

Curriculum Vitae

# Davon Holmes

J. Mack Robinson College of Business, Georgia State University  
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## EDUCATION

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Doctor of Philosophy: Marketing Georgia State University, J. Mack Robinson College of Business	2027 (Expected)
Bachelor of Business Administration: Marketing Georgia State University, J. Mack Robinson College of Business	2021

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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**Virtual Consumption:** Virtual Influencers, AI in Advertising, Services

**Consumer Well-Being:** Authenticity, Transformative Consumer Research, Identity

## DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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Three Essays on Virtual Influencers: Ownership, Responsibility, and Identity Perception, *Under Progress*  
Advisor: Dr. Naveen Donthu

Dissertation Committee: Naveen Donthu, Alokparna (Sonia) Monga, Barbara Duffek, and Aaron J. Barnes

## PUBLICATIONS

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Tessa Garcia-Collart, Ellen Campos Sousa, Ryan Cruz, Ludovica Scalco, Smriti Kumar, **Davon Holmes**, Amanda Spry, Eda Anlamlier, Ahmet Kocak, and Nelson Amaral “The Marketplace Happiness Framework for Transformative Consumer Research: Managing the Hedonic-Eudaimonic Happiness Tension.” *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*

## WORKING PAPERS

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**Davon Holmes\***, Barbara Duffek\*, and Naveen Donthu “Beyond Visual Realism: The Role of Ownership in Virtual Influencer Authenticity and Engagement.”

Status: Revised and Resubmitted at *Journal of Business Research*  
Dissertation Essay 1

## RESEARCH-IN-PROGRESS

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**Davon Holmes** and Naveen Donthu “The Role of Virtual Influencers in Service Recovery Efforts”

Status: Data collection in progress

Target: *Journal of Service Research*

Dissertation Essay 2

**Davon Holmes**, Naveen Donthu, and Seth Ketron “The Role of Racial Congruence and Product Involvement in Virtual Influencer Endorsements”

Status: Data collection in progress

Target: *Journal of Consumer Research*

Dissertation Essay 3

**Davon Holmes**, Lane Fronczek and Naveen Donthu “The Role of Luxury and Non-Luxury Status in Virtual Influencer Promotions”

Status: Data collection in progress

Target: *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*

Sydni Fomas Do\*, **Davon Holmes\***, and Aaron J. Barnes, “AI Washing: a Nuanced Conversation in Marketing”

Status: Data collection in progress

Target: *Journal of Marketing*

Khalia Jenkins, Abigail Torres, and **Davon Holmes** “Tipping in Online Delivery Platforms”

Status: Data collection in progress

Target: *Journal of Consumer Research*

Priscilla Peña\*, **Davon Holmes\*** and Seth Ketron\* “How Virtual vs. Human Influencers Affect Authenticity in Brand Activism”

Status: Data collection in progress

Target: *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*

## HONORS, AWARDS, AND GRANTS

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AMA/Sheth Foundation Doctoral Consortium 2026-Fellow

Georgia State University 2026-Teaching Fellow

Mittelstaedt & Gentry Doctoral Symposium 2026-Fellow

Georgia State University: Robinson Research Summit Hackathon 2025-Second Place

The PhD Project’s Annual 3-Minute Thesis Competition 2025-Second Place

Society for Marketing Advances Doctoral Consortium 2024-Fellow

AMA Valuing Diversity PhD Scholarship 2023-Winner

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND POSTERS

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AMA Marketing & Public Policy Conference, Poster Session, 2025

- “How Virtual vs. Human Influencers Affect Authenticity in Brand Activism

Virtual influencers and Perceived Authenticity. Three-Minute Thesis presentation at the Georgia State University Robinson Research Summit Hackathon, Atlanta, GA, 2025.

## SERVICE TO THE DISCIPLINE

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American Marketing Association Conference, *Competitive Paper Reviewer 2024-2026*

American Marketing Association Marketing and Public Policy Conference, *Competitive Paper Reviewer 2025*

American Marketing Association, *Scholarship Reviewer 2024*

Marketing Education Review, *Competitive Paper Reviewer 2024*

Georgia State University

- Subject Pool Manager, Robinson College of Business – 2022-Current
- Secretary, Robinson PhD Fellows – 2024-2025

The PhD Project

- President, Marketing Doctoral Student Association – 2025-2026
- Vice President, Marketing Doctoral Student Association – 2024-2025
- Georgia State University Recruitment Representative – 2024

## LEADERSHIP AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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*Georgia State University: Research Coordinator (2022 – Present).*

- Together with Drs. Alokparna (Sonia) Monga and Lane Fronczek, helped create a subject pool with over 700 participants as a graduate research assistant.
- Set up the SONA platform for students to register for the pool, take online studies, and receive credit for their course.

## TEACHING INTERESTS AND EXPERIENCE

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Teaching Interests: Marketing Management, Marketing Research, Consumer Behavior, Branding, Social Media

Instructor, In-person section, Marketing Management (4.9/5) Spring 2026

Instructor, In-person section, Marketing Management (4.8/5) Fall 2025

Instructor, Online section, Marketing Management Scheduled for Fall 2026

## **DOCTORAL COURSEWORK**

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- Doctoral Seminar in Theory Construction, Dr. Ajay Kohli
- Doctoral Seminar in Structural Equation Modeling (Multiple Indicator Methods), Dr. Ed Rigdon
- Doctoral Seminar in Machine Learning (New Technologies in Marketing), Dr. Ramakrishnan
- Doctoral Seminar in Marketing Strategy, Dr. Denish Shah
- Doctoral Seminar in Consumer Behavior Theory, Drs. Ryan Hamilton, and Morgan Ward
- Doctoral Seminar in Behavioral Aspects of Branding, Dr. Sonia Monga
- Doctoral Seminar in Consumer Behavior Methods, Dr. Lane Fronczek
- Doctoral Seminar in Qualitative Methods, Dr. Leigh Anne Liu
- Doctoral Seminar in Sociological Theory, Dr. Daniel Pasciuti
- Statistics I, Dr. Chris Goode
- Statistics II, Dr. Chris Goode
- Design of Experiments, Dr. Mark Keil

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

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- Marketing and Public Policy
- American Marketing Association
- Transformative Consumer Research
- Society for Marketing Advances

## **DISSERTATION ABSTRACT**

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Three Essays on Virtual Influencers: Ownership, Responsibility, and Identity Perception

Davon Holmes

Committee members: Naveen Donthu, Alokparna (Sonia) Monga, Barbara Duffek and Aaron J.

Barnes

**A B S T R A C T**

Influencer marketing has expanded rapidly over the last decade as companies recognize both the persuasive power and cost savings of influencer endorsements. Recently, brands have increasingly embraced virtual influencers (VIs), computer-generated or AI-powered characters that interact with consumers on social media much like human influencers. The growing commercialization of virtual influencers has raised significant managerial and policy concerns regarding independence, accountability, and consumer perception. Despite the rapid growth of virtual influencers, academic understanding of their effectiveness remains limited. Specifically, companies and regulators have unresolved questions about authentic perception, responsibility attribution, and how consumers respond based on identity. This dissertation tackles these gaps through three experimental essays that examine how consumers interpret and react to virtual influencers.

Essay 1 examines how the brand ownership and visual realism of virtual influencer's impacts behavioral engagement and perceptions of authenticity. Essay 2 investigates how the visual realism of virtual influencer's shapes service recovery outcomes after a service failure. Essay 3 explores how the perceived racial congruency with a virtual influencer shapes consumer purchase intentions. Together these essays contribute to the growing influencer marketing literature by establishing the effectiveness of virtual influencers through their respective strengths, capabilities, limitations, and visual realism. The findings offer salient theoretical insights into authenticity, attribution, and congruency through brands leveraging non-human endorsers.

*Keywords:* virtual influencer, ownership, attribution, congruency, visual realism, authenticity