

Geoffrey R. O. Durso
Postdoctoral Research Scholar in Marketing
Owen Graduate School of Management
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Education

The Ohio State University, 2018

Ph.D., Psychology

- *Dissertation Committee: Richard Petty (chair), Duane Wegener, Russell Fazio*

The Ohio State University, 2013

M.A., Psychology, College of Arts and Sciences

Indiana University, 2011

B.S., Marketing (with honors), Kelley School of Business

B.S., Psychology (with honors), College of Arts and Sciences

- *Minors in Mathematics and International Business Management*

Research Interests

Consumer Behavior, Persuasion, Ambivalence, Expectations, Self-Control, Radically New Products,
Psychological-Pharmacological Interactions

Academic Positions

Postdoctoral Research Scholar in Marketing

Owen Graduate School of Management, Vanderbilt University

Graduate Research Associate

Department of Psychology, The Ohio State University

Graduate Teaching Associate

Department of Psychology, The Ohio State University

Undergraduate Research Assistant in Psychology

Department of Psychology, Indiana University

Undergraduate Research Assistant in Marketing

Kelley School of Business, Indiana University

Publications

Briñol, Pablo, Richard E. Petty, **Geoffrey R. O. Durso**, and Derek D. Rucker (2017), "Power and persuasion: Processes by which perceived power can influence evaluative judgments," *Review of General Psychology*, 21, 223-241.

Durso, Geoffrey R. O., Pablo Briñol, and Richard E. Petty (2016), "From power to *inaction*: Ambivalence gives pause to the powerful," *Psychological Science*, 27 (12), 1660-1666.

- Selected media coverage: *New York Magazine*, *ScienceDaily*, *Newswise (APS)*

Durso, Geoffrey R. O., Andrew Luttrell, and Baldwin M. Way (2015), "Over-the-counter relief from pains and pleasures alike: Acetaminophen blunts evaluation sensitivity to both negative and positive stimuli," *Psychological Science*, 26 (6), 750-758.

- Selected media coverage: *The New York Times*, *BBC Radio 4*, *NPR Morning Edition*, *CBS This Morning*

Loersch, Chris, **Geoffrey R. O. Durso**, and Richard E. Petty (2013), "Vicissitudes of desire: A matching mechanism for subliminal persuasion," *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 4, 624-631.

Sawicki, Vanessa, Duane T. Wegener, Jason K. Clark, Leandre R. Fabrigar, Steven M. Smith, and **Geoffrey R. O. Durso** (2013), "Feeling conflicted and seeking information: When ambivalence enhances and diminishes selective exposure to attitude-consistent information", *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 39 (6), 735-747.

Rydell, Robert J. and **Geoffrey R. O. Durso** (2012), "Can I borrow a feeling? Spillover of negative arousal from inconsistent information during attitude formation diminishes perceptions of well-being," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 48, 575-578.

Selected Research in Progress

Durso, Geoffrey R. O., Andrew Luttrell, and Richard E. Petty, "*Considering Both the Good and the Bad: New Insights into Consumer Implicit Ambivalence*," in preparation for submission to *Journal of Consumer Research*.

Durso, Geoffrey R. O., Richard E. Petty, Pablo Briñol, Joseph Siev, Luke Hinsenkamp, and Vanessa Sawicki, "*Expecting ambivalence*," invited resubmission (2nd round) in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

Rocklage, Matthew D.*, **Geoffrey R. O. Durso***, Andrew Luttrell, and Baldwin M. Way, "*Attenuating the attitude emotionality advantage with acetaminophen*," in preparation for submission to *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. (* = shared first-authorship)

- Durso, Geoffrey R. O. and Kelly L. Haws, "No diet, no problem: Social judgments of consumers' self-control outcomes." Four studies completed, targeting *Journal of Consumer Research*.
- Durso, Geoffrey R. O., Kelly L. Haws, and Baldwin M. Way, "Emerging insights for consumers' behavior and health at the intersection of pharmacology and psychology," invited review in preparation for submission to *Marketing Letters*, special section in Ideas Corner.
- Durso, Geoffrey R. O. and Kelly L. Haws, "Irony and satire in consumer reviews and word-of-mouth persuasion." Three studies completed, targeting *Journal of Consumer Research*.
- Durso, Geoffrey R. O., Steve Hoeffler, and Jennifer Edson Escalas, "Really conflicted about really new products: Understanding and influencing consumer ambivalence to self-driving vehicles." Two studies completed, targeting *Journal of Marketing Research*.
- Durso, Geoffrey R. O. and Robert W. Smith, "When consumers prefer ambivalent products—Examining the 'Too Good to be True' effect." Six studies completed, targeting *Journal of Consumer Research*.
- Durso, Geoffrey R. O. & Richard E. Petty, "Social judgments of others' emotions versus their traits as a function of expectations," in preparation for submission to *Psychological Science*.
- Durso, Geoffrey R. O., Alexis A. Keaveney, and Baldwin M. Way, "Ibuprofen reduces evaluation extremity toward both negative and positive emotional stimuli." Two studies completed, targeting *Science*.
- Durso, Geoffrey R. O., Andrew Luttrell, and Baldwin M. Way, "How acetaminophen can increase confidence: The case of ambivalent expectations." Two studies completed, targeting *Psychological Science*.
- Durso, Geoffrey R. O., Andrew Luttrell, and Baldwin M. Way, "Variation in sensory processing sensitivity modulates emotion blunting effects of acetaminophen." Two studies completed, targeting *Psychological Science*.
- Patton, Kathleen, Geoffrey R. O. Durso, & Duane T. Wegener, "Uncovering a more nuanced relation between attitudinal ambivalence and confidence," six studies completed, targeting *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

[*abstracts available in the Appendix or by request]

Honors and Awards

National Science Foundation, Graduate Research Fellow, 2013-2018

Alumni Grants for Graduate Research and Scholarship (Ohio State), 2018

Colloquium Chair, Social Psychology Program, 2016-17

Hayes Graduate Research Forum Award Nominee (Ohio State, Business Division), 2017

Outstanding Graduate Associate Teaching Award (Ohio State), 2016

- *Sole recipient of college-wide award, the result of a semester-long process that included student-led nomination and voting, interviews on teaching philosophy, and classroom observation.*

Herbert Toops Most Outstanding Graduate Research Award (Ohio State, 2nd Place), 2016

Hayes Graduate Research Forum Award Nominee (Ohio State, Business Division), 2016

Hayes Graduate Research Forum Award (Ohio State, 2nd Place, Behavioral Sciences Division), 2014

Outstanding Undergraduate Thesis Award (Indiana University), 2011

Teaching

MBA Pricing Strategy, Owen Graduate School of Management (Vanderbilt)

Introduction to Social Psychology (writing), Department of Psychology (Ohio State)

Introduction to Social Psychology (lecture), Department of Psychology (Ohio State)

Social Psychology Laboratory Methods, Department of Psychology (Ohio State)

Psychology Honors Thesis, Department of Psychology (Ohio State)

Consumer Behavior, Department of Marketing and Logistics (Ohio State, guest lecturer)

Introduction to Criminology, Department of Sociology (Ohio State, guest lecturer)

Academic Service

Peer Reviewing

Journal of Consumer Research

Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin

Personality and Social Psychology Review

Psychological Science

Revista de Psicología Social

Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience

Social Influence

Translational Psychiatry

Frontiers in Psychology

Journal of Pain Research

National Science Centre of Poland

Service to the University

President, Chair, Treasurer, Lab Coordinator, and other roles across several committees

Invited Talks and Conference Presentations

- Durso, G. R. O. and Haws, K. L. (October 2019). No diet, no problem: Social judgments of others' self-control outcomes. To be presented at the 50th annual meeting of the Association for Consumer Research, Atlanta, GA.
- Durso, G. R. O. and Smith, R. W. (October 2019). Preferences for ambivalent products as a function of "Too Good to be True" beliefs. To be presented at the 50th annual meeting of the Association for Consumer Research, Atlanta, GA.
- Way, B. M., Mischkowski, D., Durso, G. R. O., & Keaveney, A. A. (March 2019). Acetaminophen's effects on empathy and positive emotions: Implications for relationships. Presented at the 2019 meeting of the International Convention of Psychological Science, Paris, France.
- Durso, G. R. O. and Smith, R. W. (February 2019). When consumers prefer ambivalent products—Examining the 'Too Good to be True' effect. Presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Consumer Psychology, Savannah, GA.
- Durso, G. R. O. & Petty, R. E. (October 2018). Social judgments of others' emotions versus their traits as a function of expectations. Working paper presented at the annual meeting of the Person Memory Interest Group at the Society for Experimental Social Psychology, Seattle, WA.
- Durso, G. R. O. & Petty, R. E. (July 2018). Social judgments of others' emotions versus their traits as a function of expectations. Working paper presented at the Attitudes and Social Influence symposium at the Weary Conference at Ohio State, Columbus, OH.
- Rocklage, M. D., Durso, G. R. O., Luttrell, A. L., & Way, B. M. (April 2018). The signal value of attitude emotionality—An experimental neurochemical manipulation. Presented at the 90th annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.
- Durso, G. R. O. (February 2018). Ambivalence in social evaluation—When and why mixed reactions lead to indecision and conflict. Invited talk presented at Durham University, Durham, England, United Kingdom.
- Durso, G. R. O. & Petty, R. E. (February 2018). Implicit ambivalence toward brands—Implications for attitude processes and measurement. Working paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Consumer Psychology, Dallas, TX.
- Durso, G. R. O. (February 2018). Ambivalence in consumer evaluations—When and why mixed reactions lead to indecision and conflict. Invited talk presented at Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN.

- Durso, G. R. O.** & Petty, R. E. (January 2017). Ambivalence: A universal human experience across diverse social environments. Symposium organized and presented at the 17th annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, San Antonio, TX.
- Durso, G. R. O.**, Petty, R. E., & Briñol, P. (January 2017). Ambivalence and indecision in social evaluation: Expectations reduce and power magnifies. Presented at the 17th annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, San Antonio, TX.
- Briñol, P., Petty, R. E., & **Durso, G. R. O.** (September 2016). Power validates ambivalence and beyond. Presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Experimental Social Psychology. Santa Monica, CA.
- Petty, R. E., Briñol, P., Luttrell, A., & **Durso, G. R. O.** (September 2016). Confidence moderates the impact of ambivalence on behavior. Presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Experimental Social Psychology. Santa Monica, CA.
- Petty, R. E., Briñol, P., Luttrell, A., & **Durso, G. R. O.** (September 2016). Confidence + Ambivalence: Additive or interactive? Talk presented at the 5th EASP meeting on the Psychology of Attitudes. Cologne, Germany.
- Durso, G. R. O.**, Luttrell, A., & Way, B. M. (May 2016). I can't see clearly now: Acetaminophen blunts regret-related discomfort by affecting self-reported recall clarity. Presented at the 88th annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.
- Durso, G. R. O.**, Luttrell, A., & Way, B. M. (January 2016). I can't see clearly now: Acetaminophen blunts regret-related discomfort by affecting self-reported recall clarity. Presented at the 16th annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, San Diego, CA.
- Durso, G. R. O.**, Briñol, P., & Petty, R. E. (May 2015). Predictably unpredictable people: Expectations and ambivalence in social evaluation. Scheduled at the 87th annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.
- Durso, G. R. O.**, Luttrell, A. L., & Way, B. M. (February 2015). Over-the-counter relief from pains and pleasures alike: Acetaminophen blunts evaluation sensitivity to both negative and positive stimuli. Presented at the 15th annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Long Beach, CA.
- Durso, G. R. O.**, & Petty, R. E. (July 2014). Convincingly weak arguments: Serious versus satirical intentions to persuade. Presented at the 1st annual meeting of the Attitudes and Social Influence Conference, Catalina Island, CA.

Hinsenkemp, L., **Durso, G. R. O.**, Brinol, P., & Petty, R. E. (July 2014). Patterns of mixed-valence information during attitude formation: Implications for ambivalence. Presented at the 1st annual meeting of the Attitudes and Social Influence Conference, Catalina Island, CA.

Durso, G. R. O., Brinol, P., & Petty, R. E. (May 2014). From power to (in)action: When power leads to paralysis. Presented at the 86th annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.

Hinsenkemp, L., **Durso, G. R. O.**, Brinol, P., & Petty, R. E. (May 2014). Patterns of mixed-valence information during attitude formation: Implications for ambivalence. Presented at the 86th annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.

Durso, G. R. O., Brinol, P., & Petty, R. E. (February 2014). From power to (in)action: When power leads to paralysis. Presented at the 14th annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Austin, TX.

Durso, G. R. O., Brinol, P., & Petty, R. E. (May 2013). Reducing ambivalent feelings with expected mixed information. Presented at the 85th annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.

Durso, G. R. O., Rydell, R. J., & Petty, R. E. (January 2013). Implicit ambivalence and differences in information processing: Attributions of new information predict differences in resolving attitude discrepancies. Presented at the 14th annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, New Orleans, LA.

Durso, G. R. O., & Rydell, R. J. (January 2012). Discrepant implicit and explicit evaluations weaken attitude confidence by increasing perceived ambivalence. Presented at the 13th annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, San Diego, CA.

Media Coverage

The New York Times

National Public Radio (Morning Edition)

National Public Radio—WOSU

(All Sides with Ann Fisher, Interview)

BBC (Radio 4 Interview, All in the Mind)

Good Morning Columbus (TV Interview)

CBS News

The Wall Street Journal

New York Magazine

Chicago Sun-Times

Huffington Post

The Guardian

CNN

Popular Science

TIME

[and others, links available on request]

References

Richard E. Petty (MA/PhD Advisor)

University Distinguished Professor of Psychology

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Kelly L. Haws (Postdoctoral Advisor)

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Appendix

Paper #1:

Explicit Versus Implicit Ambivalence:

Consequences for Measurement, Judgment, and Consumer Behavior

[with Richard E. Petty and Andrew Luttrell]

What happens when consumers have mixed reactions? Consumer ambivalence can manifest as either *explicit* or *implicit*. With *explicit* ambivalence, consumers express having both positive and negative reactions, and thus report feeling conflicted and undecided; conversely, with *implicit* ambivalence, consumers endorse a summary evaluation that is discrepant from their automatically-measured preferences (e.g., IAT or AMP), yet do not report feeling conflicted. To date, despite their theorized similarities, these two forms of ambivalence have remained separate areas of research, with no attempt to empirically reconcile their supposed similarities and differences for predicting consumer judgments and behavior. The current work addresses this issue through measurement approaches and by using both experimental and field study methods, demonstrating that consumers can indeed “explicitly” report their supposedly “implicit” evaluations. Our proposed measures provide enhanced utility and flexibility in assessing consumers’ evaluations and their underlying ambivalence toward products and brands that more traditional evaluative measures may fail to uncover, with trivial cost, across a range of behavioral outcomes including risk assessments and actual choices.

Paper #2:

No Diet, No Problem—Social Judgments of Consumers’ Self-Control Outcomes

[with Kelly L. Haws]

How are other consumers’ indulgences judged by observers differently as a function of observer characteristics and the situational context of the indulgence? And with what consequences for the observer in their own indulgent behavior and long-term goal pursuit? Indulgences are generally viewed as more surprising, negative, and ambivalent compared with normatively restrictive behaviors. However, critically, we find that these same indulgences are judged as *less* surprising, *more* positive, and with *less* ambivalence when these behaviors are described in specific and relevant contexts. Importantly, differences in observers’ own trait self-control exerted independent and interactive effects on their judgments of other consumers’ indulgences. These findings suggest that normatively indulgent behaviors are judged negatively *and specifically* to the extent that these behaviors run directly against consumers’ goals and without further justification, and implicate social comparison processes for judges’ *own* goal pursuit and subsequent success versus failure.

Paper #3:

Really Conflicted about Really New Products—

Understanding and Influencing Consumer Ambivalence toward Self-Driving Vehicles

[with Steve Hoeffler and Jennifer Edson Escalas]

Consumers are often both excited by and fearful about “radically new products” (RNPs) that enter the marketplace—in other words, RNPs elicit consumer ambivalence. Perhaps the most imminently relevant RNP in the 21st century is the self-driving vehicle (SDV). Specifically, SDVs suggest fundamental changes in traditional models of ownership and control of vehicles, shifting to a model where vehicles are “owned” by

communities of consumers and which relinquish control from the passenger to an artificial intelligence. We suggest that consumer categorization of SDVs as “radically new” results in both increased negative *and* positive evaluations of the product. As such, we show that narrative arguments can effectively increase persuasion by increasing positive affect and reducing counterarguing against the adoption of SDVs. Ongoing work is examining other persuasive factors that can influence consumer ambivalence towards SDVs (e.g., improving the safety of other drivers vs. the self, changing consumers’ sense of control).

Paper #4:

When Consumers Prefer Ambivalent Products—

Surprise and Skepticism Influence Judgments of Products as “Too Good to be True”

[with Robert W. Smith]

Consumers understand that most products require explicit tradeoffs (e.g., flexibility versus durability), yet they often feel ambivalent when products perform well on one dimension but poorly on another. We show that relative experts—the most profitable and influential customers—best understand such tradeoffs and thus deem seemingly perfectly positive products as “too good to be true.” Specifically, experts experience both (a) greater surprise in response to superior products, enhancing interest in purchasing, but also (b) increased skepticism, which suppresses interest in purchasing. This research sheds light on consumer reactions to the many objectively ambivalent product categories that exist in the marketplace, from dieting programs to gym memberships, and from invasive medical procedures to worthy charitable causes.

Paper #5:

Expecting Ambivalence

[with Richard E. Petty and colleagues]

In this work, we connect the vast expectations literature with ambivalence for the first time. We show that expectancies of receiving mixed information—either explicitly provided or inferred via patterns of information—led people to feel less ambivalent about their objectively mixed reactions. Critically, the extent to which people felt that their mixed expectancies toward the target were confirmed (versus violated) significantly accounted for the reduced ambivalence. Finally, holding the same mixed information constant, confirmed expectations (a) reduced consumers’ preference to delay their relevant decisions, (b) reduced actual delay when forced to make a decision, and (c) reduced post-decision tension regardless of what participants ultimately decided. These findings demonstrate that expecting ambivalence in advance can ironically *reduce* ambivalence and thus diminish its typical effects on decision avoidance and regret.

Paper #6:

Social Judgments of Others’ Emotions Versus Traits as a Function of Expectations

[with Richard E. Petty]

Historical and contemporary perspectives on social and consumer judgment suggest that prior expectations result in either judgmental assimilation or contrast. Specifically, assimilation often occurs when the judged outcome is perceived as “near” the expectation, whereas contrast arises when the outcome is comparably far. We propose that the exact same expectation-outcome discrepancy can result in *both* assimilation *and* contrast, depending on what is being judged. We demonstrate that judgments of *stable traits* are *assimilated* to disconfirmed expectations, whereas *emotional states* are *contrasted* from disconfirmed expectations.