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Donald R. Gaffney

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Education

Ph.D., Business, University of Cincinnati, 2021 (Expected)

Dissertation Title: "The Duality of Subjective Uncertainty and its consequences on Consumption, Belief and Behavior," (Chair: Dr. Frank R. Kardes)

M.S., Marketing, University of Cincinnati, 2017

B.B.A., Marketing, International Business, University of Cincinnati, 2016

Research Program

In the study of consumer research, understanding perceptions and evaluations of uncertainty has been fruitful in predicting behavior. Through an information processing lens, my research takes a rather introspective approach in investigating the duality of *subjective* uncertainty. That is, isolating the role that differences in perceptions and attributions of a singular uncertain event have in consumption. This has led me to focus on research in several thematic areas. This includes investigating the role limited information has in decision-making (omission neglect bias), epistemic motives in resolving uncertainty, and the consequences of attributing uncertain events to either a random or knowable source.

Publications

Kardes, Frank R., Steven S. Posavac, and **Donald R. Gaffney** (forthcoming), "Omission Neglect and Consumer Judgment and Inference Based on Limited Evidence," in *APA Handbook of Consumer Psychology*, eds. Lynn Kahle, Tina M. Lowrey, and Joel Huber, Washington, D.C.: APA.

Accepted on February 2nd, 2021. Inferences made in the consumer domain are often constructed differently contingent on many factors such as the depth and amount of knowledge a consumer perceives they hold. This chapter investigates the link between hidden or omitted information and the inference-making process for consumer judgment.

Posavac, Steve S., Frank R. Kardes, Heidi D. Posavac, and **Donald R. Gaffney**, (2021), "The Utility of Clinical Psychology Concepts for Judgment and Decision Making Research: The Case of Histrionic Features," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*.

Accepted on November 21st, 2020. Published on January 29th, 2021. This article answers the call for bridging clinical psychological research with judgment and decision-making consequences. Specifically, we show that those with Histrionic tendencies seek out and are willing to pay more for products with attributes that increase status and satisfy attention-seeking motives even if these attributes come at a cost.

Kellaris, James J., Karen A. Machleit, and **Donald R. Gaffney** (2020), "Sign Evaluation and Compliance Under Mortality Salience: Lessons from a Pandemic," *Interdisciplinary Journal of Signage and Wayfinding*, 4 (2), 51-66.

Accepted on July 3rd, 2020. Published on August 21st, 2020. The central theme to this article is to further understand the implications of COVID-19 compliance signage and to provide evidence of what types of signage work best for compliance.

Under Review

Wu, Ruomeng, Shaobao Li, **Donald R. Gaffney**, and Frank R. Kardes (under review), "As Good as New: Embarrassment and Consumers' Preference for Used versus New Products," *Journal of Business Research*.

Submitted on January 29th, 2021. This article investigates the role of how used products are viewed between cultures. We then show how to mitigate these effects by describing used products differently by tapping into the mechanism, embarrassment.

Working Papers

***Gaffney, Donald R.**, Joshua J. Clarkson, and Frank R. Kardes (preparing for submission), "Epistemic Motivations of Ideological Extremism," *Target: Science*.

***Gaffney, Donald R.**, Bryan M. Buechner, and Noah VanBergen (preparing for submission), "Death and Free Will: Subjective Uncertainty on COVID-19 Countermeasure Perceptions and Compliance," *Target: Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*.

Krishnan, Vijaykumar, James J. Kellaris, and **Donald R. Gaffney**, (preparing for submission). Sonic Branding: Designing Distinctive Auditory Identities. *Target: Journal of Marketing*.

Hernandez, José Mauro C., Murilo Carrazedo M. C. Fillho, Annaysa S. M. Kamiya, **Donald R. Gaffney**, and Frank R. Kardes, (preparing for submission). The effects of delaying the purchase decision on choice deferral, omission detection, and decision confidence. *Target: Journal of Consumer Psychology*.

***Gaffney, Donald R.**, Emma Neybert, Frank R. Kardes, and Robert S. Wyer, Jr. (collecting data), "The Veil of Trust: Media Effects on Hidden Information," *Target: Psychological Science*.

***Gaffney, Donald R.**, Emma Neybert, Frank R. Kardes, and Susan Powell Mantel (collecting data), "Grice in the 21st Century: Product Reviews and their Authors," *Target: Journal of Consumer Research*.

*Denotes that the project is a part of the lead author's dissertation

Selected Conference Presentations

Posavac, Steven S., Frank R. Kardes, Heidi D. Posavac, and **Donald R. Gaffney** (2021), "Decision Motives and Judgment Tendencies of the Histrionic Personality," presented at the Society of Personality and Social Psychology, Digital.

Gaffney, Donald R., Emma Neybert, Susan Powell Mantel, and Frank R. Kardes (2021), "Grice in the 21st Century: Product Reviews and their Authors," paper to be presented at the 93rd Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.

Kardes, Frank R. and **Donald R. Gaffney** (2020), "Omission Neglect: Out of Sight, Out of Mind," paper presented at TEDxUCincinnati, Cincinnati, OH.

Gaffney, Donald R., Emma Neybert, Frank R. Kardes, and Robert S. Wyer, Jr. (2020), "Encounters of Distrust on Hidden Information," paper accepted for the 92nd Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.

Gaffney, Donald R., Ruomeng Wu, Meng Liu, and Frank R. Kardes (2020), "Cross-Cultural Differences in New versus Used Products," paper accepted for the 92nd Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.

Gaffney, Donald R. (2020), "Can Donald Trump Make you Smarter?" paper presented at the Three Minute Thesis Competition, Cincinnati, OH.

Neybert, Emma, **Donald R. Gaffney**, Liang Shen, Stephanie Flout, Maxwell Richards, and Frank R. Kardes, Sarah Elizabeth Perry, and Zoey Phelps (2020), "Novel Moderators of the Reception and Detection of Pseudo-profound Bullshit," paper presented at the 41st Annual Conference of Society for Judgment and Decision Making, virtual.

Gaffney, Donald R., Frank R. Kardes, and Robert S. Wyer Jr. (2019), "Does Feeling Ignorant Give Us More Control?" paper presented at the Annual Association for Consumer Research Conference, Atlanta, GA.

Gaffney, Donald R., Emma Neybert, Frank R. Kardes, and Robert S. Wyer (2019), "Seeing the Unseen: The Role of Distrust in Considering Missing Information," paper presented at the Annual Association for Consumer Research Conference, Atlanta, GA.

Gaffney, Donald R., Ruomeng Wu, and Frank R. Kardes (2019), "As Good as New: Cross-Cultural Differences in Losing Face and Preference of New versus Used Products," paper presented at the CLIK Conference, Louisville, KY.

[Invited] **Gaffney, Donald R.** (2019), "Uncertainty within Self: The Impact of Subjective Uncertainty in Marketing," paper presented at the University of Cincinnati Bicentennial Community Day, Cincinnati, OH.

Gaffney, Donald R. (2019), "It's Not You, It's Me: The Impact of Variants of Uncertainty on Purchase Behavior," paper presented at the University of Cincinnati Graduate Student Expo, Cincinnati, OH.

Neybert Emma, **Donald R. Gaffney**, Frank R. Kardes, and Robert S. Wyer Jr. (2019), "Fake News: The Impact of a Distrust Mindset on Omission Neglect," paper presented at the University of Cincinnati Graduate Student Exposition, Cincinnati, OH.

Gaffney, Donald R., Ruomeng Wu, and Frank R. Kardes (2018), "You are What You Buy: An Investigation into Metaphorical Purity and its Effect on Purchase Behavior," paper presented at the University of Cincinnati Graduate Student Exposition, Cincinnati, OH.

Grant Funding

- Lindner Summer Research Grant (2020-2021): \$2,500 award.
- University of Cincinnati Marketing Department research grant (2016-2021). Lindner College of Business: \$1,000 annual award.
- Siddall Research Fund (2016-2021). Lindner College of Business: \$1,000 annual award.

Research Assistantship

Wyer - Clarkson Lab

Mentors: Frank R. Kardes & Robert S. Wyer, Jr.

- Consumer Marketing Insights Lab Director (2020-2021), Marketing Department
- Research Assistant (2017-2021), Frank R. Kardes, Robert S. Wyer Jr., James J. Kellaris
- Consumer Marketing Insights Lab Supervisor (2016-2017), Marketing Department

Teaching Experience

Teaching Philosophy

It often takes years for marketing personnel in the corporate world to practice the robust and rigorously tested to which marketing scholars dedicate their lives. As researchers, we have the unique opportunity to help facilitate the acceleration of marketing theory being put into practice by immersing our students in break-through marketing science. This in turn allows our students to be distinct. Rather than simply

teaching students to be good at their field, as researchers, we give them tools to disrupt the marketing industry.

Through this lens, I attempt to teach my students theory derived from consumer behavior through example. To facilitate the learning of key concepts I challenge my students to exemplify these core ideas in case studies and peer to peer discussions. This dual approach of concept learning and application through analogy allows students to not only learn content that will set them apart from other students, but also how and when to apply this industry equity.

Course History and Evaluations

- Marketing Research, summer 2020
 - Instructor Excellence Rating 7.7/8
- Consumer Behavior, summer 2019
 - Instructor Excellence Rating: 7.7/8
- Introduction to Marketing, summer 2018
 - Instructor Excellence Rating: 7.8/8

Teaching Assistantship

- Marketing for Managers (MBA) (2020), Dr. Roseann Hassey
- Marketing for Managers (MBA) (2020), Dr. James Kellaris
- Consumer Behavior (MBA) (2017), Dr. Esta Shah
- Introduction to Marketing (UG) (2017), Dr. Karen Machleit
- Introduction to Marketing (UG) (2016), Dr. Jane Sojka

Graduate Coursework

Marketing

- Consumer Information Processing; Dr. Frank R. Kardes
- Judgment and Decision Making; Dr. Ryan Rahinel
- Consumer Behavior; Dr. Frank R. Kardes
- Consumer Research; Dr. Frank R. Kardes
- Branding; Dr. Ryan Rahinel
- Marketing Strategy; Drew Boyd

Psychology

- Cognition; Dr. Peter Chiu
- Attitudes and Persuasion; Dr. Joshua J. Clarkson
- Information Processing; Dr. Robert S. Wyer, Jr.
- Thought and Theory; Dr. Rashmi Adaval
- Goals and Emotions; Dr. Anthony Salerno

Research Design and Statistics

- Measurement and Structural Equation Modeling; Dr. Karen Machleit
- Marketing Models; Dr. David J. Curry

- Statistical Methods: Psychology: 7014, 7015; Business: 7041, 7042

Service

- Reviewer: Society for Consumer Psychology Conference
 - 2021 [*Competitive & Working Papers*]
 - 2019 [*Competitive Papers*]
- Committee: Lindner Graduate Student Association
 - 2019-2021 [*President*]
 - Appointed by the Dean to the Steering Committee.
 - Awarded thousands towards conference travel.
 - Awarded thousands in grant money to support graduate student research.
 - Advocated and succeeded in pushing for change in graduate student environment.
 - Founded the Business Scholar series to help facilitate graduate student learning.
 - Served on the Grievance Review Committee.
 - Served on the College Hearing Panel.
 - 2018-2019 [*Vice President*]
 - Co-led the international visa workshop for international students.
 - 2017-2018 [*Philanthropy Chair*]
 - Raised hundreds of dollars for the American Cancer Society

Affiliations

- Association for Consumer Research (ACR)
- Society for Consumer Psychology (SCP)
- American Marketing Association (AMA)
- Society for Judgment and Decision Making (SJDM)
- Midwest Psychological Association (MPA)
- Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP)

Select Industry Work Experience

Hope For Kabingo, 2016-2020

Consumer Insight Analyst and Lead Website Design. Utilized consumer insights (Google Analytics, Wix, etc.) to develop a highly efficient and pleasing website. To date, the website has been responsible for collecting over \$100,000 donated to the Hope for Kabingo. Responsibilities included: website development, optimization, design, user testing, search engine optimization (SEO) and more.

Academic Advisory Council for Signage Research and Education, 2016-2018

Consumer Insight Analyst and Lead Website Design. Developed a full marketing strategy for this young non-profit and helped manifest the goals and strategies from this marketing strategy into an interactive website. Responsibilities included: website development, optimization, design, user testing, search engine optimization (SEO), marketing strategy and more.

Idealine, 2015

Consumer Research Analyst. Was the chief market research analyst for six start-up companies. Retained a success rate higher than the national average for start-up success. Specialized in market penetration and quantitative consumer insight. Responsibilities included: website development, market penetration strategy, consultation, seeking out investors, external (secondary) and internal (primary) research, and the application of findings from the collected insights.

Dissertation Research

Committee:

Chair: Frank R. Kardes
Robert S. Wyer, Jr.
Susan Powell Mantel

The Duality of Subjective Uncertainty and its consequences on Consumption, Belief and Behavior (3 Essays, 5 papers)

Many definitions of uncertainty across the social sciences exist, however, across these domains, uncertainty is often viewed as a single construct. Through three essays I show that consumers often distinguish between two types of uncertainty and that these two types of uncertainty have unique and different consequences. The role of these two types of uncertainty, epistemic and aleatory, in the marketing literature has largely been undefined, however, I attempt to show that a further understanding of these uncertainty variants may better explain and predict consumption behavior.

Essay 1: Subjective Uncertainty and the Belief-Behavior Link

*Gaffney, Buechner, and VanBergen
Gaffney and Buechner*

"Ignorance is the night of the mind, but a night without moon and star."

Beliefs often influence our behavior in times of uncertainty. Consider, for example, the role politics have on how we act and behave. However, is this relationship contingent upon the variant of uncertainty being perceived? The first essay of my dissertation investigates cases in which beliefs predict behavior, and possibly more interesting, when they don't. The first framework of this essay postulates that in order for our beliefs to predict how we behave in times of uncertainty, these beliefs must play a role in the resolution of such uncertainty. The first paper is the first empirical test of this postulation as we show that free will beliefs predict behavior in response to COVID-19, but only when COVID-19 is seen to be epistemic in nature (*Manuscript in preparation. Targeting the Journal of Public Policy & Marketing.*). The second paper of this essay extends this finding further into a scarcity domain (*ideation stage. Targeting the Journal of Consumer Research.*).

Essay 2: Gricean Uncertainty

*Gaffney, Neybert, Kardes, and Wyer
Gaffney, Neybert, Mantel, and Kardes*

"Real knowledge is to know the extent of one's ignorance."

Essay two aspires to gain a deeper understanding of Grice's (1975) postulations but in the modern world. Specifically, we look at how distrust (Mayo, 2008), caused by the media and counter-arguing (Cai & Wyer, 2012), result in attenuating confirmation bias by pushing consumers to elevate levels of epistemic uncertainty. This essay has yielded two working papers. In the first paper we investigate the role of media effects on hidden information. In three experiments we find converging evidence that engaging in a distrust mindset reduces a notoriously difficult bias, omission neglect. In the first study, fake news salience was used. The second study, a single image of Donald Trump, replicated this effect via distrust mediation. The third study, we extended our

findings into branding and utilized untrustworthy brands to replicate this effect. In sum, these three studies provide evidence that the distrust mindset does indeed debias omission neglect. *Data collection stage. Targeting Psychological Science.* In the second paper we investigate the role Gricean norms have in product purchasing domains. When product reviews violate Gricean norms, how are these reviews used in the purchasing decision? Preliminary data suggest that there is a duality in whether this violation can either increase or decrease the likelihood of purchase, contingent on the role of Gricean (epistemic) uncertainty. *Data collection stage. Targeting Journal of Consumer Research.*

Essay 3: Uncertainty and Epistemic Motives of Ideological Extremism

Gaffney, Clarkson, and Kardes

"Exploring the unknown requires tolerating uncertainty."

The third and final essay investigates the epistemic motives of political ideology. Past research has constructed conservatism as an ideology akin to preference for the status quo, avoiding uncertainty at any cost. However, conservatism may not accurately represent an aversion of uncertainty to those that feel that past regulations are threatening or detrimental. This research evaluates a specific epistemic motive, need for cognitive closure, and its relation to political ideology, and its extremity rather than its directionality. *(Manuscript in preparation. Targeting Science.)*

References

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Dr. Joshua J. Clarkson
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