

The KU SOCIAL Psychology Program presents

## ***The Rice Theory: Evidence That Farming Practices Can Explain Differences from Marriage to Manspreading***



***Thomas Talhelm, PhD., Associate Professor of Behavioral Science – University of Chicago Booth School of Business***

***Please join us in Fraser Hall Room 547***

***Friday, April 7, 2023***

***11:45AM - 1:00p.m. CST***

***OR***

***Please join us over [ZOOM](#)***

***Meeting ID: 925 9696 4469***

***Passcode: 123456***

**Abstract:** The rice theory is the idea that historical rice farming shaped southern China into a very different culture from the wheat-farming north. Why would rice matter? Traditional paddy rice required about twice as many labor hours as wheat, which led rice farmers to share labor. Paddy rice also relied on irrigation networks, which required farmers to coordinate their water use and flood their fields at the same time. These elements gave rice villages tight, interdependent social ties. I will present data showing that northern and southern China have cultural differences that fall along the historical borders of rice and wheat. I will also show new data where we coded how much space 7,000 people were taking up in Starbucks. Within China and India, people in rice-farming regions took up less space than people in wheat-farming regions.