **Wee, Kellynn**, Goh, Charmian, and Yeoh, Brenda S.A. 2017. Cultural Mediation through Vernacularization: Framing Rights Claims through the Day-Off Campaign for Migrant Domestic Workers in Singapore. *International Migration* 55 (3): 98-104. DOI: 10.1111/imig.12332

Yeoh, Brenda S.A, Baey, Grace, Platt, Maria, and **Wee, Kellynn**. 2017. Bangladeshi Construction Workers and the Politics of (Im)mobility in Singapore. *City* 21 (5): 641-649. DOI: 10.1080/13604813.2017.1374786

Koh, Chiu Yee, Goh, Charmian, **Wee, Kellynn**, and Yeoh, Brenda S.A. 2017. Drivers of Migration Policy Reform: The Day Off Policy for Migrant Domestic Workers in Singapore. *Global Social Policy* 17 (2): 188-205. DOI: 10.1177/1468018116677218

Yeoh, Brenda S.A., Goh, Charmian, and **Wee, Kellynn**. 2020. "Emigration." In *International Encyclopaedia of Human Geography*, edited by A. Kobayashi, 91-96. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Yeoh, Brenda S.A., **Wee, Kellynn**, and Goh, Charmian. 2019. "Corporeal Geographies of Labour Migration in Asia." In *Handbook on Critical Geographies of Migration*, edited by K. Mitchell, R. Jones and J. L. Fluri, 92-105. Surrey: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Edited Books

Yeoh, Brenda S.A, **Wee, Kellynn** & Lam, Theodora. 2022. *Migrant Workers in Singapore: Lives and Labour in a Transient Migration Regime*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing.

Edited Special Issues

Wee, Kellynn, Lam, Theodora, Spitzer, Denise, and Yeoh, Brenda S. A. 2023 (Eds.). Love's Labour's Cost? Gendered Migration and Intimate Labour in Asia. *Gender, Place and Culture*. DOI: 10.1080/0966369X.2023.2179025

Spitzer, Denise, Lam, Theodora, **Wee, Kellynn**, and Yeoh, Brenda S.A. 2022 (Eds.). Close Encounters: Migrant Bodies, Workplace, and Intimate Labour in Asia. *Gender, Work and Organization* 29(3): 897-905. DOI: 10.1111/gwao.12837

Other Publications

Wee, Kellynn. 2020. "'Covidiot's' and caution tape: Care, surveillance and the elderly in Singapore." *Collecting COVID-19: A Crowd-Sourced Digital Ethnography of the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Accessed 20 May 2020. <https://anthrocovid.com/2020/05/20/covidiots-and-caution-tape-care-surveillance-and-the-elderly-in-singapore/>

Wee, Kellynn. 2020. "What waiting bodies can tell us about Singapore's maids." *Geography Directions*. Accessed 19 February 2020. <https://blog.geographydirections.com/2020/02/18/what-waiting-bodies-can-tell-us-about-singapores-maids/>

Vanyoro, Kudakwashe, and Wee, Kellynn. 2016. "What could go wrong in this year's Global Forum on Migration and Development?" *Open Democracy*. Accessed November 27, 2019. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/kudakwashe-vanyoro-kellynn-wee/what-could-go-wrong-in-this-year-s-gfmd>

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS: PLAY AND GAMES

Wee, Kellynn. “‘Writing Back’ To Which Empire?: Constructing Chinese identities in Tabletop Roleplaying Games in Singapore.” Paper presented at Digital Games Research Association 2026: Intersectional Pleasures, Maynooth, June 14-18, 2026.

Wee, Kellynn. “‘Will we get along? Will we vibe?’: The Ambivalences of Friendship in Tabletop Roleplaying Games.” Paper presented at Tampere University’s Spring Seminar, Tampere, May 5-6, 2026.

Wee, Kellynn. “Worlds Beyond Words: Atmospheres of Play.” Paper presented at University College London’s Material, Visual, and Digital Culture Seminar Series, London, February 26, 2024.

Wee, Kellynn. “But Dungeons and Dragons is so non-Singaporean”: Tabletop Role-Playing Games as a Site of Playful Identity Making.” Paper presented at Games Symposium for Oceania and the Asia Pacific, Melbourne, June 14-15, 2023.

Wee, Kellynn. “Add +1 To Your Relationship: Recovering An Ill World Through Dungeons & Dragons.” Paper presented at Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK 2023: An Unwell World? Anthropology in a Speculative Mode, London, April 11-14, 2023.

Wee, Kellynn. “Move Quietly and Tend Things: Tabletop Roleplaying Games as a Tool for Collaborative Speculation.” Paper presented at Transdisciplinary Perspectives on Climate Change and Coastal Urban Development in the Asia-Pacific, Asia Research Institute, Singapore, February 16-17, 2023.

Wee, Kellynn. “Waystations to Utopia: Hopeful Tabletop Roleplaying Games as Tools of Collaborative Speculation.” Paper presented at Anthropology, AI and the Future of Human Society [Virtual], Royal Anthropological Institute, June 10, 2022.

Wee, Kellynn. “‘The theatrics, the lights, the sound... I like the dragon to be *there*’: Role-playing studio spaces and the delivery of the paid game experience in Singapore.” Paper presented at People, Materialities and Analog Game Culture, Generation Analog 2022 [Virtual], July 27-28, 2022.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS: MIGRATION

Wee, Kellynn. “‘Separate but simultaneous’: Compositing individual accounts of a shared migration trajectory within migration & family research in Asia.” Paper presented at AAS-in-Asia: Asia at the Crossroads, Solidarity through Scholarship, Association of Asian Studies, Kobe [Virtual], August 31-September 4, 2020.

Wee, Kellynn, and Yeoh, Brenda S.A. “Serial Migration In and Through Southeast Asia: Orientations Towards the Future.” Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Center for Global Asia, Shanghai University, Shanghai, August 26-28, 2019.

Wee, Kellynn. “Bids and Bets: The Risky Brokerage of Debt-Credit Relations Within the Migration Industry for Domestic Workers in Singapore.” Paper presented at Shaping Migrant and Mobile Worlds: Connectivities, Comparisons, Collaborations, National University of Singapore, Singapore, February 21-22, 2019.

Wee, Kellynn, Goh, Charmian, and Yeoh, Brenda S.A. “The Regime of Skills in Singapore’s Care Landscape.” Paper presented at The Question of Skills in Cross-Border Labour Mobility, Waseda University, Tokyo, September 20-21, 2018.

Wee, Kellynn, Goh, Charmian, and Yeoh, Brenda S.A. “Geographies of Encounter in the Maid Agency: (Re)producing Binaries and the Politics of Misrecognition in the Cosmopolitan City-State of Singapore.” Paper presented at Migrants in the Globalizing City: Spaces, Places and Mobilities in Asia, Europe and the Middle East, Sorbonne University, Paris, July 8-9, 2018.

Wee, Kellynn, Goh, Charmian, and Yeoh, Brenda S.A. “Micro-Brokerage: Translation, Discretion, and the Migration Industry for Domestic Workers in Singapore.” Paper presented at The Migration Industry: Facilitators and Brokerage in Asia, National University of Singapore, Singapore, June 1-2, 2017.

Wee, Kellynn, Goh, Charmian, and Yeoh, Brenda S.A. “Conditionality and Chance: Migration brokers and the Production of Precarity Among Migrant Domestic Workers in Singapore.” Plenary paper presented at Migrating out of Poverty: From Evidence to Policy, University of Sussex, Brighton, March 28-29, 2017.

Wee, Kellynn, and Yeoh, Brenda S.A. “File In, Filed Away: Placement Agencies and the Mediation of Migrant Domestic Labour in Singapore.” Paper presented at Urban Arrival Infrastructures: An International Workshop on Migration and Cities in the 19th and 21st Century, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussels, December 10-11, 2015.

ORGANISED CONFERENCES AND PANELS: PLAY AND GAMES

Seminar Series Convenor. 2024-Present. “Anthropology of Play and Games Seminar Series”, The Royal Anthropological Institute. Ongoing seminar series featuring experts on the anthropology of play.

Panel Convenor. 2024. “Methodologies and Theories for a Theory of Fun and Play”, European Association for Social Anthropologists: Doing and Undoing with Anthropology, Barcelona, Spain, 22 July-26 July.

Conference Organiser. 2024. “The Anthropology of Play: Encounters and Emergences”, Institute of Advanced Studies and Department of Anthropology, University College London, London, 11-12 July.

ORGANISED CONFERENCES AND PANELS: MIGRATION

Panel Organiser. 2020. “Methodologies of Migration and Care Research at the Crossroads of Asia: What We Can Learn from Paired Interviews”, Association of Asian Studies in Asia: Asia at the Crossroads, Kobe, Japan, 29 June-1 July.

Organising Committee Member. 2018. “Love’s Labour’s Cost? Asian Migration, Intimate Labour and the Politics of Gender”, Asia Research Institute, Singapore, 3-4 December.

Organiser. 2016. “ARI Asia Trends 2016: The Cost of Care”, Asia Research Institute, Singapore, 21 October.

Organiser. 2015. “ARI Asia Trends 2015: En Route to the Departure Hall”, Asia Research Institute, 14 July.

INVITED TALKS

Narrative, sociality, and materiality in collaborative storytelling games. Plymouth University, 14 October 2024.

Brokering women as labour: The migration industry for domestic workers in Singapore. Singapore Management University, 10 September 2020.

Brokering women as labour: The migration industry for domestic workers in Singapore. Nanyang Technological University, 17 September 2019.

The migration industry for domestic workers. Singapore Management University, 10 September 2018.

Who holds the bomb? Debt-financed migration for domestic workers in Singapore. Yale-NUS College, 1 March 2017.

AWARDS, GRANTS, AND HONOURS

Student-Led Activity Fund | Faculty of Social and Historical Sciences, UCL 2026
Awarded £600 to run workshop series on using games in education

Conference Fund Award | Department of Anthropology, UCL 2024, 2026
Awarded £770 to attend two international conferences

Octagon Small Grant Fund | Institute of Advanced Studies, UCL 2024
Awarded £1465 to support conference organisation: “The Anthropology of Play: Encounters and Emergences”

Overseas Graduate Scholarship | National University of Singapore 2020-2023
Awarded full funding for tuition fees, stipend, and research costs across 3 years

Research Impact Award | Association of Southeast Asian Studies in the UK 2022
Awarded £1500 to support project: “Waystations to Utopia: Tabletop Roleplaying Games as a Method of Hopeful Speculation”

Postgraduate Scholarship | Tan Kah Kee Foundation 2020
Awarded funding of £7000 to support doctoral work

Lee Foundation Prize | National University of Singapore 2015
Top M.Soc.Sci student in the Department of Sociology

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Featured Guest, 2024. [Mind Games: The Psychology of D&D and RPGs](#) (with Dr. Rohan Kapitany). Podcast: Episode 6.

Designer, 2024. [Move Quietly and Tend Things](#). Tabletop Roleplaying Game. Played internationally; also used in classrooms, workshops, and other teaching sites focused on climate futures

Invited Speaker, 2023. [The World Transformed Festival 2023](#). Public Panel: Can Games Transform The World?

PEER REVIEW

Reviewer, Games and Culture 2026

Reviewer, International Journal of Role-Playing	2024
Reviewer, European Journal of Development Research	2023
Reviewer, Gender, Place and Culture	2023
Reviewer, American Journal of Sociology	2021
Reviewer, Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies	2020
Reviewer, Gender, Work, and Organisation	2020
Reviewer, Local Environment	2020
Reviewer, Urban Planning	2020
Reviewer, Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies	2018
Reviewer, International Migration	2017