

YUCHEN TIAN

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EDUCATION

Ph. D. in Developmental Science 2021-2026
Boston University *(expected)*
(at the University of Massachusetts Amherst from 09/2021-07/2024)
Committee: Tara Mandalaywala, Peter Blake, Deborah Kelemen, Alice Zhao (external)

M. A. in Developmental Psychology 2020
Cornell University
Committee: Qi Wang, Lin Bian

B. A. in English Translation 2019
North China Electric Power University
Graduated with the highest honor

HONORS AND AWARDS

Cognitive Development Society Diversity Travel Award 2026
Summer Teaching Fellowship, Boston U. (\$5,000) 2025
Summer Fellowship, Boston U. (\$5,000) 2025
Conference Travel Grant, Graduate Student Organization, Boston U. (\$1,000) 2025
Teaching Fellowship, Boston U. (\$41,200) 2024-2025
Departmental Travel Grant, PBS, Boston U. (\$1000) 2024-2026
Dissertation Fieldwork grant, UMass Graduate School (\$5,000) 2023
Department fund for Dissertation Research Project, PBS, UMass Amherst (\$750) 2023
Department fund for Master-level Research Project, PBS, UMass Amherst (\$500) 2022
Grant for Bayes workshop at UMass ISSR (\$315) 2022
Grant for the 9th Annual Online Career Conference for PhDs 2022
University Graduate Fellowship at UMass Amherst (\$11,100) 2021
Yale Sneak Peek Diversity Scholarship 2020
Academic Excellence Award of City of Beijing (top 0.2%) 2019
China National Scholarship (8,000 Chinese yuan, top 0.2%) 2017
First Prize in Chinese College Students Innovation & Entrepreneur Competition 2017
Academic Excellence Scholarship (3,000 Chinese yuan, top 3%) 2016-2018
Academic Excellence Awards for Undergraduate Students (top 3%) 2016-2019

PUBLICATIONS

^indicates equal contribution; *indicates mentees under my supervision

^Shachnai, R., ^Leshin, R., **Tian Y.**, Wang, M., & Cimpian., A. (2025) What predicts girls' and boys' political ambition? Evidence from the United States and China. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*.

Media coverage: [The Last Show](#)

Tian, Y., González, G. T., & Mandalaywala, T. M. (2024). Beliefs about social mobility in young American children. *Developmental Science*, e13527. <https://doi.org/10.1111/desc.13527> [OSF]

Wang, Q., Mert, N., & **Tian, Y.** (2024). Remembering the good and bad and the self and others in a culturally modulated self-memory system. *Memory*, 32(6), 790–802. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09658211.2024.2372373> [OSF]

Tian, Y., & Bian, L. (2023). Should leaders conform? Developmental evidence from the United States and China. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 152(11), 3153–3166. <https://doi.org/10.1037/xge0001451> [OSF]

Media coverage: [PBS website](#), [UMass Amherst](#)

^Legaspi, J. K., ^Pareto, H. G., Korroch, S. L., **Tian, Y.**, & Mandalaywala, T. M. (2023). Do American children automatically encode cues to wealth? *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 234, 105706. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jecp.2023.105706> [OSF]

Jiang, X., & **Tian, Y.** (2016). Cultural confidence of Chinese people: Reflection on “The Spirit of the Chinese People”. *Higher Education of Social Sciences*, 11(4), 8-13.

WORKING PAPERS

^indicates equal contribution; *indicates mentees under my supervision

Tian, Y., *Ukairo, O., *Yu, X., & Mandalaywala, T. M. (*Revise and Resubmit*) Adopting an intersectional approach to study the development of group-based beliefs about upward social mobility. *Child Development*.

Tian, Y., Zhao, X. & Mandalaywala, T. M. (*Revise and Resubmit*) Cross-cultural variation in the development of children's awareness of disability-based disparities in upward social mobility: Evidence from the U.S and China. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*

Browman, A., **Tian, Y.**, Mandalaywala, T. M., (*invited submission, under review*) Social mobility beliefs and academic outcomes. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*

Mandalaywala, T. M. & **Tian, Y.** (*Revise and Resubmit, invited submission*) How do children think about social status? *Current Directions in Psychological Sciences*.

^Liu, R., ^**Tian, Y.**, Amemiya, J., & Bian, L. (*Revise and Resubmit*) Increasing children's recognition of structural causes of the gender gap in STEM in China.

ONGOING PROJECTS

^indicates equal contribution; *indicates mentees under my supervision

Tian, Y., & Mandalaywala, T. M. (*first draft available*) The development of children's beliefs about social mobility: A review of the cognitive foundations and implications for future research. *Child Development Perspective*

Mandalaywala, T. M., **Tian, Y.**, Aldan, P., & *Bayrak, S. (*first draft available*) Children's preferential attention to and memory for racial stereotypical information about social status.

Tian, Y., Zhao, X. & Mandalaywala, T. M. (*data collection completed*) The development of Chinese children's geography-based beliefs about social mobility.

Tian, Y., Aldan, P., & Mandalaywala, T. M. (*data collection completed*) The development of children's causal attribution of upward social mobility.

Tian, Y., Zhao, X. & Mandalaywala, T. M. (*data collection completed*) The development of geographical stereotypes in the United States and China.

Tian, Y., *Park, N., Bian, L. & Heck, I. (*data collection ongoing*) The development of children's cognition around innovative leaders in a group context.

INVITED TALKS

School of Psychology, Shanghai Normal University, Shanghai, China	2025
Department of Educational Psychology, East China Normal University, Shanghai, China	2025
Diversifying Scholarship Research Conference, University of Virginia, online	2025
Developmental Science Colloquium, Boston University, Boston, MA	2025
Prospective Student Interview Day, Boston University, Boston, MA	2025
Emerging Scholar in Psychological Sciences Talk Series, Princeton University	2024
School of Psychological and Cognitive Sciences & IDG McGovern Institute, Peking University, Beijing, China	2024
Department of Educational Psychology, East China Normal University, Shanghai, China	2024
Child Colloquium of UMass Amherst, Amherst, MA	2023
Child Colloquium of UMass Amherst, Amherst, MA	2022
Ithaca Youth Research Café, Ithaca, NY	2020
Human Development Brown Bag Series, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY	2020
Prospective Graduate Students Interview Weekend, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY	2020

CONFERENCES PROCEEDINGS

Tian, Y., Zhao, X., & Mandalaywala, T. M. (June 2026) *The development of awareness of rural-urban disparities in social mobility in China*. In E. Kneeskern (Chair), From Early Recognition to Active Engagement: Developmental Pathways in Youths' Understanding of and Action Towards Structural Inequalities, symposium to be conducted at the 28th Biennial Meeting of the International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development (ISSBD), Incheon, South Korea.

Tian, Y., Zhao, X., & Mandalaywala, T. M. (April 2026) *The development of awareness of disparities in social mobility between rural and urban families in China: Evidence from children, adolescents and older adults*. In V. Liu (Chair), From Early Recognition to Active Engagement: Developmental Pathways in Youths' Understanding of and Action Towards Structural Inequalities, symposium to be conducted at the Biennial Meeting 2026 of Society for Research on Adolescence, Toronto, Canada.

Tian, Y., Zhao, X., & Mandalaywala, T. M. (April 2026) *The development and consequences of geographical stereotypes about status among Chinese children: the role of contact with rural population*. Poster to be presented at the Biennial Conference 2026 of Child Development Society, Montreal, Canada.

Aldan, P., **Tian, Y.**, & Mandalaywala, T. (April 2026). Climbing the ladder: What do children in the United States think causes upward mobility? Poster to be presented at the Biennial Conference 2026 of Child Development Society, Montreal, Canada.

Tian, Y., Ukairo, O., Yu, X., & Mandalaywala, T. M. (May 2025) *Children's awareness of disparities in social mobility based on race and heritage country*. In **Y. Tian** and T. Mandalaywala (Co-chairs), Children's insights on social mobility for themselves and others across diverse identities, symposium conducted at the Biennial Conference 2025 of Society of Research in Child Development, Minneapolis, MN.

Liu, R., **Tian, Y.**, Amemiya, J., & Bian, L. (May 2025) *Chinese children reason structurally about STEM gender inequalities after observing girls' resource and psychological barriers*. In Norries, M (chair), Reasoning about Social Inequality: How Individual and Structural Attributions for Social Inequality Shape Children's Reasoning, symposium conducted at the Biennial Conference 2025 of Society of Research in Child Development, Minneapolis, MN.

Tian, Y., Zhao, X., & Mandalaywala, T. M. (May 2025) *Cross-cultural variation in 4- to 9-year-old children's awareness of disability-based disparities in social mobility*. In L. Lanteri and J. Leer (Co-chairs), Beliefs About Economic Inequality and Social Mobility Among Parents and Children in Diverse Cultural Contexts, symposium conducted at the Biennial Conference 2025 of Society of Research in Child Development, Minneapolis, MN.

Tian, Y., X, Zhao., & Mandalaywala, T. M. (April 2025) *The development of essentialist reasoning for geographic membership in China*. Poster presented at the Conference of the Essentialism in the Human Mind: Philosophical and Psychological Perspective, Amherst, MA.

Tian, Y., X, Zhao., & Mandalaywala, T. M. (February 2025) *Group-based beliefs about upward social mobility in the United States and China*. Poster presented at the 2025 Society for Personality and Social Psychology Annual Convention, Denver, CO.

Mandalaywala, T. M., **Tian, Y.**, & Gonzalez, G., (June 2024) *Beliefs About Social Mobility in Young American Children*. Talk presented at the 53rd Annual Meeting of the Jean Piaget Society, Toronto, Canada.

Legaspi, J. K., **Tian, Y.**, Gonzalez, G., & Mandalaywala, T. M., (March 2024) *American children's inferences of wealth and occupational status: an early- emerging endorsement of the myth of meritocracy*. Talk presented at the Biennial Conference 2024 of Child Development Society, Pasadena, CA.

Tian, Y., & Bian, L., (March 2024) *Should leaders conform? Developmental evidence from the United States and China*. Oral Paper presented at the Biennial Conference 2024 of Child Development Society, Pasadena, CA.

Tian, Y., & Mandalaywala, T. M. (February 2024) *Children's Beliefs in Group-based Disparities of Social Mobility*. Poster presented at the 2024 Society for Personality and Social Psychology Annual Convention, San Diego, CA.

Tian, Y., & Mandalaywala, T. M. (March 2023) *Children's preferential attention to and memory for stereotypical information*. Paper presented to the Biennial Conference 2023 of Society of Research in Child Development, Salt Lake City, UT.

Tian, Y., & Mandalaywala, T. M. (March 2022) *Children's inferences about and explanations for occupation-based wealth*. In M. Norris & N. Noles (Chairs), How Children Think about Power

and Status. Symposium conducted at the 2022 biennial meeting of the Cognitive Development Society, Madison, WI.

Tian, Y., Bian, L., (April 2021) *More power, more freedom: 4- to 8-year-old children approve of powerful group members' non-conformity*. Paper presented to the 2021 Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development. Virtual.

Shachnai, R., Leshin, R., **Tian Y.**, Wang, M., Bian, L., & Cimpian., A., (March 2021) *The development of gendered concepts of political leaders: Evidence from the US and China*. Paper presented to the 47th Annual Meeting of the Society for Philosophy and Psychology. Virtual.

Tian, Y., Wang, Q., (February 2021) *Remembering the good and the bad: Culture, memory, and well-being*. Poster presented at the 2021 Society for Personality and Social Psychology Annual Convention. Virtual.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Lecturer

Developmental Psychology (Summer 2024)

Teaching Fellow

Introduction to Cognitive Psychology (Fall 2025)

General Psychology (Summer 2025)

Social Psychology (Fall 2024)

Experimental Psychology: Developmental (Spring 2025)

Guest Lecturer

Introduction to Neuroscience (May 2023)

“The cultural impacts on brain development” *Course received a 4.8/5.0 score by 330 students*

Teaching Assistant

Adolescent Psychology (Fall 2022)

Introduction to Neuroscience (Spring 2023)

Lab Instructor

Methods of Inquiry in Psychology (Fall 2023)

MENTORSHIP

Honors thesis students:

Saliha Bayrak (UMass Amherst), Oluchi Ukairo (UMass Amherst)

Undergrad and Post-bac RAs:

Daniel Mandell (Boston University), Emily Aron (University of Rochester), Samantha Fuchs (Fairfield University), Yukefan He (Boston University), Samuel Kraus (Boston University), Ashleigh Washington, (Boston University), Amirtha Santhosh (Boston University), Xiangning He (Wake Forest University), Maddy Lin (Boston University), Lewen Wang (Boston University), Chunyu Zhu (University of Washington Seattle), Xiaoping (Eric) Yu, (Macalester College), Keming Liu (Wellesley College), Yujia Bai (Brandeis University), Cheryl (Wenjun) Shen (Boston University), Yancheng Liu (East China Normal University), Lada Filippov, (UMass Amherst), Carine Mansour (UMass Amherst), Delaney Sherman (UMass Amherst), Kailin Huang (UMass Amherst), Lydia Flagg (UMass Amherst), Rishabh Nair (UMass Amherst), Elizabeth Cho (UMass

Amherst), Laya Bharath (UMass Amherst), Kaitlyn Rybicki (UMass Amherst), Alex Dhima (UMass Amherst), Honggu (Nora) Zhou (Smith College), Chen Zou (Mount Holyoke College), Jingyi Yuan (Mount Holyoke College)

Pre-college RAs from UMass summer intensive program:

Benjamin Heim, Xingchen (Stella) Liu, Madeline Zhang, Ayesha Bahl, Saavarna Das

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Organizer for Writing Group

01/2025-present

- Organized the weekly 3-hour writing group sessions for graduate students and post-doc scholars across the department.
- Poll people’s availabilities, send schedules and track expenses for each session.

Search Committee for Associate Chair of Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness

10/2023-03/2024

- Helped prepare the job description and rubric for evaluating applications.
- Reached out broadly to get information about the position in the hands of as many qualified applicants as possible.
- Reviewed all applications to determine which applicants are minimally qualified.
- Participated in zoom interviews and recommended a shortlist.
- Hosted campus visits and interviews.

NextGen Psych Scholars Program

07/2023-05/2024

- Advised 5 mentees from historically underrepresented background to select psychology graduate programs, work on personal statements and all other materials for their applications.

Coordinator for the “Research at UMass” Series

06/2022-08/2022

- Invited 5 graduate students from 5 different programs in the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences at UMass to give talks about their research, pathways to grad school, and life as a graduate student.
- Booked the meeting rooms, coordinated speakers’ schedules, and advertised the events to pre-college RAs to gather questions, and hosted the events.

Organizer for the “Anderson-Myers Colloquium”

09/2021-03/2022

- Invited Dr. Fei Xu from UC Berkely as the inaugural “Anderson-Myers Colloquium” speaker to give a research talk at UMass Amherst.
- Teamed up with the other 3 student organizers to contact the speaker, work on financial budget, book flights and hotels, advertise the event, host the event.

DIVERSITY OUTREACH

Panelist, Boston University Society of Asian Scientists and Engineers	2025
Speaker, “Research in Social Science”, Hebei Institute of Communication, China	2024
Podcaster, “Talking about psychology PhD interviews”, The Short Talks	2023
Coordinator of online webinar, “Life as a junior faculty and PhD student in social sciences in the U.S.”	2020
Content creator of psychoeducational video, “Lifetime of Lasting Love” for Chinese college students.	2018

ACADEMIC SERVICE AND AFFILIATIONS

Reviewer: *Developmental Science, Child Development; Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies*

Co-reviewer (with Dr. Tara Mandalaywala): *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology; Acta Psychologica, Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology, Child Development*

Co-reviewer (with Dr. Shu Su): *Journal of Family Psychology, Journal of Early Adolescence*

Member: Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Society for Research on Child Development, Cognitive Development Society

REFERENCES

Tara Mandalaywala

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Lin Bian

Assistant Professor of Psychology
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Alice (Xin) Zhao

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East China Normal University
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Qi Wang

Joan K. and Irwin M. Jacobs Professor of Human Development
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