Research Statement
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I have been fortunate to collaborate with a number of faculty colleagues who are leaders in their fields. Our research continues to examine the basic processes through which decisions and judgments are made (e.g., Sanbonmatsu, Mazur, Behrends, & Moore, 2015). Zhenghui Yu, Steve Posavac, and I have begun investigating the dynamics of serial decision making - a phenomena which has been almost wholly overlooked in the choice literature. In serial decision making, responses are assessed one a time with the unwanted possibility of “jumping the gun” or passing on the best options. Steve and I are also continuing our long standing research on consumer judgment (e.g., Posavac, Ratchford, Bollen, & Sanbonmatsu, under review).

Much of my collaborative work has been concerned with applied decision making. My colleagues and I have conducted several studies investigating the causes and consequences of cell phone use while driving (Sanbonmatsu, Strayer, Behrends, Medeiros-Ward, & Watson, 2016). Our research has also examined more generally why people multi-task (Sanbonmatsu, Strayer, Medeiros-Ward, & Watson, 2013). Recently, we have begun investigating the effects of distractions such as cell phones on the self-regulation of driving (Sanbonmatsu, Strayer, Biondi, Behrends, & Moore, 2016). Our newest research examines the determinants of beliefs and confidence in beliefs about autonomous vehicles (Sanbonmatsu, Strayer, Yu, Biondi, & Cooper, in press). This is a potentially rich domain of study because of the misconceptions, ignorance, and overconfidence characterizing consumers’ beliefs about the technology. Following a pattern that has characterized Dave Strayer’s career, our applied studies have successfully addressed interesting theoretical issues in the context of important everyday issues.

Our expertise in higher order thinking has enabled us to contribute to the science and philosophy of science. Our initial work in this domain was a study of why confirmatory hypothesis testing dominates psychological science (Sanbonmatsu, Posavac, Behrends, Moore, & Uchino, 2015). This was followed by a theoretical paper on Thomas Kuhn’s misconceptions of science and the role of paradigms in research (Sanbonmatsu & Sanbonmatsu, 2017). Most recently, I have invested an inordinate amount of time on a companion pair of papers I am co-authoring with Katie Sanbonmatsu and Zhenghui Yu that examine the variability in theory development and scientific practice across disciplines. Finally, I am planning on submitting a grant proposal this summer to investigate how and why scientists in various disciplines differ in their views of their research, their fields, and science. I am hoping to bring Bert Uchino and Steve Posavac in on this grant project.