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## **The Influence of Personality on Presidential Leadership Style (with a Case Study of Donald J. Trump, 45th President of the United States)**

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**The Influence of Personality on Presidential Leadership Style**  
**(with a Case Study of Donald J. Trump, 45<sup>th</sup> President of the United States)**

Anne Marie Griebie

College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University

April 12, 2021

PROJECT TITLE: The Influence of Personality on Presidential Leadership Style (with a Case Study of Donald J. Trump, 45<sup>th</sup> President of the United States)

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**Abstract**

This project explored the links between personality and leadership style in politics. The case study component of the thesis comprised an empirically derived personality assessment of Donald Trump (Immelman & Griebie, 2020) using the Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria (MIDC), adapted from Millon's personological framework by Immelman for the study of personality in politics. Trump's personality assessment was supplemented by a theoretically informed analysis of the hypothesized developmental background (biogenic factors and childhood experiential history) underlying Trump's primary and secondary personality patterns, as a validity check on the theoretical coherence of Trump's MIDC-derived profile. Conceptual links between Trump's empirically constructed personality profile and his hypothesized leadership style were established in deductive, rational-intuitive fashion by mapping his personality traits onto Hermann's leadership trait analysis (LTA) framework. The study provides a heuristic framework for future research efforts to develop a model of political leadership styles congruent with the theoretical underpinnings of Millon's personological model.

## **Introduction**

The study of personality in politics is grounded in the assumption that political leadership style is shaped by the individual leader's personality, which in turn is produced by a combination of genetic influences and developmental experiences. Exploring how former U.S. president Donald Trump's childhood experiences forged his personality attributes and the leadership style revealed during his presidency provides suggestive evidence for the relationship between Theodore Millon's (1990) evolutionary theory of personality and stylistic elements of political leadership derived from it (Immelman, 2005).

This present study offers the field of political psychology a theoretically based analysis of the hypothesized biogenic factors and childhood experiential history underlying Trump's personality pattern and leadership style, which can be generalized as a basis for inferring the latent psychological motivations of other political leaders and predicting how their personality traits may influence their role orientation to domestic politics and foreign relations.

This primary aim of the study is to explore conceptual links between Trump's personality profile and complementary models of political leadership as a first step to ultimately constructing a comprehensive taxonomy of political leadership styles or types congruent with, and embedded in, Millon's (1990; Immelman & Millon, 2003) evolutionary theory of personality. The present study comprises four major components.

1. The first part of this thesis surveys historical and contemporary research on the links between personality and leadership and seeks to evaluate the self-perpetuating personality traits reflected in Trump's personality-based leadership style.

2. Next, the thesis addresses the developmental background of personality patterns relevant to Trump by presenting a theoretically based analysis of the hypothesized

developmental background (biogenic factors and childhood experiential history) underlying Trump's empirically established personality pattern and leadership style (Immelman & Griebie, 2020).

3. The case study component of the thesis comprises an empirically derived personality assessment of Trump (Immelman & Griebie, 2020) using the Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria (MIDC; 2015) adapted from the work of Millon (1969, 1986a, 1986b, 1990, 1991, 1994, 1996, 2003; Millon & Davis, 2000; Millon & Everly, 1985) by Immelman (1993, 1998, 2002, 2003, 2005) for the study of personality in politics.

4. The concluding section of the thesis addresses the ultimate purpose of this project by seeking to update and elaborate the conceptual links between Trump's presidential leadership style (Immelman, 2017) as revealed in office (Immelman & Griebie, 2020) and Immelman's (2003, 2005) personality-in-politics model in which leadership behaviors are embedded.

This project is valuable to the fields of psychology and political science, and the interdisciplinary field of political psychology, because it has the potential to build conceptual bridges between different cognate areas in each of the two political psychology source disciplines while also providing both fields with an original perspective to conceptualize the intricate connection between personality development and its subsequent manifestation in leadership style and role orientation to domestic politics and foreign relations.

### **Conceptual Links between Personality and Leadership**

In this section, I review political leadership models that complement Immelman's personality-in-politics framework, review the literature on complementary perspectives that hold promise for elaborating Immelman's model, and note shortcomings in previous theoretical models linking personality variables to political leadership style.

### **Complementary Models of Political Leadership Proposed by Immelman**

Immelman (e.g., 1998, 2002, 2010, 2017) summarized several complementary models of political leadership of heuristic import with respect to building a conceptual bridge between political leaders' personality patterns and their leadership style in office. Specifically, he has employed the leadership models of Barber (1972/1992), Etheredge (1978), Hermann (1987), Simonton (1988), and Renshon (1996) to establish linkages between personality patterns and leadership behavior in political office.

James David Barber (1972/1992), focusing narrowly on presidential temperament, developed a simple model of presidential character that has shown some utility in predicting successful (active-positive) and failed (active-negative) presidencies.

Lloyd Etheredge (1978) developed an "interpersonal generalization theory" of personality effects on U.S. foreign policy, substantively replicated by Shepard (1988), which can be employed rationally and intuitively to enhance and complement the predictive utility of Millon's model with respect to leadership performance in the arena of international relations.

Margaret Hermann (1987) developed a personality-based model of foreign policy role orientations that provides an alternative to (or complement) Etheredge's model with respect to personality-based foreign policy preferences.

Dean Keith Simonton's (1988) empirically derived presidential styles (charismatic, interpersonal, deliberative, neurotic, and creative) offer another promising frame of reference. Given the fidelity with which his leadership styles mirror the popular five-factor model, whose correlates with Millon's personality patterns have been empirically established (Millon, 1994, p. 82), Simonton's stylistic dimensions may have considerable heuristic value in linking personality to political leadership behavior.

Stanley Renshon (1996) proposed “three distinct aspects” (p. 226) of political leadership shaped by character: mobilization — the ability to arouse, engage, and direct the public; orchestration — the organizational skill and ability to craft specific policies; and consolidation — the skills and tasks required to preserve the supportive relationships necessary for an executive leader to implement and institutionalize his or her policy judgments (pp. 227, 411).

The literature review for the current study has identified several additional perspectives on political leadership relevant to building a conceptual bridge between personality and leadership style in high-level public office, summarized below.

### **Complementary Perspectives for Elaborating Immelman’s Model**

A review of the literature identified several complementary perspectives that hold promise for expanding the conceptual models catalogued by Immelman.

#### ***Hermann’s Leadership Trait Analysis***

In the most recent iteration of her conceptual framework, Margaret Hermann (2003), identified seven traits that have proven particularly useful in assessing leadership style on the basis of linkages among leaders’ personal characteristics and their political behavior:

(1) the belief that one can influence or control what happens, (2) the need for power and influence, (3) conceptual complexity (the ability to differentiate things and people in one’s environment), (4) self-confidence, (5) the tendency to focus on problem solving and accomplishing something versus maintenance of the group and dealing with others’ ideas and sensitivities, (6) general distrust or suspiciousness of others, and (7) the intensity with which a person holds an in-group bias. (p. 184)



Following is a summary of the seven key leadership traits Hermann (2003) employs to evaluate leadership style. For a more detailed exposition, see Appendix A.

**Belief in the Ability to Control Events.** The belief in one's ability to control events is "a view of the world in which leaders perceive some degree of control over the situations in which they find themselves." It is assumed that when leaders take responsibility for planning or initiating an action, they believe that they have some control over what occurs (Hermann, 2003, pp. 188–189).

**Need for Power and Influence.** The need for power indicates "a concern for establishing, maintaining, or restoring one's power" — in other words, "the desire to control, influence, or have an impact" on others (Hermann, 2003, pp. 190).

**Self-Confidence.** Self-confidence indicates "one's sense of self-importance" — an individual's image of his or her "ability to cope adequately with objects and persons in the environment" (Hermann, 2003, p. 194).

**Conceptual Complexity.** Conceptual complexity is "the degree of differentiation that an individual shows in describing or discussing other people, places, policies, ideas, or things." A "conceptually complex individual can see varying reasons for a particular position, is willing to entertain the possibility that there is ambiguity in the environment, and is flexible in reacting to objects or ideas." At the opposite pole of the spectrum, "the conceptually simple individual tends to classify objects and ideas into good–bad, black–white, either–or dimensions; has difficulty in perceiving ambiguity in the environment; and reacts rather inflexibly to stimuli" (Hermann, 2003, pp. 195–196).

**Task vs. Relationship Focus.** An important leadership trait is variation on the dimension of task completion (solving problems) versus group maintenance (building relationships). Task-

oriented leaders attach greater importance to dealing head-on with problems facing the government, whereas relationship-oriented leaders are more sensitive to the needs of relevant constituents (Hermann, 2003, pp. 197–198).

**Worldview.** Ingroup bias and distrust of others may be employed in the aggregate to gauge a leader's view of the world. Information about a leader's ingroup bias and distrust of others foreshadows whether the leader will be driven more by perceived threats or by opportunities to form cooperative relationships. The leader's view of the world in this regard can affect how confrontational or cooperative he or she is likely to be (Hermann, 2003, pp. 199–200).

**Ingroup bias** is a view of the world in which one's own group (social, political, ethnic, etc.) holds center stage. There are “strong emotional attachments” to this ingroup and there is an emphasis on the importance of maintaining ingroup identity, honor, culture, status, and security (Hermann, 2003, p. 201).

**Distrust of others** involves “a general feeling of doubt, uneasiness, misgiving, and wariness about others” — an inclination to be suspicious of the motives and actions of others (Hermann, 2003, p. 202).

### *Simonton's Historiometric Assessment of Intelligence and Related Constructs*

Dean Keith Simonton (1986, pp. 928–935) historiometrically measured intelligence using personality summaries of well-known leaders within various life domains, including the U.S. presidency. Specifically, he found a factor, labeled “Intellectual Brilliance,” to be strongly associated with presidential success, with the most objectively successful presidents having the highest Intellectual Brilliance scores. This finding is important to note because intelligence, though by itself not specifically a personality trait, constitutes both an individual difference

among people and a dispositional attribute known to be highly heritable. Furthermore, the Intellectual Brilliance factor used by Simonton (2006) can be considered a personality trait because it was measured by consolidating ratings from several different adjectives congruent with the five-factor model's Openness to Experience factor, including positive associations with *artistic*, *inventive*, and *complicated* and negative associations with *commonplace* and *dull*.

As a follow up, Simonton (2009, pp. 318–222) integrated his 1986 Intellectual Brilliance scores for U.S. presidents with Openness to Experience scores for U.S. presidents (from Rubenzer & Faschingbauer, 2004) and presidential IQ scores (from Cox, 1926). Simonton (2009) found a strong correlation between all of these measures. Most notably, there were no disparate pairings among the measures. The integrative analysis performed by Simonton (2009) established the finding that Intellectual Brilliance is an amalgam of Openness, general intelligence, and high integrative complexity and an excellent predictor of presidential success.

### ***Mumford's Three-Factor Leadership Model***

Michael Mumford (2006) proposed a three-factor leadership model consisting of charismatic, ideological, and pragmatic (CIP) leadership styles. The *charismatic* dimension, as its name implies, refers to leaders with an aptitude for inspiring and rallying those they lead by projecting visionary ideas. *Ideological* leaders oppose the imaginative proposals of charismatic leaders and take a more principled approach that highlights the merit of moral standards. *Pragmatic* leaders are more similar to ideological leaders as they are considered more traditional and illustrate rational decision making. The CIP leadership model can be used in conjunction with Immelman's conceptual framework because all three leadership styles proposed by Mumford (2006) can be inferred from Immelman's MIDC-based personality assessment. The *charismatic* style is likely a combination of the Outgoing and Ambitious patterns in Immelman's

model. *Ideological* leadership could be a result of a primary Conscientious pattern with a complementary Dominant pattern. *Pragmatic* leadership could be inferred from elevations in any combination of Ambitious, Accommodating, Conscientious, Aggrieved, and Reticent personalities, though it is worth noting that individuals with elevated Aggrieved or Reticent personalities may be less likely to rise to high-level elected office.

### ***McDermott and Hatemi's Neurobiological Proposal***

Rose McDermott and Peter Hatemi (2014) argued that advances in human understanding of neurobiology can be used empirically to understand and predict personality traits and shed light on individual differences among world leaders as well as their inclination toward using force to achieve their goals. Behavior is a function of the person interacting with the situation and within any given situation political leaders bring their own genes, developmental history, and physiology; thus, individual differences in overall neurobiology can have a significant impact on individual decision making. The proposition that neurobiology can aid in leadership predictions provides evidence for the practical usefulness of Millon's theoretical model as it is grounded in evolutionary theory and provides a framework for understanding the relationship between an individual's developmental background and their ensuing adult behavior patterns.

### **Shortcomings in Existing Models Linking Personality to Leadership Style**

Two serious weaknesses of previous theoretical models linking personality variables to leadership style has been their narrowness of scope and subsequent failure to encapsulate the true breadth of personality diversity found within humans as well as their failure to acknowledge or incorporate the underlying biological sources of individual differences.

Many previous models, such as the one proposed by Thomas Preston (2001), focus on leaders within their social roles and their behavior within policy settings. Approaches centered

on leadership effects seem like a logical approach given the goal of creating connections between individual variables and leadership style; however, these models are inadequately generalizable because they fail to take into account the vast breadth of individual variance found throughout the general human population.

These models inadequately acknowledge the reality that those who rise to or are elected to leadership positions are but a small subset of the population and thus, by focusing too narrowly on already elected leaders and their personality traits, these models run the risk of inappropriately or incorrectly labeling someone like Donald Trump, who does not necessarily follow the typical script U.S. politicians adhere to in ascending to high-level leadership positions.

### **Overcoming Deficiencies of Models Linking Personality to Leadership Style**

Previous theoretical models' lack of generalizability to the common public is further reflected by the relatively few personality dimensions outlined by many models. Immelman (2003, 2005) offers one of the most comprehensive models to date with 34 normal and maladaptive personality classifications encompassing four *structural* domains (object representations, self-image, morphologic organization, and mood/temperament) and four *functional* domains (expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, and regulatory mechanisms) encompassing four data levels: *behavioral* (expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct); *phenomenological* (cognitive style, object representations, self-image); *intrapsychic* (regulatory mechanisms, morphological organization); and *biophysical* (mood/temperament). As noted by Immelman (2003),

For political personality inquiry to remain a thriving scholarly endeavor *and* have an impact beyond the narrow confines of academic political psychology, it will

need to account, at a minimum, for the patterning of personality variables “across the entire matrix of the person.” (p. 604)

A theoretical model of political leadership style with a basis in an evolutionary theory of personality is valuable because it is rooted in biology, which is ultimately the foundation of human personality and subsequent political behavior. Immelman’s (2003, 2005) personality-in-politics model in which leadership behaviors are embedded is informed by evolutionary theory and is useful in assessing the full spectrum of human personality and behavior — not just those limited to a political context — because it is congruent with the syndromes described in the revised third edition, fourth edition, and fifth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (*DSM-III-R*, *DSM-IV*, and *DSM-5*) of the American Psychiatric Association (APA; 1987, 1994, 2013) and coordinated with the normal personality styles in which those disorders are rooted, as described by Millon and Everly (1985) and Millon (1994, 2011). Other models permit comparison with other leaders, which is helpful, but less so when predicting the behavior or leadership style of someone with less political experience, as in the case of Trump.

At base, Immelman’s (2003, 2005) model is more broadly applicable and thus applicable to a general understanding of people, rendering it increasingly relevant in an era that has seen the emergence of populist world leaders with less political experience, accompanied by increased social media use encouraging political participation (Newlands, 2013) and the potential for more social media-based campaigns.

Several questions have plagued the contemporary field of political psychology, two of which were posed by Preston (2010), who stated the following:

Finally, among the areas of leadership and foreign policy analysis where the need for newer scholarship stands out, several can be pointed towards as worthy of our

future focus. For example, how do leadership style dynamics change over time, and what variables influence these changes? ... Similarly, while a great deal of focus has been placed upon the “leader” in our analyses to date, with much less attention being paid to followers, this needs to be remedied. Burns (1978) has always been correct that to understand leadership, it is necessary to understand followership as well — they are two sides of the same coin. (p. 18)

Immelman’s model provides an answer to Preston’s (2010, p. 16) questions. The first question that often arises relates to how leadership style dynamics might change within an individual over time. Immelman’s model addresses this question because it allows individuals to be classified on a spectrum from normal to maladaptive variants of each individual personality pattern. Though the model expects a substantial degree of personality stability, Immelman’s MIDC-based estimates of lower and upper limits (comparable to confidence intervals) for each personality pattern in his taxonomy allows one to infer — or at least speculate — how the leader might change under conditions of extreme personal stress, political crisis, or simply over time. The ensuing case study of Donald Trump highlights the stability of personality over time.

The second question posed by Preston (2010, pp. 2–7) highlights the idea that the role of a leader implies the condition of a following, which highlights the importance of understanding how the dynamics of constituents or other followers might influence an individual’s leadership style. Though Immelman’s model does not explicitly address the idea of leader–follower interaction, both Immelman’s data collection procedures his personal electability index (PEI; Immelman, 2019) heuristic serve as indirect measures of public approval and perception of the specific leader’s personality traits and leadership style. Whether or how the leader will respond to public feedback and adopt different styles of impression management is influenced by that

individual leader's particular personality style and can thus be expected to vary across leaders, depending on their particular personality composite.

### **Developmental Causal Analysis**

For most personality-in-politics investigators who favor a descriptive approach to personality assessment and don't engage in psychogenetic reconstruction, developmental questions are of secondary relevance; however, because each personality pattern has characteristic developmental antecedents, in-depth knowledge of a subject's experiential history can be useful with respect to validating the results of descriptive personality assessment or for suggesting alternative hypotheses (Immelman, 2003, p. 612; Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 73–74). The following evaluation of the personality patterns relevant to Donald Trump includes summaries of the developmental background of the personality patterns relevant to Trump, supplemented by endnotes providing confirmatory evidence of these developmental situations present within Trump's early life as well as relevant adult behavioral manifestations from which we can infer the presence of the underlying developmental contingencies. According to Immelman (2003),

A comprehensive model for the study of personality in politics (see Figure 1) should account for structural and functional personality attributes, at behavioral, phenomenological, intrapsychic, and biophysical levels of analysis; permit supplementary developmental causal analysis (i.e., genesis or etiology); provide an explicit framework for risk analysis (i.e., account for normal variability as well as personality pathology); and provide an assessment methodology. Furthermore, the personality model should be linked to performance outcomes, recognize the impact of situational variables and the cultural context on political performance,



and allow for personological, situational, and contextual filters that may modulate the impact of personality on political performance. (p. 609)

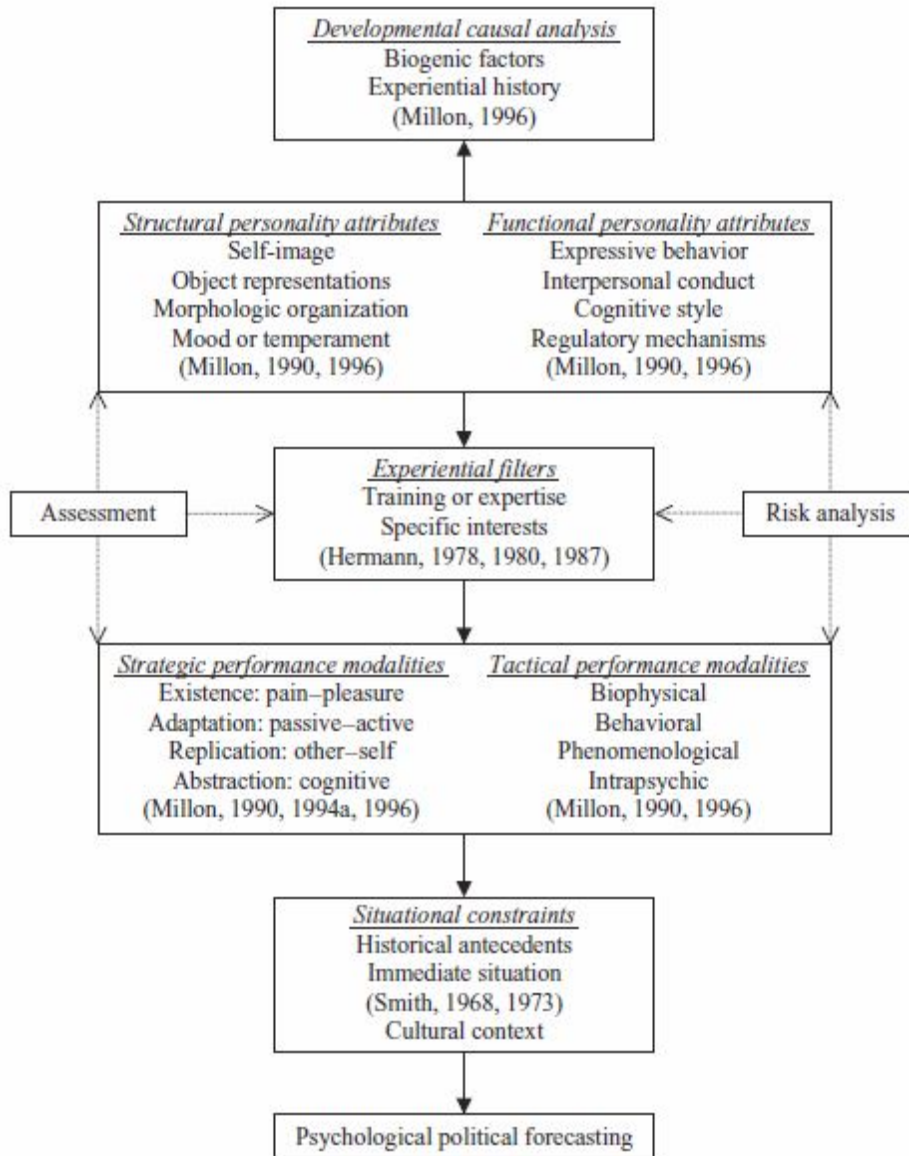


Figure 1. A generative conceptual model for assessing personality and political performance (adapted from Immelman, 2003, p. 610).

## **Developmental Background and Associated Self-Perpetuating Processes in Personality Patterns Relevant to Donald Trump**

An individual's experiential history sets the stage for self-perpetuation processes that become ingrained over time, becoming part of the person's crystallized, cross-situationally consistent and temporally stable personality configuration. Paralleling the manner in which an individual's early life experiences can form the basis for their self-perpetuating personality tendencies, formative experiences throughout an individual's development can impact which personality patterns are most expressed and to what degree an individual's primary patterns are manifested. The type of attachment, level of stimulus, and reward schedule an individual experiences during each developmental stage impacts their psychological growth and subsequent personality presentation (Millon, 2011, p. 110).

The following paragraphs summarize Millon's theoretical perspective on the developmental background of each of the four personality patterns relevant to Trump — Ambitious, Dominant, Outgoing, and Dauntless — supplemented by endnotes extracted from Mary Trump's biography of Donald Trump, *Too Much and Never Enough* (2020), in an effort to determine which of Trump's principal personality patterns are best supported by informant data and therefore more integral to Trump's personality functioning and its accompanying leadership style.

### ***Ambitious Pattern***

**Characteristic Experiential History.** The characteristic experiential history of persons with the Ambitious pattern includes parental overevaluation and indulgence and only-child or first-born male status (Millon, pp. 412–414). Only-child or first born-male status is associated with increased parental attention and special valuing of the child. Though Donald Trump rose to

the role within his father's business societally destined for his older brother Freddy and assumed the social role of first-born male, Trump was neither the first-born male nor an only child. This developmental variable lacked sufficient supportive evidence and cannot be confirmed.

***Parental Overindulgence.*** Adults who develop narcissistic personality disorder, the maladaptive extreme variant of the *Ambitious* pattern, are indulged as children in ways beyond traditional caregiving. These children learn “their every wish is a command, that they can receive without giving in return, and that they can deserve prominence without even minimal effort” (Millon, 2011, p. 413).<sup>1</sup> Parental overindulgence instills a perception of superiority and a perpetual expectation of deference which leads to difficulty assimilating to their peers as these children “fail to learn how to cooperate and share or to think of the desires and interests of others” (Millon, 2011, p. 413).<sup>2</sup> As these individuals grow into adolescence and adulthood their childhood sense of supremacy does not falter and they continue to expect praise and exceptional treatment.

***Self-Perpetuation Processes.*** The self-perpetuation processes of the *Ambitious* pattern include the illusion of competence, a lack of self-controls, and social alienation (Millon, pp. 414–415).

***Illusion of Competence.*** Individuals who experience parental overindulgence during formative childhood years can fail to develop appropriate motivation toward personal goals and can feel entitled to admiration regardless of genuine accomplishment. Although self-confidence is beneficial, unfounded positive self-evaluation can eventually lead these individuals to recognize the hollowness of their own false pretenses and they may “begin to recognize in time that they cannot ‘live up’ to their self-made publicity and fear trying themselves out in the real world. Rather than face genuine challenges, they may temporize and boast, but they never

venture to test their adequacy. By acting in this way, they can retain their illusion of superiority without fear of disproof” (Millon, 2011, p. 414).<sup>3</sup>

***Lack of Self-Controls.*** With an illusion of superiority comes a certain disregard for the needs and boundaries of normal society. Having received little constructive direction as a child, these individuals have learned to create their own rules and worlds: “Unrestrained by childhood discipline and confident of their worth and prowess, they make take liberties within rules and reality, and prevaricate and fantasize at will. Free to wander in their private world of fiction, narcissists may lose touch with reality, lose their sense of proportion, and begin to think along peculiar and deviant lines” (Millon, 2011, p. 415).<sup>4</sup>

***Social Alienation.*** The illusion of superiority can lead to isolation. If others seem insignificant, friendships and relationships seem to lose their inherent value thus narcissists may develop trust issues and struggle to accept the thoughts or judgements of those around them. When disagreements inevitably ensue, “rather than question the correctness of their own beliefs, they [narcissists] assume the views of others are at fault. Hence, the more disagreement they have with others, the more convinced they are of their superiority and the more isolated and alienated they are likely to become” (Millon, 2011, p. 415).<sup>5</sup> Self-inflicted seclusion only perpetuates the narcissist’s inability to relate to other individuals and can lead to the individual reverting further into their own confabulated reality in which they are superior: “isolation further prevents them from understanding the intentions and actions of others. They are increasingly unable to assess situations objectively, thereby failing further to grasp why they have been rebuffed and misunderstood. Distressed by these repeated and perplexing social failure, they are likely, at first, to become depressed and morose. However, true to their fashion, they will begin to elaborate new and fantastic rationales to account for their fate” (Millon, 2011, p. 415).<sup>6</sup> “They

may begin to be suspicious of others, to question their intentions, and criticize them for ostensive deceptions” (Millon, 2011, p. 415).

### ***Dominant Pattern***

**Characteristic Experiential History.** The characteristic experiential history of the Dominant pattern involves the singular variable of parental hostility (Millon, pp. 651–653).

**Parental Hostility.** Children model the behavior first of their parents or caregivers and then of their peers: “It appears to make little difference whether or not a child desires consciously to copy parental hostility; mere exposure to these behaviors, especially in childhood when alternatives have as yet not been observed, serves as an implicit guide as to how people feel and relate to one another” (Millon, 2011, p. 652).<sup>7</sup> Early parental rejection can leave a child with the impression that the world is cold and unforgiving; this perception can lead to a child adopting either an avoidant personality marked by continued fear of rejection or a dominant personality marked by aggression. According to Millon, “a close examination of the childhood of the *avoidant* personality indicates that parental rejection took the form primarily of belittlement, teasing and humiliation. Although these children may have borne the brunt of occasional physical cruelty, the essential nature of the message conveyed by the persecutor was that the child was weak, worthless, and beneath contempt. ... *Sadistic* children [in contrast] were an object of similar parental aggression but received or experienced a different message. Rather than being devalued in the attack, they learned to feel that they were a power to contend with, that they could cause others to be upset, and that they had the wherewithal to influence the moods, attitudes and behaviors of others” (Millon, 2011, p. 651).<sup>8</sup>

**Self-Perpetuation Processes.** The self-perpetuation processes of the Dominant pattern include perceptual and cognitive distortions, demeaning of affection and cooperative behavior,

and creating realistic antagonisms (Millon, 2011, pp. 653–654). Creating realistic antagonisms involves highly dominant individuals seeking out hostile situations in which their aggressive behavior is justified, subsequently creating a positive feedback loop of hostility. This particular variety of person–situation interaction, labeled “evocation” (Larsen & Buss, 2021, pp. 476–477) — was not confirmed in Mary Trump’s (2020) biography; however, it was abundantly evident throughout the Trump presidency in Trump’s contentious relationship with mainstream media.

***Perceptual and Cognitive Distortions.*** As emphasized earlier in this thesis, highly dominant personalities devalue sentimentality, tendermindedness, and cooperativeness. That leaves these individuals prone to aggressiveness that can be perceived as hostility, thus leading to perpetual relationship difficulties that further instill feelings of negativity within the highly dominant individual. Oppositional interactions perpetuated by their initial aggressive demeanor leave highly dominant people expecting further hostility; “these personalities are likely to repeatedly distort the incidental remarks and actions of others so that they appear to deprecate and vilify them. They persist in misinterpreting what they see and hear, and magnify minor slightly in major insults and slanders” (Millon, 2011, p. 653).<sup>9</sup>

***Demeaning of Affection and Cooperative Behavior.*** Having been subjected to aggressive and antagonistic treatment as children, highly dominant individuals become suspicious of the motives of others and learn to rely heavily on themselves. Feelings of distrust are further reinforced throughout these individuals’ lives, ultimately leading to a deficit in human compassion. As noted by Millon, “These individuals lack sympathy for the weak and oppressed, and are often contemptuous of those who express compassion and concern for the underdog. There is little reason to expect that the sadistic personality would be empathetic and sentimental, given his past (Millon, 2011, p. 653).<sup>10</sup>

### ***Outgoing Pattern***

**Characteristic Experiential History.** The characteristic experiential history of the Outgoing pattern includes stimulus enrichment and diversity in the sensory-attachment stage, parental control by contingent and irregular reward, histrionic parental models, sibling rivalry, ease of interpersonal attraction, and shifting standards and values (Millon, pp. 364–367). In the present study, only aspects relevant to Trump — namely, stimulus enrichment and diversity in the sensory-attachment stage, parental control by contingent and irregular reward, and sibling rivalry — will be examined.

***Stimulus Enrichment and Diversity in the Sensory-Attachment Stage.*** The reinforcement schedule adopted by caregivers is important in determining childhood attachment. The field of psychology has long acknowledged the importance of childhood attachment in determining later adult attachment styles and psychoanalytic theory and attachment theory both emphasize the significance of early childhood relationships. Attachment style is therefore important in understanding personality development. Highly outgoing individuals are likely to “have been exposed to a number of different sources that provide brief, highly charged and irregular stimulus reinforcements. ... Thus, the persistent yet erratic dependency behaviors of the histrionic personality may reflect a pathological form of intense stimulus seeking that can be traced to highly charged, varied and irregular stimulus reinforcements associated with early attachment learning.<sup>11</sup> The shifting from one source of gratification to another so characteristic of histrionics, their search for new stimulus adventures, their penchant for creating excitement and their inability to tolerate boredom and routine, all may represent the consequences of these unusual early experiences” (Millon, 2011, pp. 364–365).<sup>12</sup>

***Parental Control by Contingent and Irregular Reward.*** Children who develop into highly outgoing personalities “appear to learn that they must engage in certain sanctioned behaviors, and must satisfy certain parental desires and expectations in order to receive attention and affection” (Millon, 2011, p. 36).<sup>13</sup> Some caregivers struggle to adequately connect with their children or are too preoccupied by other life situations to adequately fulfill the child’s affiliation needs, only occasionally giving the children attention, leading an irregular reinforcement style. This can result in children seeking any form of reinforcement, positive or negative, in order to receive attention. “If they learn that the achievement of rewards is dependent on fulfilling the expectations and desires of others, they will develop a set of instrumental behaviors designed to please others and therefore elicit these rewards. However, if these strategies succeed sometimes but not always (i.e., are irregularly reinforced), children will persist in using them, or variations of them, well beyond all reason, until they do succeed, which eventually they will” (Millon, 2011, p. 365).<sup>14</sup> In order to receive this the reinforcement they need, these children become attuned to the reactions of others and become dependent upon the attention they receive to inform their evaluations of their own self-worth. As stated by Millon, “Although the child acts at all times to please and perform for others, it is always they who determine whether and when to give a reward. The child awaits their judgment as to whether behavioral efforts will bring recognition and approval; as a consequence, it is they who define the adequacy of the behavior — competence is judged by the reaction of others, not by the child’s own efforts or behaviors” (Millon, 2011, p. 365).<sup>15</sup>

***Sibling Rivalry.*** Just as parents or caregiver relationships have a substantial impact on childhood development, sibling relationships serve as foundational connections from which children learn how to interact and what to expect from future alliances. Sibling relationships are



particularly important in the formation of highly outgoing personality as these individuals seek constant attention and stimulation from those around them. With multiple siblings vying for the attention of parent or caregiver, a future histrionic child will develop certain attention-seeking tactics. Consequently, because of their intense desire to be continually noticed, compounded by the irregular reinforcement style outlined previously, these individuals will continue to return to behavior that proved fruitful in the past. In the words of Millon, “Children who struggled long and hard to capture the attention and affection of their parents under conditions of sibling rivalry often continue to utilize the devices that led to their periodic successes long after the rivalry ceased in reality (Millon, 2011, p. 365).<sup>16</sup>

**Self-Perpetuation Processes.** The self-perpetuation processes of the Outgoing pattern involve external preoccupations, massive repression, and superficial social relationships (Millon, 2011, pp. 367–368). External preoccupations lacked sufficient evidence in the Trump biography (2020) and thus will not be addressed in the present study.

**Massive Repression.** Highly outgoing personalities are reliant on affection and attention from others to fulfill their emotional needs and have difficulty feeling and expressing the full range of their emotions in socially constructive ways. Instead of allowing themselves to feel negative or unpleasant emotions, these individuals tend to suppress those feelings. By repressing their emotion these individuals “deny themselves opportunities to learn new alternatives for their behavior, to modify their self-image, or to become genuinely skillful and knowledgeable persons” (Millon, 2011, p. 368). This helplessness further exacerbates these personalities’ dependence upon others for emotional strength.<sup>17</sup>

**Superficial Social Relationships.** Related to the highly outgoing personality’s need for constant attention is their difficulty in retaining long-term relationships. A constant need for

emotional attention is coupled with a tendency to become easily bored; thus, after a time these individuals' unstable relationships fail to adequately satisfy the individual's ever-changing needs, thus resulting in superficial relationships. These persons "require a retinue of changing events and people to replenish the need for stimulation and approval. Thus, as life progresses, histrionics move capriciously from one source to another" (Millon, 2011, 368).<sup>18</sup>

### ***Dauntless Pattern***

Prior to examining experiential history (i.e., "nurture"), the next section addresses the hypothesized biogenic factors (i.e., "nature") underlying the dauntless personality pattern, supplemented by a commentary on the importance of specifically addressing the biology underlying this particular personality trait.

**Hypothesized Biogenic Factors.** Hypothesized biogenic factors associated with the Dauntless pattern are heredity, parmic infantile reaction patterns, and certain neurological characteristics (Millon, 2011, pp. 464–466).

**Heredity.** In its most maladaptive manifestation, highly dauntless personalities reveal themselves in antisocial behavior. To quote Millon, "The high frequency of correspondence in overt oppositional behavior commonly observed among family members suggests that constitutional dispositions traceable to genetic origins may play a role in the development of the antisocial pattern" (Millon, 2011, p. 465).<sup>19</sup> Similar to how having a biological parent with a highly heritable mental disorder such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder predisposes an individual to developing their own mental illness, having a biological relative with antisocial personality disorder greatly increases one's own chance of developing a primary dauntless personality — especially for males.

**Supplementary Information.** As with most psychological phenomena, there is no singular causal variable; most if not all psychological experiences are the result of a combination of numerous factors, including the present environment, an individual's genetic makeup, neurochemical composition, and past experiences. Personality is no different; each individual's unique way of perceiving and interacting with the world is shaped by this multitude of factors and, like other psychological characteristics, the degree to which biology — and consequently, heritability — influences trait expression is dependent upon each individual trait. A key trait to examine when attempting to link childhood personality development to adult personality manifestations is the Dauntless pattern, which at its most extreme level is associated with sensation seeking and tantamount to antisocial personality disorder. As inherently social creatures, humans have devoted extensive research to understanding the environmental and underlying genetic sources and biological substrates of antisocial personality disorder. Twin studies have revealed a heritability estimate of 38% for antisocial personality disorder (Torgersen et al., 2008), the most heritable of the DSM cluster B personality disorders. Further research has also revealed that the cluster of personality traits associated with psychopathy — in other words antisocial spectrum behavior — in evolutionary terms is subject to frequency-dependent selection (Larson & Buss, 2021, pp. 248–249). Though Immelman's (2003, 2005) model does not claim to diagnose personality disorders and Trump's personality profile (Immelman & Griebie, 2020) does not unequivocally suggest any type of personality disorder, the assessment did reveal a secondary Dauntless personality pattern. Trump's Dauntless pattern exists at the normal, generally adaptive level, yet at more extreme elevations this pattern would be tantamount to antisocial personality disorder. Indirect informant data gathered from Mary Trump's (2020) biography suggests Fred Trump Sr., Donald's father, exhibited behavior

consistent with both antisocial personality disorder and a sadistic personality pattern; thus, when considering Donald Trump's secondary Dauntless pattern in conjunction with the idea of frequency-dependent strategic individual differences hypothesized to be associated with psychopathy (Larson & Buss, 2021), the presence of this pattern at the adaptive level with respect to Trump supports the idea that antisocial-spectrum personality patterns are heritable and further affirms the importance of a model of personality assessment informed by evolutionary theory.

**Parmic Infantile Reaction Patterns.** Individuals who develop an antisocial personality pattern are likely to show evidence of misbehavior in early childhood with transgressions increasing in intensity with age. According to Millon, "Not only are they likely to encounter and precipitate more conflict and trouble than most children, but their seeming recalcitrance in the face of punishment results in their receiving more punishment than that required to control most children" (Millon, 2011, 465).<sup>20</sup>

**Neurological Characteristics.** Similar to how having a first-degree antisocial relative increases the likelihood of developing a dauntless personality, heredity also is involved in an individual's neurological characteristics because they are biological in origin; thus, the presence of a relative with any of the aforementioned behaviors predicts an increased likelihood of the related individual developing similar dispositions, though its manifestation may be different. As noted by Millon, "Especially interesting of late has been the research and theoretical work of Krueger and his associates on a hierarchical spectrum model that poses the existence of a general dispositional constitution that accounts for a wide variety of antisocial, conduct disorder, and alcoholic and drug behaviors" (Millon, 2011, p. 466).<sup>21</sup>

**Characteristic Experiential History.** The characteristic experiential history of the Dauntless pattern includes early parental indifference, deficient parental models, maldeveloped conscience, and secondary family status (Millon, 2011, pp. 466–468).

**Early Parental Indifference.** Like the children exposed to callous care who develop into highly dominant personalities, parental hostility or disregard can lead to a child developing into an antisocial personality: “Infants who are exposed to parental neglect, indifference, even hostility during the *sensory-attachment* stage are likely to ‘feel’ the world as a cold and ungiving place, hence creating a template for a lack of human sensibility and attachment behaviors” (Millon, 2011, p. 466).<sup>22</sup>

**Deficient Parental Models.** As mentioned previously, early parent/caregiver relationships are integral in personality development and subsequent adult functioning. When children are physically or emotionally abandoned, they may become distrustful and learn to care very little for the needs of those around them. To quote Millon, “The disappearance of the father and the preoccupations of a distracted mother are also felt, implicitly, as a sign of rejection, especially by young boys. As a result, there emerges a free-wheeling, lusty, and predatory approach to life” (Millon, 2011, p. 467).<sup>23</sup>

**Maldeveloped Conscience.** As stated earlier, parental modeling of antisocial behavior can have a major impact on the development of child. This very idea relates to the way these children learn to feel little remorse and empathy toward others. Parents of highly dauntless personalities “may have provided problematic and nonempathetic models of identification. The same parent whose deficient care led to the child’s sense of basic distrust may have exhibited a distorted sense of moral right or wrong that was incorporated by the child” (Millon, 2011, p. 467).<sup>24</sup> Faced

with deficient parental models and neglectful caregiving these children often fail to “acquire self-developed controls adequate to their emotions” (Millon, 2011, p. 468).<sup>25</sup>

***Secondary Family Status.*** Though highly dauntless personalities can develop in socially underprivileged homes where neglect and lack of resources leads the child to develop a hostile view of the world, these personalities can develop in affluent homes as well. The common thread found in highly dauntless individuals from both socially deprived and socially privileged homes is “their failure to experience the feeling of being treated fairly and having been viewed as a person/child of value in the family context” (Millon, 2011, p. 468).<sup>26</sup> Highly dauntless individuals from affluent homes “become persistently acquisitive and driven by aggrandizing need, such as power, status, and inexhaustible accumulations” (Millon, 2011, p. 468).<sup>27</sup> Millon (2011) also notes that antisocial personalities that grow up in more privileged homes can become highly successful professionals by dint of their ruthlessness in pursuing their ambitions.

***Self-Perpetuation Processes.*** The self-perpetuation processes of the Dauntless pattern include distrustful anticipations, vindictive interpersonal behavior, and weak intrapsychic controls resulting in impulsivity (Millon, 2011, pp. 468–470). The present study lacked sufficient evidence for any of these variables and thus these variables were not examined. This section is instead supplemented by a brief commentary addressing how the dauntless personality pattern can manifest itself in the corporate world and high-level executive leadership positions in politics. This is an important consideration in the case of Trump, given that he has held positions of power both business and in politics.

***Supplementary Information.*** Studies have revealed a positive relationship between the “dark triad” of personality traits — described as a combination of narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism — and career success by position rank and salary measures (Spurk, Keller, &

Hirschi, 2016). Though no precise estimate of the prevalence of antisocial behavior within high-intensity workplace environments exists, “roughly 4% to as high as 12% of CEOs exhibit psychopathic traits, according to some expert estimates, many times more than the 1% found in the general population and more in line with the 15% rate found in prisons” (McCullough, 2019). These numbers suggest that some individuals with primary elevated dauntless personality patterns may be able to channel their behavior into a more socially acceptable, though not necessarily less problematic, avenues. Millon (1996), in examining the developmental background of these so-called “socially sublimated antisocials,” asserts that their experiential history is often characterized by secondary status in the family:

It is not only in socially underprivileged families or underclass communities that we see the emergence of antisocial individuals. The key problem for all has been their failure to experience the feeling of being treated fairly and having been viewed as a person/child of value in the family context. Such situations occur in many middle- and upper-middle class families. (p. 468)

### ***Summary and Formulation***

Examining the hypothesized developmental background of the four personality patterns — Ambitious, Dominant, Outgoing and Dauntless — on which Donald Trump obtained the highest MIDC scale elevations (Immelman & Griebie, 2020) through the lens of Mary Trump’s (2020) biographical account seems to reveal the strongest support for the dominant (aggressive/sadistic) pattern, closely followed the outgoing (histrionic/impulsive) pattern, then the ambitious (narcissistic) pattern, and finally secondary dauntless (antisocial/sensation-seeking) pattern.

### **The Personality Profile and Leadership Style of Donald J. Trump**

In the past couple of years I have collaborated on a project to develop a personality profile of Donald J. Trump in office (Immelman & Griebie, 2020) from the conceptual perspective of Theodore Millon.

Psychodiagnostically relevant data were collected from biographical sources and media reports and synthesized into a personality profile using the Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria (MIDC; Immelman, 2015), which yields 34 normal and maladaptive personality classifications congruent with *DSM-III-R*, *DSM-IV*, and *DSM-5*.

The personality profile yielded by the MIDC was analyzed in accordance with interpretive guidelines provided in the MIDC and Millon Index of Personality Styles manuals (Immelman, 2014; Millon, 1994). Trump's primary personality patterns were found to be Ambitious/self-serving (bordering on exploitative), Dominant/controlling (bordering on aggressive), and Outgoing/gregarious (bordering on impulsive), infused with secondary features of the Dauntless/dissenting pattern. There were suggestive, equivocal evidence of incipient Distrusting/suspicious and Erratic/unstable tendencies emerging during Trump's time in office.

*Ambitious* individuals are bold, competitive, and self-assured; they easily assume leadership roles, expect others to recognize their special qualities, and often act as though entitled. *Dominant* individuals enjoy the power to direct others and to evoke obedience and respect; they are tough and unsentimental and often make effective leaders. *Outgoing* individuals are dramatic attention-getters who thrive on being the center of social events, go out of their way to be popular with others, have confidence in their social abilities, tend to be impulsive and undisciplined, and become easily bored — especially when faced with repetitive or mundane tasks. *Dauntless* individuals tend to flout tradition, dislike following routine, sometimes act



impulsively and irresponsibly, and are inclined to elaborate on or shade the truth and skirt the law.

The study concluded with an assessment of the relationship between Trump's personality profile and his leadership behavior in office. This assessment was guided by Immelman's (2017) profile and leadership style predictions for the Trump presidency, which were compared with our assessment of the personality profile and leadership style of U.S. president Donald J. Trump in office (Immelman & Griebie, 2020). The comparison revealed a high degree of consistency between Trump's pre-inaugural (Immelman, 2016, 2017) and post-inaugural (Immelman & Griebie, 2020) profiles. The largest difference between the profiles was equivocal evidence of incipient Distrusting and Erratic tendencies emerging during Trump's time in office.

Immelman and Griebie (2020) provided empirical evidence validating Immelman's (2017) pre-inaugural predictions of the general tenor of the Trump presidency. The consistency (i.e., temporal stability) of Trump's pre- and post-inaugural profiles affirms the predictive and criterion-related validity of the MIDC-based assessment procedure and the utility of personality profiling as a basis for predicting political behavior in high-level executive leadership positions.

### **Self-Perpetuating Personality Tendencies Reflected in Leadership Style**

Early life experiences have lasting impacts on how an individual interprets and experiences the world. As noted by Millon (2011), "Every current behavior is a perpetuation, then, of the past, a continuation and intrusion of these inner stimulus traces. . . . they guide, shape, or distort the character of current events. Not only are they ever present, then, but they operate insidiously to transform new stimulus experiences in line with past" (p. 110). The following paragraphs summarize Millon's theoretical perspective on the self-perpetuating tendencies of each of the four personality patterns relevant to Trump. Understanding which self-perpetuating

processes are likely guiding an individual's perception based on their primary personality patterns is important when assessing an individual's potential leadership style, because these processes are directly related to the stability of personality. An individual's self-perpetuating personality tendencies are formed early in life and thus have implications for the ability to project or predict leadership behavior on the basis of ingrained personality traits.

### ***Ambitious Pattern***

A politician's leadership style in office can be anticipated by examining the three self-perpetuating processes of highly ambitious personalities as outlined by Millon (2011), namely, illusion of competence, lack of self-controls, and social alienation.

**Illusion of Competence.** First, highly ambitious personalities believe in their own superiority and consequently spend little time actively obtaining commensurate achievements. Eventually, these individuals may recognize they lack definitive skills, which further immobilizes the ambitious individual as they strive to maintain their superior self-image. Maintaining a façade over a long period of time proves difficult and these individuals can become depressed or irritable (Millon, 2011, p. 414).

**Lack of Self-Controls.** Second, highly ambitious individuals seem to scorn reality and thus lack common self-controls. Narcissists, according to Millon, "are neither disposed to stick to objective facts nor to restrict their actions within the boundaries of social custom or cooperative living" (Millon, 2011, p. 415). Highly ambitious individuals' actions can quickly border on social deviance as they continue to experience false beliefs. Outside parties may become critical of the highly ambitious individual's actions which leads to the individual retreating deeper into their construction of reality.

**Social Alienation.** Third, highly ambitious personalities believe other people are less intelligent and untrustworthy, so when an outside source questions their intentions these individuals see no reason to consider the other person's opinions. Unable to understand reciprocity, these individuals struggle to maintain normal social relationships, which leads to further agitation and subsequently increased fantasizing. "Thus, rather than question the correctness of their own beliefs, they assume that the views of others are at fault. Hence, the more disagreement they have with others, the more convinced they are of their own superiority and the more isolated and alienated they are likely to become" (Millon, 2011, p. 415).

### ***Dominant Pattern***

Personality by definition denotes a coherent pattern of deeply ingrained characteristics and inclinations that are deeply etched, cannot be easily eradicated, and pervade every facet of life experience. A politician's leadership style in office can be anticipated by examining the three self-perpetuating processes of highly aggressive personalities as outlined by Millon (2011), namely, perceptual and cognitive distortions, demeaning of affection and cooperative behavior, and creating realistic antagonisms.

**Perceptual and Cognitive Distortions.** First, highly dominant personalities have the persistent expectation that others will be devious or hostile, leading them repeatedly to distort others' incidental remarks or actions as signifying malicious intent. Minor slights may be magnified in their own mind as major insults. They may perceive threat where little or none exists and have difficulty changing their outlook and attitudes (Millon, 1996, p. 653). As a result, advisers may be reluctant to express their unvarnished opinion for fear of retaliation.

**Demeaning of Affection and Cooperative Behavior.** Second, highly dominant personalities devalue sentimentality, tendermindedness, and cooperativeness. They are

“hardheaded realists” who tend to lack sympathy for the weak and “are often contemptuous of those who express compassion and concern for the underdog.” By restraining positive feelings and repudiating cooperative behaviors, “these personalities provoke others to withdraw from them” (Millon, 1996, pp. 653–654).

**Creating Realistic Antagonisms.** Third, highly dominant personalities “evoke counterhostility, not only as an incidental consequence of their behaviors and attitudes but because they intentionally provoke others into conflict.” They “enjoy tangling with others to prove their strength and test their competencies and powers,” which may prompt intense animosity in others (Millon, 1996, p. 654).

### ***Outgoing Pattern***

A politician’s leadership style in office can be anticipated by examining the self-perpetuating process of highly outgoing personalities as outlined by Millon (2011), namely, external preoccupations, massive repression, and superficial social relationships.

**External Preoccupations.** First, highly outgoing personalities show little capacity for internal reflection. They seem to “show little integration and few well-examined reflective processes that intervene between perception and action; behaviors are emitted before they have been connected and organized by the operation of memory and thought” (Millon, 2011, p. 367). Preoccupation with external events further solidifies the highly outgoing personality’s dependence upon others as they form few solidified personal ideals.

**Massive Repression.** One consequence of “hyperalertness to external stimuli” is the tendency of highly ambitious personalities to suppress their internal thoughts and emotions (Millon, 2011, p. 368). This tendency can exacerbate these individuals’ co-dependency as they lack the ability to adequately learn from their mistakes and feel the full extent of their emotions.

**Superficial Social Relationships.** A second consequence of the highly outgoing personality's tendency to focus on external events is the occurrence of unsatisfying and short-lived relationships. Highly outgoing individuals tend to become easily bored. This trait in concert with their desire for acceptance and outside stimulation causes them to frequently seek out new friendships. Highly outgoing individuals are adept at making friends and cultivating connections yet if they find themselves between relationships they may "engage in a frantic search for stimulation and approval or become dejected and forlorn" (Millon, 2011, p. 368).

### ***Dauntless Pattern***

A politician's leadership style in office can be anticipated by examining the three self-perpetuating processes of highly dauntless personalities as outlined by Millon (2011), namely, distrustful anticipations, vindictive interpersonal behavior, and weak intrapsychic controls.

**Distrustful Anticipations.** First, highly dauntless personalities have persistent expectations of frustration and hostility. These personalities are deeply suspicious and actively seek to protect themselves from the cruelty and exploitation of others even when nothing suggests impending manipulation. According to Millon, "Unfortunately, these self-protective attitudes set into motion a vicious circle of suspiciousness and distrust, provoking others to react in a similarly cool and rejecting fashion" (Millon, 2011, 469).

**Vindictive Interpersonal Behavior.** Secondly, highly dauntless personalities derive pleasure from the mistreatment and misfortune of others. Convinced of their own mistreatment, these individuals seek to exploit and dominate others. They live in an isolated world with no genuine loyalty and consistently seek to intimate others though constant terrorization wins them few close friends and often mirrors back to these individuals' feelings of resentment and an environment of rejection (Millon, 2011, p. 469).

**Weak Intrapsychic Controls.** Third, highly dauntless personalities have difficulty controlling or justifying their threatening behavior: “As feelings surge forth, they are vented more or less directly; thus, we see the low tolerance, the impulsive rashness, the susceptibility to temptation, and the acting out of emotions so characteristic of this pattern” (Millon, 2011, p. 469). These individuals internally justify their deviant behavior by creating rationalizations centered on the values of toughness and justice. They proceed through life expecting cruelty and rejection and thus are prone to inflating even the most innocent remarks from others as having hostile intent.

### **Leadership Trait Analysis**

As noted earlier, Hermann (2003), identified seven traits that are useful for assessing leadership style on the basis of linkages among leaders’ personal characteristics and their political behavior. Following is a rational-intuitive attempt to develop linkages between Trump’s Millon-based personality profile and Hermann’s key political leadership traits.

#### ***Belief in the Ability to Control Events***

At-a-distance personality assessment of Donald Trump (Immelman & Griebie, 2020) revealed a highly ambitious, dominant personality pattern, suggesting a leader who is tough and self-assured, acts as though entitled, expects others to recognize his special qualities, enjoys the power to direct others, has an internal locus of control, and is skilled at manipulating others to consolidate his power and consummate his policy objectives.

These empirical findings are supported by news reports that suggest Trump possesses supreme self-confidence and strong belief in his ability to control events, as documented in the following news report excerpts (emphasis added):

Trump's seeming naïveté about the severity of "this Russia thing" and **his confidence** that any repercussions would be absorbed by his underlings isn't merely evidence of his willful ignorance and stunted capacity for critical thinking. (Cauterucci, 2019)

Trump is effectively being constrained, a novel and uncomfortable position for a businessman, a reality star and an unlikely politician who **resists all kinds of control**. All his life, Trump has **called the shots** and he's always **forced others to respond** to his impulses. It's not surprising he's frustrated when the shoe is on the other foot. (Collinson, 2019)

### *Need for Power and Influence*

As a highly dominant personality, Donald Trump should be expected to have a strong power motive.

News reports during Trump presidency reveal a strong power motive and Trump's willingness to do whatever is necessary to achieve and consolidate power, as documented in the following excerpts (emphasis added):

"His **obsession with domination and power** have prompted Trump to tell lies more promiscuously than ever since he became President, and to engage in ever more unfounded and aggressive responses aimed at anyone he perceives stands in his way," [*Art of the Deal* ghostwriter] Schwartz wrote. (Glasser, 2020)

In Trump, we have a frightening Venn diagram consisting of three circles: The first is extreme present hedonism [associated with the MIDC Outgoing and Dauntless patterns]; the second, narcissism [associated with the MIDC Ambitious pattern]; and the third, **bullying behavior** [associated with the MIDC Dominant

pattern]. These three circles overlap in the middle to create an impulsive, immature, incompetent person who, when in the position of ultimate power, **easily slides into the role of tyrant**, complete with family members sitting at his proverbial “ruling table.” (Dodes, Gilligan, Sheehy, Sword, & Zimbardo, 2017)

### *Self-Confidence*

At-a-distance personality assessment of Donald Trump (Immelman & Griebie, 2020) revealed a highly ambitious personality pattern, suggesting a leader who is self-confident, acts as though entitled, and expects others to recognize his special qualities.

Media reports support the inference that Trump demonstrates a high level of self-confidence as president. This confidence is most directly substantiated by Trump’s own self-reports:

“You know, people don’t understand. I went to an Ivy League college. I was a nice student. I did very well. **I’m a very intelligent person.** (Borchers, 2017)

Mr. Trump has hit back against Mr. Wolff’s account, claiming on Twitter to be a “**very stable genius**” whose “two greatest assets have been mental stability and being, like, **really smart.**” (Trump’s mental health, 2018)

### *Conceptual Complexity*

Donald Trump’s dominant primary personality pattern provides suggestive evidence that he is predisposed to holding strong beliefs that he vigorously defends, with an attendant predisposition to be inflexible and closed-minded, dogmatic clinging to preconceived ideas, beliefs, and values. This tendency is reinforced by a highly distinctive outgoing pattern, which is associated with an unreflective, superficial cognitive style characterized by flightiness in reasoning or thinking. Outgoing leaders are predisposed to avoid introspective thought, instead



focusing on practical, concrete matters. They are not paragons of deep thinking or self-reflection and tend to speak and write in impressionistic generalities. Moreover, they are poor integrators of experience, which results in scattered learning, difficulty in learning from mistakes, and a pattern of exercising poor judgment. (Immelman & Griebie, 2020).

These empirical findings are supported by several news reports from which a low degree of conceptual complexity may be inferred (emphasis added):

That Trump comes to this view **instinctively rather than intellectually**, that his personal diplomacy is bumbling and naïve, that other U.S. actors are ramping up hostility to Russia that Trump would like to dampen, merely cloud the strategic arguments. (Watson, 2018)

They stem from Trump's **unwillingness to ponder the consequences of his actions** in countries that he doesn't understand. (Kaplan, 2018)

And he [Trump] is so narcissistic and **unreflective** that he is completely **incapable of learning from his mistakes**. (Wehner, 2020)

### ***Task vs. Relationship Focus***

Donald Trump's dominant, controlling primary personality pattern provides suggestive evidence that he is predisposed to taking charge and enjoying the power to direct others in task-oriented fashion. For that reason, Trump's leadership orientation was projected as follows in 2017:

Given his supreme self-confidence and high dominance, Trump will likely be more *goal directed* than relationship oriented. As a task-oriented leader, Trump will not permit the maintenance of good relations to stand in the way of goal achievement. This orientation will be offset to some extent by Trump's outgoing

tendencies which, in addition, will also prime him to place a high premium on loyalty among his advisers and members of his administration. (Immelman, 2017).

Those observations during Trump's 2016 presidential campaign are supported by news reports during his presidency, as documented in the following excerpts (emphasis added):

Trump doesn't appear to make heartfelt connections with anyone, **nor to value relationships beyond the extent to which they serve his immediate self-interest.** Turnover in his administration — 85% in the first 32 months — dwarfs that of his five most recent predecessors for their entire first terms. Trump treats even his relationships with family members as transactional. (Schwartz, 2020)

From the start of his ascension to power, **Mr. Trump has presented himself as someone who seeks conflict, not conciliation,** a fighter, not a peacemaker.

(Baker, 2020)

### ***Ingroup Bias and Distrust of Others***

Based on his personality profile (Immelman & Griebie, 2020), Donald Trump is relatively high on distrust of others. Ingroup bias is more difficult to rate, because it cannot be directly inferred from Trump's personality profile; however, this tendency was quite transparent throughout his presidential campaign and presidency.

News articles published during the Trump's presidency made frequent references to Trump's distrustful nature, as documented in the following excerpts (emphasis added):

“[Trump] came to office with an almost pathological **distrust** of others and an irresistible impulse to attack any perceived threat,” said Jonathan Turley, a law

professor at George Washington University who testified against impeachment last year before the House Judiciary Committee. (Baker & Haberman, 2020a) [Barbara Res, Trump’s top construction executive in the 1980s, was quoted as saying] “**He doesn’t trust anybody, except his family.** That’s why [Trump’s ex-wife] Ivana was involved in everything and why now his children are too.” (Fischer, 2018)

***Composite Profile: Donald Trump’s Leadership Style as a Function of Responsiveness to Constraints, Openness to Information, and Motivation***

Following Hermann (2003), Donald Trump’s location on the various trait dimensions may be employed to develop a composite leadership trait profile.

Trump is classified as (a) high in the belief he can control events and in the need for power, indicating he is highly likely to challenge constraints; (b) low in conceptual complexity and high in self-confidence, with self-confidence conspicuously higher than conceptual complexity, suggesting he is closed to incoming contextual information; (c) high in task focus, denoting that his attention is more centered around the problem rather than on maintaining relationships; and (d) high in ingroup bias but comparatively low in distrust of others, leading to a focus on dealing with threats and solving problems, though recognizing that there are certain international arenas where cooperation with others and building relationships is possible.

As a leader who challenges constraints, is closed to information, and is motivated primarily by a problem focus, Trump fits Hermann’s profile of the *expansionistic* leadership style — a role orientation whose attention is focused on expanding one’s power and influence. Expansionistic leaders typically have an interest in gaining more control over people, resources, or territory (Hermann, 1987, p. 168).

Trump's *view of the world* is likely characterized by a perception of the world as "divided into 'us' and 'them,' each intent on improving its conditions at the expense of the other" and a belief that "conflict is inherent to functioning in the international system" (Hermann, 1987, p. 168). Although the international system is essentially a zero-sum game, according to Hermann (2003) expansionist leaders "recognize that it is bounded by a specified set of international norms," but "even so, adversaries are perceived as inherently threatening and confrontation is viewed to be ongoing as [these] leaders work to limit the threat and enhance their countries' capabilities and relative status" (p. 200).

As an expansionistic leader, Trump's *personal political style* would be characterized as "directive and manipulative in dealing with others," a "wariness of others' moves," and a tendency "to keep one step ahead of those considered the enemy" (Hermann, 1987, p. 169).

Finally, the *foreign policy* of expansionistic leaders is generally focused on issues of security and status"; their behavior is often "hostile in tone"; they "favor low-commitment actions"; are "not averse to using [the] enemy as a scapegoat on which to blame problems"; and "espouse short-term, immediate change in the international system" (Hermann, 1987, p. 169).

### **Conclusion**

The congruence between Trump's predicted leadership style (Immelman 2017) and his documented behavior in office (Immelman & Griebie, 2020) provides evidence for Immelman's (2003) "generative conceptual model for assessing personality and political performance" (see Figure 1). Much of this model is beyond the scope of the current investigation, yet the present study serves as the preliminary step in a larger project in which Immelman will seek to elaborate the strategic and tactical performance modalities outlined by Millon (1990, 2011). The analysis of Trump's hypothesized developmental background utilizing Millon (2011), in conjunction with

informant data gathered from Mary Trump's (2020) biography of Donald Trump revealed linkages among an individual's biogenic factors and early experiential history and their subsequent personality patterns and leadership style.

Millon (2011) proposed that parental hostility leaves children predisposed to either acquire an *avoidant* personality or a *sadistic* personality; Mary Trump (2020) claims Fred Sr. possessed both antisocial and sadistic personality traits and his early brutality resulted in his eldest sons adopting these primary personalities: Fred Jr. became avoidant whereas Donald was socialized to be dominant. This connection provides evidence for the importance of the "developmental causal analysis" component of Immelman's (2003) model as well as the "structural personality attributes" component as Trump's (2020) description of Donald Trump's early life offers a glimpse into the formation of his object representations that persisted throughout his life and ultimately were manifested in his aggressive leadership style.

The personality profile of Donald Trump was constructed using the Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria (MIDC; Immelman, 2015) and this profile accounts for the *structural and functional personality attributes* in Immelman's (2003) personality-in-politics model; an individual's expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, and self-image are all determined based on the collection of psychodiagnostically relevant data synthesized into a comprehensive personality profile across the entire matrix of the person.

Many high-level leaders rise through ranks to obtain their ultimate position of political power; thus the *experiential filters* component of an individual's leadership style is key to predicting how an individual's personality might contribute to their strategic and tactical political performance in terms of decision-making and leadership style. The years spent rising to power allow leaders to acquire appropriate role-related behaviors. Trump is an anomaly in that he

became president of the United States without prior political experience. Nonetheless, this component of Immelman's generative model still applies. Trump's experience of leading the Trump Organization in domineering fashion evidently transposed into his eventual presidential leadership style.

Parallels can also be made between Trump's unobstructed rise to leadership within the Trump Organization and his unusual accession to the presidency. The *strategic performance modalities* in Immelman's (2003) generative model are key to assessing personality and political performance. The strategic performance modalities aspect of the model is indirectly related to Millon's (2011) developmental causal analysis, in which he explains how early infantile reinforcement patterns can influence an individual's position on the evolutionary polarities of passivity–activity, other–self orientation, and pain-avoidance–pleasure-seeking that provide the conceptual underpinnings of Millon's taxonomy of personality styles. The development of these strategic performance modalities early in life contributes significantly to how a leader can be expected to react to conflict and how leaders will likely pursue their goals. Trump's impulsive presidential style can be attributable at least in part to his active pleasure-oriented outgoing personality style. Following Millon (2011), Trump's impulsive leadership style likely began developing during infancy due to exposure to an irregular attachment style, which fits the description of the president's early life outlined by Mary Trump (2020) in which she describes Trump's father as largely abusive, his mother absent and plagued by mental health issues, and most childcare provided by a nanny, older siblings, and a domineering grandmother.

Millon (2011) also touches on some of the *tactical performance modalities* posited in Immelman's (2003) model. The situational constraints aspect of Immelman's (2003) model is a key component of political leadership styles. Immelman and Griebie (2020) comparison of

Trump's pre- and post-inauguration MIDC profiles revealed suggestive, equivocal evidence of incipient Distrusting/suspicious and Erratic/unstable tendencies emerging during Trump's time in office. The emergence of those tendencies is indicative of the impact of situational variables on the expression of personal dispositions (i.e., person–situation interaction). For example, the political pressure of feeling assailed by a hostile media, complicated by a global pandemic that threatened his reelection prospects could potentially have contributed to the emergence of these maladaptive traits.

As biological beings it is necessary to understand that the biophysical and physiological workings of the human brain play a large role in the manifestation of personality and behavior. Those elements, as well as an individual's intrapsychic processes, are more difficult to assess, yet tactical performance modalities — which Millon (2011) originally developed to serve as a guide to conducting psychotherapy congruent with clients' underlying personality patterns — remain crucial components of an individual's personality and subsequent political leadership style and performance. This component must be included in a complete taxonomy of personality and political performance and offers a productive avenue of exploration for future research as more becomes known about the neurobiological substrates of personality styles and leadership traits.

Immelman's (2003) model (see Figure 1) provides a framework for understanding the diversity of biological substrates and psychological experience that provide the underpinnings of distinctive political leadership styles. Because of the fluidity of this model, it can be employed both to project an individual's leadership style based on their personality profile or, conversely, to infer a leader's personality profile from their observed leadership traits. To make this taxonomy increasingly comprehensive, a component comprising an individual's impression

management techniques as well as public reception could be added as a leader does not truly exist without constituents. An leader's favored impression management techniques can be inferred from their personality attributes and is related to that individual's strategic performance modalities as well as situational constraints, so a module devoted to understanding an individual's impression management style might best fit as a moderating variable between experiential filters and strategic performance modalities in Figure 1.

Because leadership behaviors are assumed to be embedded in personality, the profile constructed by Immelman and Griebie (2020) can be connected to the contemporary theories of political leadership outlined earlier in this thesis. Simonton (2009) averred that his Intellectual Brilliance factor predicted presidential success. Though the present study did not specifically assess Trump's presidential IQ or Openness to Experience, those attributes can be inferred from Trump's personality profile. Immelman (2016) reported that normal variants of the Outgoing pattern are highly correlated with the five-factor model's Extraversion factor and moderately correlated with its Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience factors, whereas normal variants of Trump's other primary and secondary personality patterns — the Dominant, Ambitious, and Dauntless patterns — are all uncorrelated with the five-factor model's Openness to Experience factor. Based on the absence of and meaningful correlation between Trump's primary personality patterns and Openness to Experience, Trump is unlikely to be high on Intellectual Brilliance as defined by Simonton (2009). Similarly, the profile created by Immelman and Griebie (2020) can be applied to the CIP leadership style model proposed by Mumford (2006). Based on Trump's elevated Outgoing and Ambitious patterns we can expect Trump's leadership behavior to best fit Mumford's *charismatic* style, which relates back to Simonton (1988) and confirms Immelman's (2017) prediction, in which he asserted, "From



Simonton's perspective, Trump's MIDC elevations on the Outgoing, Ambitious, and Dominant scales imply a 'charismatic' leadership style, which conceptually corresponds to the 'Big Five' Extraversion factor."

The current case study cannot validate the neurobiological substrates of Trump's personality composite, because Trump is inaccessible for structural or functional brain imaging; however, based on Trump's profile and published research on the underlying neurobiology of personality traits we can infer the neurobiological substrates of Trump's personality traits. Within the DSM the 10 recognized personality disorders are further broken into three clusters: Cluster A: the "odd, eccentric" cluster; Cluster B: the "dramatic, emotional erratic" cluster; and Cluster C: the "anxious, fearful" cluster." An examination of Trump's profile suggests that his primary and secondary patterns (with the exception of his dominant pattern, whose pathological variant, sadistic, is not listed in *DSM-5*) all are the normal, generally adaptive variants of Cluster B personality disorders. This suggests Trump's impulsivity and difficulty regulating his emotions likely has a neurobiological etiology. Siever & Weinstein (2009) suggest the emotional instability characteristic of Cluster B personality disorders results from "excessive limbic reactivity in gabaminergic/glutamatergic/cholinergic circuits, resulting in an increased sensitivity or reactivity to environmental emotional stimuli" (p. 361).

We have a fairly reliable way of verifying Trump's childhood development using Mary Trump's (2020) biography. Analyzing Donald Trump's developmental background using his niece's unauthorized biography revealed an abundance of evidence for a developmental history congruent with each of Trump's primary personality patterns as reported by Immelman and Griebie (2020). Mary Trump (2020) subjectively revealed a developmental environment most consistent with the establishment of all three of Donald Trump's primary ambitious, dominant,

and outgoing patterns and inferred hereditary predisposition to a dauntless personality pattern. Though it is difficult to objectively rank-order which traits are most important to Donald Trump's leadership style, arguably the developmental history outlined by Mary Trump (2020) reveals the most evidence for Trump's three primary patterns, with the most support for the dominant pattern, followed closely by the outgoing pattern and then the ambitious pattern. Mary Trump's (2020) analysis also provides some evidence for a developmental history congruent with the development of Trump's secondary dauntless pattern. Although the MIDC assessment is descriptive with predictive implications for leadership, analysis of the developmental background serves as a validity check for the profile. The profile created by Immelman and Griebie (2020) verifies the experiential history outlined by Trump (2020) and thus highlights the importance of embedding an understanding of an individual's personality into any leadership projection model.

When assessing the usefulness of a personality-in-politics model in contemporary society it is also important to consider how such a model takes into account variations between the way biological males and biological females tend to behave due to both evolutionary and learned differences as well as the way the political behavior of male and female leaders are perceived by the general public.

A possible deficiency of Immelman's model is the potential for female leaders to be incorrectly assessed as overly aggressive or dominant because of ingrained cultural expectations of female submissiveness and warmth. As more women emerge into positions of leadership it is important to note that biological males and females may employ slightly different leadership styles based both on their underlying biology as well as interaction strategies they have learned throughout their lives. Thus, a potential further development of this project could include

examining differences in the predictive utility of Immelman's (2003, 2005) personality-in-politics model when used to project leadership style and role orientation in domestic politics and foreign relations of both male and female leaders.

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## Appendix A

### Margaret Hermann's Leadership Trait Analysis

Margaret Hermann (2002) defines leadership style as “the ways in which leaders relate to those around them, whether constituents, advisers, or other leaders — how they structure interactions and the norms, rules, and principles they use to guide such interactions” (p. 5).

According to Hermann (2002), “political leaders face several dilemmas in effecting policy: (a) how to maintain control over policy while still delegating authority ... to other actors in the government; and (b) how to shape the policy agenda when situations are being defined and problems as well as opportunities are being perceived and structured by others in the political system” (p. 4).

Understanding this quandary is important with respect to the assessment of leadership style; as stated by Hermann (2002), “The particular leadership style that leaders adopt can affect the manner in which they deal with these dilemmas and, in turn, the nature of the decision-making process” (pp. 4–5).

Based on studies in the 1980s and 1990s of 122 leaders from 48 countries, spanning the years 1945–1999 — including members of cabinets, revolutionary leaders, legislative leaders, leaders of opposition parties, and terrorist leaders in addition to 87 heads of state — Hermann (2002), identified a set of leadership styles built around the answers to three questions:

(a) How do leaders react to political constraints in their environment — do they respect or challenge such constraints? (b) How open are leaders to incoming information — do they selectively use information or are they open to information directing their response? (c) What are the leaders' reasons for seeking their positions — are they driven by an internal focus of attention within themselves or by the relationships that can be formed with salient constituents? (p. 5)

Hermann (2002) further argues that the answers to these three questions indicate “whether the leader is going to be generally sensitive or insensitive to the political context” and “the degree to which he or she will want to control what happens or be an agent for the viewpoints of others” — answers that “combine to suggest a particular leadership style” (p. 5).

#### **Responsiveness to Political Constraints (Beliefs)**

Evaluating leaders' responsiveness to political constraints hinges on determining the relative importance to them of exerting control and influence over the environment in which they find themselves and the constraints that environment imposes, versus adapting to the situation and being open to responding to the demands of domestic and international constituencies and circumstances (Hermann, 2002, pp. 5–6).

***Leaders That Challenge Constraints***

According to Hermann (2002), research has shown that leaders who are predisposed to challenging constraints are more intent on meeting a situation head-on, achieving quick resolution to an issue, being decisive, and dealing forcefully with the problem of the moment. Their personal characteristics are highly predictive of their responses to events because constraints are viewed as obstacles but not insurmountable. To facilitate maintaining direction over events, such leaders work to bring policymaking under their control (p. 6).

***Leaders Responsive to Context***

According to Hermann (2002), research has shown that leaders who are more responsive to the context are more empathetic to their surroundings; interested in how relevant constituents view events and in seeking their support; more open to bargaining, trade-offs, and compromise; and more likely to focus on events on a case-by-case basis. Because constraints set the parameters for action for such leaders, their personal characteristics suggest the degree of support and closure they will need from the environment before making a decision and where that support will be sought. Flexibility, political timing, and consensus building are viewed as important leadership tools (p. 6).

**Openness to Information (Decision Style)**

Hermann (2002) states that the kinds of information sought in making a decision is shaped by whether the leader has a well-formulated vision or agenda framing how data are perceived and interpreted, versus more open-minded interest in studying the situation before choosing a response (pp. 6–7).

***Leaders with an Agenda***

Leaders with an agenda seek information that reinforces a particular point of view and surround themselves with people supportive of their predispositions. Being less open to information they tend to act as advocates, intent on finding information that supports their definition of the situation and overlooking disconfirmatory evidence; their attention is focused on persuading others of their position (Hermann, 2002, p. 7).

***Leaders Open to Information***

Leaders more sensitive to the political environment want to know what is attainable and feasible in the present context and are interested in the expert opinion of advisers highly attuned to important constituencies. Leaders more open to information are essentially cue-takers, both defining the problem and identifying a position by checking what important others are advocating and doing. Notably, such leaders are interested in information both *discrepant* and *supportive* of the options on the table at the moment, seeking political insights into who is supporting what and with what degree of intensity (Hermann, 2002, p. 7).

### **Task versus Relationship Orientation (Motives)**

A survey of the literature exploring motivation in political leaders suggests a variety of needs and incentives relevant to leadership emergence in politics, according to Hermann (2002), who notes that motives indicate what is important to leaders and what drives them to act.

Political leaders are driven, in general, either by an *internal* focus — a particular problem or cause, an ideology, a specific set of interests — or by the desire for *external* feedback from those in their environment — acceptance, approval, support, status, acclaim, or power (Hermann, 2002, pp. 7–8).

#### ***Internally Driven (Task Orientation)***

Internally driven leaders are pushed to act by ideas and images they believe and advocate. For them, solving problems and achieving causes are highly salient; thus, mobilization and effectiveness feature prominently in movement toward their goal (i.e., task orientation) (Hermann, 2002, p. 8).

#### ***Externally Incentivized (Relationship Orientation)***

Leaders motivated by a desired relationship with important others (i.e., a socioemotional orientation) are pulled into action by forces outside themselves. For them, persuasion and marketing are central to achieving their goal (Hermann, 2002, p. 8).

### **Aggregating the Three Stylistic Components: Leadership Style**

Knowledge about how leaders (a) react to constraints, (b) process information, and (c) are motivated to deal with their political environment provides us with data on their leadership style (Hermann, 2002, p. 8).

#### **Using Trait Analysis to Assess Leadership Style**

According to Hermann (2002), seven traits have been found to be particularly useful in assessing leadership style on the basis of linkages among leaders' personal characteristics and their political behavior:

(1) the belief that one can influence or control what happens, (2) the need for power and influence, (3) conceptual complexity (the ability to differentiate things and people in one's environment), (4) self-confidence, (5) the tendency to focus on problem solving and accomplishing something versus maintenance of the group and dealing with others' ideas and sensitivities, (6) an individual's general distrust or suspiciousness of others, and (7) the intensity with which a person holds an ingroup bias. (p. 10)

These seven traits provide information that is relevant to assessing how political leaders [1] respond to the constraints in their environment, [2] process information, and [3] are motivated

to act. Knowledge about the degree to which leaders believe that they can influence what happens and their need for power suggests whether they will challenge or respect the constraints that they perceive in any setting in which they find themselves. Assessing leaders' conceptual complexity and self-confidence helps us determine how open they will be to information. And measuring the extent of their ingroup bias, general distrust of others, and tendency to prefer problem-solving functions to those involving group maintenance assists us in learning what motivates leaders (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 10).

Following is a description of how the seven traits in question relate to the three broad types of personal characteristics that impact political behavior.

### **Question 1: Does the Leader Respect or Challenge Constraints?**

Political leaders who are *high* in their belief that they can control what happens and in the need for power have been found to challenge the constraints in their environments, to push the limits of what is possible. These leaders are in charge and they know what should happen. Moreover, they are skillful both directly and indirectly in getting what they want (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, pp. 11–12).

Leaders who are *low* in these two traits appear to respect, or at the least accede, to the constraints they perceive in their environments and to work within such parameters toward their goals. Building consensus and achieving compromise are important skills in their minds for a politician to have and to exercise (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 12).

Leaders who are *moderate* on both these traits have the ability of moving either toward challenging or toward respecting constraints depending on the nature of the situation; they will be driven by their other characteristics and what they believe is called for by the context (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 12).

But what if a leader is high on one trait but low to moderate on the other? Leaders who are *high in the belief that they can control events but low in need for power* will take charge of what happens and challenge constraints but they will not do as well in reading how to manipulate the people and setting behind the scenes to have the desired influence. Such leaders will not be as successful in having an impact as those high in both traits. They will be too direct and open in their use of power, signaling others on how to react without really meaning to (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 12).

And what about the leaders who are *low in belief they can control events but high in need for power*? These individuals will also challenge constraints, but they will be more comfortable doing so behind the scenes, in an indirect fashion rather than out in the open. Such leaders are especially good in settings where they are the “power behind the throne,” where they can pull the strings but are less accountable for the result (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 12).

### ***Belief in One's Own Ability to Control Events***

The belief in one's own ability to control events is a view of the world in which leaders perceive some degree of control over the situations they find themselves in; there is a perception that individuals and governments can influence what happens. It is assumed that when leaders take responsibility for planning or initiating an action, they believe that they have some control over what happens. The focus here is on actions proposed or taken by the leader or a group with whom he or she identifies (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, pp. 13–14).

*Leaders who believe that they can influence what happens* in the world are generally more interested and active in the policy-making process. Those who are high in this trait will want to maintain control over decision making and implementation to ensure that things, indeed, do happen. After all, if they are not involved, something may go awry. Thus, such leaders are likely to call subordinates to check on what they are doing, to make surprise visits to places where policy is being implemented, and to be interested in meeting with other leaders face-to-face to see how far they are willing to go. Leaders high in this belief are less likely to delegate authority for tasks and are likely to initiate activities and policies rather than wait for others to make suggestions. They are often “running ideas up the flagpole to see who salutes them.” In some sense this trait has aspects of a self-fulfilling prophecy. Leaders who believe that they can affect what happens are more likely to initiate and oversee activities to ensure that policies are enacted; they are more likely to take charge because they perceive they can influence events. Moreover, because such leaders are so sure they can have an impact on the world, they are less prone to compromise or to work out a deal with others. Once they decide, they exude confidence in their decision — they know what should be done (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, pp. 14–15),

*Leaders who are low in the belief that they can control what happens* tend to be more reactive to situations, waiting to see how the situation is likely to play out before acting. They are less likely to take the initiative, preferring instead to let others take responsibility for anything too daring and out of the ordinary. Such leaders want to participate and lead in contexts where there is at least a realistic chance of success. They are willing to delegate authority, hoping others may have more luck than they seem to have in influencing outcomes. As a result, such leaders are also able to shift the blame when something goes wrong. Unlike their counterparts who think they can affect their external environments, these leaders do not shoulder responsibility and move on but are quick to accuse others of making it difficult for them to act. For political leaders who do not believe they can control what happens, fear of failure may supersede and crowd out their sense of timing (Hermann, 2002, p. 15).

### ***Need for Power and Influence***

Need for power indicates a concern for establishing, maintaining, or restoring one's power or, in other words, the desire to control, influence, or have an impact on other persons or groups. Indicators of a need for power include (1) proposing or engaging in a strong, forceful action such as an assault or attack, a verbal threat, an accusation, or a reprimand; (2) giving advice or assistance when it is not solicited; (3) attempting to regulate the behavior of another person or group; (4) trying to persuade, bribe, or argue with someone else, where the object is not

to reach agreement or avoid disagreement; (5) endeavoring to impress or gain fame with an action; and (6) exhibiting a concern with one's reputation or position (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, pp. 15–16).

**High Need for Power.** When need for power is high, leaders work to manipulate the environment to have control and influence and to appear a winner. They are good at sizing up situations and sensing what tactics will work to achieve their goals. Indeed, they are highly Machiavellian, often working behind the scenes to ensure their positions prevail. Leaders high in need for power are generally daring and charming — the dashing hero. However, they have little real regard for those around them or for people in general. In effect, other people and groups are viewed as instruments for the leader's ends; guile and deceit are perceived as part of the game of politics. Such leaders set up rules to ensure conformity to their ideas — rules that can change abruptly if the leader's goals or interests change. At first followers are beguiled by leaders who are high in the power motive because they are able to produce results and are charismatic, but the “bloom often leaves the rose” over time as such leaders exploit their followers and their goals diverge from what the people want or feel they need. Leaders high in need for power will test the limits before adhering to a course of action, bartering and bargaining up until the last moment in order to see what is possible and what the consequences will be of pushing further toward their goals. These leaders are more skillful in such negotiations when they can interact directly with those involved; without face-to-face interaction, such leaders can misjudge the assumptions the other party is making and how far they are willing to go (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, pp. 16–17).

**Low Need for Power.** When need for power is low, leaders have less need to be in charge; they can be one among several who have influence. It is perfectly okay with them that others receive credit for what happens. Indeed, empowering others is important for such a leader. They are willing to sacrifice their own interests for those of the group because in their view what is good for the group is, in truth, good for them. Leaders low in need for power enable their followers to feel strong and responsible by empowering them to act as emissaries and expand the group or the group's assets. Through this process these leaders engender high morale in their followers and a sense of team spirit and goal clarity. Such leaders also have a sense of justice. They deal with people evenhandedly based on the norms of the group; they play no favorites so people know where they stand and what will happen if they violate the norms. Their intent is to build a relationship of trust with their followers and a sense of shared responsibility and accountability for what happens. In effect, these leaders become the agent for the group, representing their needs and interests in policymaking (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 17).

## **Question 2: Is the Leader Open or Closed to Contextual Information?**

Political leaders tend to differ in their degree of openness to contextual information based on their levels of *self-confidence* and *conceptual complexity*. Hermann (2002) notes that these two traits interrelate to form a leader's self–other orientation. The self–other orientation indicates how open the leader will be to input from others in the decision-making process and from the political environment in general (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, pp. 17–18).

Leaders who are *higher on conceptual complexity than on self-confidence* are open; they are generally more pragmatic and responsive to the interests, needs, ideas, and demands of others. Such leaders are generally those who get elected in local and state elections in the U.S. They are sensitive to situational cues and act based on what they sense is acceptable under current conditions. They appear to others to be open and to listen. These leaders are able to get others to do things because they seem interested in what happens to these others and concerned about helping them. Such leaders are more likely to organize collegial decision structures which allow for a free give and take and, thus, to maximize the contextual information they can have about the opinions and needs of those around them. These leaders deal with problems and events on a case-by-case basis (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 18).

Leaders who are *higher on self-confidence than on conceptual complexity* tend to be closed; they are ideologues — principled and driven by causes. These leaders know what is right and what should happen and set about to persuade others of the appropriateness of their course of action. Such leaders are fairly unresponsive or insensitive to cues from the environment. Instead they reinterpret the environment to fit their view of the world. Moreover, they are not above using coercive or devious tactics to ensure that their views are adopted by a group. Indeed, they are highly active on behalf of their cause, eagerly pursuing options they believe will succeed. These leaders are more likely to organize the decision-making process in a hierarchical manner in order to maintain control over the nature of the decision. They generally do not win any “most popular” leader contests but are usually admired for what they can do (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 18).

Leaders who are *high on both self-confidence and on conceptual complexity* tend to be open; they are more strategic, focusing their attention on what is possible and feasible at any point in time. Their high self-confidence facilitates having patience in the situation and taking their time to see what will succeed. These leaders will combine the best qualities of both these characteristics — a sense of what they want to do but the capability to check the environment to see what will work. Interestingly, this type of leader is less likely to be elected in democratic systems, perhaps because their behavior seems to the outside observer and interested constituent to be erratic and opportunistic. If one knows the goals and political contexts of such leaders, their decisions and actions become more logical. Without this knowledge, however, they may seem indecisive and chameleon-like in their behavior (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 19).

Leaders who are *low on both self-confidence and on conceptual complexity* are likely to be closed, reflecting the views of those around them and inclined to rather easily lock onto a position that appear to have a high likelihood of success. These leaders may be drawn to politics to compensate for low self-esteem. They are easy targets for groups that seek someone who will tenaciously advocate for a particular position in exchange for influence and authority, however tenuous and fleeting the assignation may be. These leaders may evidence some of the signs of narcissism, relishing the spotlight, pushing for even more extreme moves than the group may perceive are necessary, and being preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited success (Hermann, 2002, p. 19).



Following is a description of how the traits of self-confidence and conceptual complexity may be assessed.

### *Self-Confidence*

Self-confidence indicates one's sense of self-importance — an individual's image of his or her ability to cope adequately with objects and persons in the environment. Stimuli from the environment are mediated by a person's sense of self. Because people tend to develop their self-confidence as a result of evaluating themselves in comparison with others (social comparison) and their experiences, this trait often becomes the frame of reference for positioning oneself in a particular context (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, pp. 20–21).

**High Self-Confidence.** Leaders whose self-confidence is high are more immune to incoming information from the environment than those with low self-confidence. They are more generally satisfied with who they are and are not searching for more material on which to evaluate themselves and their behavior. Such leaders are not subject to the whims of contextual contingencies. They are neither the victims of events nor are they compelled to adapt to the nature of the situation — consistency in behavior is too important. Information is filtered and reinterpreted based on their high sense of self-worth (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 21).

**Low Self-Confidence.** Political leaders who are low in self-confidence are easily buffeted by the “contextual winds.” Without a well-developed sense of who they are, such leaders tend to continually seek out information from the environment in order to know what to do and how to conform to the demands of the circumstances in which they find themselves. Input from others about what they are thinking and feeling is critical to knowing how to act in any situation. Thus, the behavior of these individuals often appears highly inconsistent, matched as it is to the nature of the setting rather than to the needs and desires of the individual. To compensate for feelings of inadequacy, these leaders seek to become the agents, representatives, or delegates of political groups that can help to enhance their self-confidence (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, pp. 21–22)

### *Conceptual Complexity*

Conceptual complexity is the degree of differentiation an individual shows in describing or discussing other people, places, policies, ideas, or things. The more conceptually complex individual can see varying reasons for a particular position, is willing to entertain the possibility that there is ambiguity in the environment, and is flexible in reacting to objects or ideas. In the opposite manner, the more conceptually simple individual tends to classify objects and ideas into good–bad, black–white, either–or dimensions; has difficulty in perceiving ambiguity in the environment; and reacts rather inflexibly to stimuli (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 22),

In coding for conceptual complexity, the focus is on particular words — words that suggest the speaker can see different dimensions in the environment as opposed to words that indicate the speaker sees only a few categories along which to classify objects and ideas. Words

that are suggestive of high conceptual complexity are approximately, possibility, trend, and for example; words indicative of low conceptual complexity include absolutely, without a doubt, certainly, and irreversible (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 22).

**High Conceptual Complexity.** Political leaders who are high in conceptual complexity attend to a wider array of stimuli from their environment than do those who are low. Indeed, they have a sense that issues are more gray than black or white and seek a variety of perspectives through which to organize the situation in which they find themselves. These leaders remain highly attuned to contextual information since they do not necessarily trust their first response to an event. In the view of the conceptually complex leader, to understand a situation and plan what to do, one must gather a large array of information and seek out others' opinions on what should be done — there is always room for one more piece of data or perspective. Such leaders often take their time in making decisions and involve a large array of actors in the decision-making process. Flexibility is seen as the key to behavior (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 23).

**Low Conceptual Complexity.** Leaders who are low in conceptual complexity trust their intuition and often are willing to go with the option that presents itself first. Action is preferable to thinking, planning, or searching for more information. Contextual information is generally classified according to a set of stereotypes; because there is often a good fit between this categorization system and the conceptually less complex individual's orientation to politics, the world is highly ordered and structured. It is relatively easy to decide what to do since the individual's closed conceptual system evaluates and transforms information from any situation into the specified categories. Interpretation and consistency are the keys to behavior (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 23).

### **Question 3: Is the Leader Motivated by Problems or Relationships?**

The literature on politics suggests that leaders' reasons for assuming positions of authority have to do with them personally and with the relevance of groups (e.g., parties, juntas, ethnic groups, unions, administrations, cabinets, governments) with which they identify. As noted earlier, leaders are driven, in general, either by an internal focus (a problem) — a particular cause, an ideology, a specific set of interests — or by the desire for a certain kind of feedback from those in their environment (a relationship) — acceptance, approval, support, status, acclaim, or power. They also appear to become activated by needs to protect their own kind. Whereas leaders who are more closely identified with particular groups work to insure such entities' survival and often perceive the political world as full of potential threats to their groups, those who are less strongly tied to a specific group view the world as posing potential opportunities for working with others for mutual or their own benefit. Thus, in assessing motivation, we are interested in both why the leader sought office *and* their need to preserve and secure the group they are leading (and, in turn, their position) (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, pp. 23–24).

Determining problem- versus relationship motivation involves an examination of task focus and the related traits of ingroup bias and distrust of others. Task versus interpersonal focus provides information about the leader's reasons for seeking office; ingroup bias and distrust of

others assist in assessing identification with the group (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 24).

### ***Motivation for Leadership (Task vs. Relationship Focus)***

Leaders have been recognized as performing two distinct functions in groups — that of moving the group toward completion of a task (solving problems) and that of maintaining group cohesiveness and morale (building relationships). These two functions can be represented by a continuum with one extreme representing an emphasis on getting the task done and the other extreme an emphasis on group maintenance. Task focus suggests the relative emphasis a leader places on interactions with others in dealing with the problems that face the government, as opposed to focusing on the feelings and needs of relevant and important constituents. For leaders who emphasize the problem, moving the group (nation, government, ethnic group, religious group, etc.) forward toward a goal is their principal purpose for assuming leadership. For those who emphasize group maintenance and establishing relationships, retaining the loyalty of constituents and keeping morale high are the central functions of leadership. Charismatic leaders fall in the middle of this continuum, focusing on the problem when appropriate to the situation at hand and on building relationships when that seems more relevant. The charismatic leader senses when the context calls for each of these functions and focuses on it at that point in time (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, pp. 24–25).

In coding for task focus, attention is directed toward indicators of a focus on work, tasks, or instrumental activity, in contrast to a group-maintenance focus on concern for others' feelings, desires, and satisfaction (Hermann, 2002, pp. 25–26).

**Task Focus.** Leaders with a task focus are often “taskmasters,” always pushing a group to work on solving the particular problem of the moment. They tend to see the world in terms of problems and the role of the group as providing solutions to those problems. These leaders view people less as individuals than as instruments. Such leaders are constantly asking for movement on a project, about what is happening in the implementation of a solution to a problem, for options to deal with a problem. The substance, not the people involved, is the focus of attention. Leaders with a task emphasis are willing to sacrifice a high level of morale in the group for accomplishing the task. These leaders seek followers who share their interest in solving problems and who will work hard to implement any decisions that are made (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 26).

**Relationship Focus.** Leaders with a group-maintenance (relationship) focus want to keep the morale and spirit of their groups high. These leaders are generally sensitive to what the people want and need and try to provide it. They will only move the group toward its goals as fast as the members are willing to move. Camaraderie, loyalty, and commitment to the group are critical for leaders with this emphasis. The people in the group, not what needs to be done, are the focus of attention. These leaders work to foster a sense of collegiality and of participation in their groups. Members have the feeling that they are a part of what happens and their views are sought and listened to. For these leaders, mobilizing and empowering members are what leading is all about. As a result, they are likely to build teams and to share leadership, often seeking out

opinions about what is feasible among relevant constituencies at any point in time (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, pp. 26–27).

### ***Motivation Toward World (Ingroup Bias and Distrust of Others)***

Information about a leader's scores on ingroup bias and distrust of others provides us with evidence concerning whether the leader is driven by the threats or problems he or she perceives in the world or by the opportunities to form cooperative relationships. There is a growing literature that indicates a leadership's way of approaching the world can affect how confrontational their country is likely to be, how likely they are to take initiatives, and when they are likely to engage in economic sanctions and military interventions. This perspective has been referred to as the "statist approach" to foreign policy decision-making because it focuses on how leaders' needs to protect their own kind, when shared by an administration, can shape how conflictual or cooperative a government and country will be in the international arena. The research suggests that the more focused on protecting their own kind leaders are the more threats they are likely to perceive in the environment and the more focused they will be on confronting those responsible. Leaders who are not so intense in this desire are capable of seeing the possibilities for win-win agreements and building relationships in international politics because the world is viewed as containing opportunities as well as threats (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, pp. 27–28).

***Ingroup bias*** is a view of the world in which one's own group (social, political, ethnic, etc.) holds center stage. There are strong emotional attachments to this ingroup and it is perceived as the best. Moreover, there is an emphasis on the importance of maintaining ingroup culture and status. Any decisions that are made favor the ingroup. In coding for ingroup bias, the unit of analysis is reference to the particular leader's own group versus reference to the need to maintain group honor, identity, and security (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 29).

**High Ingroup Bias.** Political leaders high in ingroup bias are interested in maintaining the separate identity of their groups at all costs. They become quite concerned when other groups, organizations, governments, or countries try to meddle in what they perceive are the internal affairs of their group. The higher the score, the more isomorphic the leader and group become — the leader is the group; if anything happens to the group it happens to the leader and vice versa. Leaders with high scores for ingroup bias tend to see the world in "us" and "them" (friends and enemies) terms and to be quick to view others as challenging the status of their group. They are prone to only perceive the good aspects of their group and to deny or rationalize away any weaknesses. Thus, such leaders are often relatively late in becoming aware of problems that may undermine their authority (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, pp. 29–30).

Furthermore, leaders high in ingroup bias are likely to use external scapegoats — their perceived enemies — as the cause for all the group's (government's, country's) problems and to mobilize the support of their own population through this external threat. In the extreme, such leaders may keep their group indefinitely mobilized militarily to deal with the perceived external enemy. Leaders with high scores are likely to view politics as a zero-sum game where one group's gain is another's loss. Therefore, they must always be vigilant to make sure it is their

group that wins or doesn't lose. Such leaders will want to surround themselves with people who are also highly identified with the group, and loyal — selecting advisers on the basis of their sense of commitment to the group and its goals and interests (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 30).

**Low Ingroup Bias.** It is important to note that leaders low on ingroup bias are still patriots interested in maintaining their groups as a separate entity; however, they are less prone to view the world in black-and-white terms and more willing to categorize people as “us” or “them” based on the nature of the situation or problem at hand so that such categories remain fluid and ever changing depending on what is happening in the world at the moment. These leaders are less likely to use scapegoats as a means of dealing with domestic opposition; instead they may use interactions such as summit conferences and positive diplomatic gestures as strategies for tempering domestic discontent (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 30).

***Distrust of others*** involves a general feeling of doubt, uneasiness, misgiving, and wariness about others — an inclination to be suspicious of the motives and actions of others. In coding for distrust of others, the focus is on references to persons other than the leader and to groups other than those with whom the leader identifies. Does the leader distrust, doubt, have misgivings about, feel uneasy about, or feel wary about what these persons or groups are doing? Does the leader show concern about what these persons or groups are doing and perceive such actions to be harmful, wrong, or detrimental to him- or herself, an ally, a friend, or a cause important to the leader? (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, pp. 30–31).

**High Distrust.** Leaders high in distrust of others are predisposed to being suspicious about the motives and actions of others, particularly those others who are viewed as competitors for their positions or against their cause or ideology. These others can do nothing right; whatever they do is easily perceived as being motivated by ulterior motives and designs. In its extreme, distrust of others becomes paranoia in which there is a well-developed rationale for being suspicious of certain individuals, groups, or countries. Distrust of others often makes leaders not rely on others but do things on their own to prevent others from undermining or sabotaging what they want to achieve. Loyalty becomes a sine qua non of working with the leader and participating in policymaking. Such leaders often shuffle their advisers around, making sure none of them acquires a large enough power base to challenge the leader's authority. To some extent distrust of others may grow out of a zero-sum view of the world — when someone wins, someone else loses. The desire not to lose makes the leader question and assess others' motives. Leaders who distrust others tend to be hypersensitive to criticism — often seeing criticism where others would not — and they are vigilant, always on the lookout for a challenge to their authority (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 31).

**Low Distrust.** Some wariness of others' motives may be an occupational hazard of political leaders, but leaders low in distrust of others tend to put that into perspective. Trust and distrust are more likely to be based on past experience with the people involved and on the nature of the current situation. A person is distrusted based on more realistic cues and not in a blanket fashion (adapted with minor modifications from Hermann, 2002, p. 32).

### **Constructing a Profile**

Once the analyst has determined a leader's location on the various trait dimensions, it is feasible to use the preceding traits and leadership styles to develop a profile of the leader: (1) how the leader is likely to respond to constraints (classification on belief in the ability to control events and the need for power), (2) how open the leader is to information (classification on self-confidence and conceptual complexity), and (3) the nature of the leader's motivation for seeking authority and influence (classification on task focus and ingroup bias/distrust of others). By noting whether a leader is more likely to respect or to challenge constraints, to be more or less open to information, and to be more internally or externally driven, the analyst can ascertain the particular leadership style leader is likely to exhibit.

## Appendix B

### Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> “In the 1970s, after my grandfather had already been preferring and promoting Donald for years, the New York media picked up the baton and began disseminating Donald’s unsubstantiated hype” (Trump, 2020, p. 11).

<sup>2</sup> “As Donald grew up, he was forced to become his own cheerleader, first because he needed his father to believe he was a better and more confident son than Freddy was; then because Fred required it of him; and finally because he began to believe his own hype. Encouraged by his father, Donald eventually started to believe his own hype. By the time he was twelve, the right side of his mouth was curled up in an almost perpetual sneer of self-conscious superiority, and Freddy had dubbed him “the Great I-Am,” echoing a passage from Exodus he’d learned in Sunday school in which God first reveals himself to Moses” (Trump, 2020, p. 48).

“He no longer needed to talk himself up; his exaggerated assessment of himself was simultaneously fueled and validated by banks that were throwing hundreds of millions of dollars at him and a media that lavished him with attention and unwarranted praise” (Trump, 2020, pp. 137–138).

<sup>3</sup> “Though Donald’s fundamental nature hasn’t changed, since his inauguration the amount of stress he’s under has changed dramatically. It’s not the stress of the job, because he isn’t doing the job—unless watching TV and tweeting insults count. It’s the effort to keep the rest of us distracted from the fact that he knows nothing—about politics, civics, or simple human decency—that requires an enormous amount of work” (Trump, 2020, p. 199).

<sup>4</sup> “Over time that attitude—that he knew better—would become even more entrenched: as his knowledge base has decreased (particularly in areas of governing), his claims to know everything have increased in direct proportion to his insecurity, which is where we are now” (Trump, 2020, p. 133).

“When his ability to charm hit a wall, he deployed another ‘business strategy’: throwing tantrums during which he threatened to bankrupt or otherwise ruin anybody who failed to let him have what he wanted. Either way, he won” (Trump, 2020, p. 138).

“The distractions and sleights of hand benefited Donald enormously while giving him exactly what he wanted: the ongoing adulation of media that focused on his salacious divorce and alleged sexual prowess. If the media could deny reality, so could he” (Trump, 2020, p.138).

<sup>5</sup> “He continues to be protected from his own disasters in the White House, where a clique of loyalists applauds his every pronouncement or covers up his possible criminal” (Trump, 2020, p. 16).

“... hope this book will end the practice of referring to Donald’s ‘strategies’ or ‘agendas,’ as if he operates according to any organizing principles. He doesn’t. Donald’s ego has been and is a fragile and inadequate barrier between him and the real world, which, thanks to his father’s money and power, he never had to negotiate by himself. Donald has always needed to perpetuate the fiction my grandfather started that he is strong, smart, and otherwise extraordinary, because

facing the truth—that he is none of those things—is too terrifying for him to contemplate” (Trump, 2020, p. 17).

“Donald takes any rebuke as a challenge and doubles down on the behavior that drew fire in the first place, as if the criticism is permission to do worse” (Trump, 2020, p.204).

<sup>6</sup> “He secretly approached two of my grandfather’s longest-serving employees, Irwin Durben, his lawyer, and Jack Mitnick, his accountant, and enlisted them to draft a codicil to my grandfather’s will that would put Donald in complete control of Fred’s estate, including the empire and all its holdings, after he died. Maryanne, Elizabeth, and Robert would effectively be at Donald’s financial mercy, dependent on his approval for the smallest transaction. . . . Donald’s attempt to wrest control of Fred’s estate away from him was the logical outcome of Fred’s leading his son to believe that he was the only person who mattered. Donald had been given more of everything; he had been invested in; elevated to the detriment of Maryanne, Elizabeth, and Robert (and even his mother) and at the expense of Freddy. In Donald’s mind, the success and reputation of the entire family rested on his shoulders. Given that, it makes sense in the end that he would feel he deserved not just more than his fair share but everything” (Trump, 2020, pp. 143–144)

<sup>7</sup> “Going forward, he refused to acknowledge or feel loss. (I never heard him or anyone else in my family speak about my great-grandfather) (Trump, 2020, p. 41) [Implies that Fred Sr. was an antisocial sadist.]

“That Fred would, by default, become the primary source of Donald’s solace when he was much more likely to be a source of fear or rejection put Donald into an intolerable position: being totally dependent on his father, who was also likely to be a source of his terror” (Trump, 2020, p. 26)

“The personality traits that resulted—displays of narcissism, bullying, grandiosity—finally made my grandfather take notice but not in a way that ameliorated any of the horror that had come before” (Trump, 2020, p. 26)

“... they also knew, if only on an unconscious level, that their father’s ‘love,’ as they experienced it, was entirely conditional” (Trump, 2020, p. 26).

“... place of those needs grew a kind of grievance and behaviors—including bullying, disrespect, and aggressiveness—that served their purpose in the moment but became more problematic over time. With appropriate care and attention, they might have been overcome. Unfortunately for Donald and everybody else on this planet, those behaviors became hardened into personality traits because once Fred started paying attention to his loud and difficult second son, he came to value them” (Trump, 2020, p. 27).

“With the benefit of a seven-and-a-half-year age difference, he had plenty of time to learn from watching Fred humiliate his older brother and Freddy’s resulting shame. The lesson he learned, at its simplest, was that it was wrong to be like Freddy: Fred didn’t respect his oldest son, so neither would Donald” (Trump, 2020, p. 42).

“Fred’s fundamental beliefs about how the world worked—in life, there can be only one winner and everybody else is a loser (an idea that essentially precluded the ability to share) and kindness is weakness—were clear. Donald knew, because he had seen it with Freddy, that failure to comply with his father’s rules was punished by severe and often public humiliation, so he continued to adhere to them even outside his father’s purview. Not surprisingly, his understanding of ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ would clash with the lessons taught in most elementary schools” (Trump, 2020, p. 43).



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“Nobody else would have bothered—Robert was so skinny and quiet that there was no sport in tormenting him—but Donald enjoyed flexing his power, even if only over his younger, smaller, and even thinner-skinned brother” (Trump, 2020, p. 44).

“One Christmas the boys received three Tonka trucks, which soon became Robert’s favorite toys. As soon as Donald figured that out, he started hiding them from his little brother and pretending he had no idea where they were” (Trump, 2020, p. 44).

“Going forward, he refused to acknowledge or feel loss. (I never heard him or anyone else in my family speak about my great-grandfather)” (Trump, 2020, p. 41). [Implies Fred Sr. was an antisocial sadist.]

“Donald unaltered. It’s weakening our ability to be kind or believe in forgiveness, concepts that have never had any meaning for him” (Trump, 2020, p. 15).

<sup>8</sup> “The only reason Donald escaped the same fate is that his personality served his father’s purpose. That’s what sociopaths do: They co-opt others and use them toward their own ends — ruthlessly and efficiently, with no tolerance for dissent or resistance. Fred destroyed Donald, too, but not by snuffing him out as he did Freddy; instead, he short-circuited Donald’s ability to develop and experience the entire spectrum of human emotion. By limiting Donald’s access to his own feelings and rendering many of them unacceptable, Fred perverted his son’s perception of the world and damaged his ability to live in it” (Trump, 2020, p. 42).

His [Donald Trump’s] cruelty serves, in part, as a means to distract both us and himself from the true extent of his failures. His cruelty is also an exercise of his power, such as it is. He has always wielded it against people who are weaker than he is or who are constrained by their duty or dependence from fighting back. Donald continues to exist in the dark space between the fear of indifference and the fear of failure that led to his brother’s destruction. It took forty-two years for the destruction to be completed, but the foundations were laid early and played out before Donald’s eyes as he was experiencing his own trauma. The combination of those two things—what he witnessed and what he experienced—both isolated and terrified him. The role that fear played in his childhood and the role it plays now can’t be overstated. And the fact that fear continues to be an overriding emotion for him speaks to the hell that must have existed inside the House six decades ago” (Trump, 2020, p. 202).

<sup>9</sup> “His cruelty serves, in part, as a means to distract both us and himself from the true extent of his failures. His cruelty is also an exercise of his power, such as it is. He has always wielded it against people who are weaker than he is or who are constrained by their duty or dependence from fighting back. Donald continues to exist in the dark space between the fear of indifference and the fear of failure that led to his brother’s destruction” (Trump, 2020, p. 202).

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“Every time you hear Donald talking about how something is the greatest, the best, the biggest, the most tremendous (the implication being that he made them so), you have to remember that the man speaking is still, in essential ways, the same little boy who is desperately worried that he, like his older brother, is inadequate and that he, too, will be destroyed for his inadequacy. At a very deep level, his bragging and false bravado are not directed at the audience in front of him but at his audience of one: his long-dead father” (Trump, 2020, p. 202).

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<sup>10</sup> “Donald came in with his kids and Rob’s stepson. With the exception of Eric, they were all teenagers, the boys tall and chubby and wearing suits. Donald went to sit on the chair by the TV, and Ivanka climbed on his lap. The boys started wrestling. Donald watched the action from his chair, kissing Ivanka or pinching her cheek. Every once in a while, he’d stick his foot out and kick whichever boy was being pinned to the floor. When they had been younger, Donald had wrestled with them—a fight that had basically consisted of his picking them up, throwing them on the ground, and kneeling on them until they cried uncle” (Trump, 2020, p.156).

“Why didn’t he take the novel coronavirus seriously? In part because, like my grandfather, he has no imagination. ... The simple fact is that Donald is fundamentally incapable of acknowledging the suffering of others. Telling the stories of those we’ve lost would bore him. Acknowledging the victims of COVID-19 would be to associate himself with their weakness, a trait his father taught him to despise. ... Perhaps most crucially, for Donald there is no value in empathy, no tangible upside to caring for other people. But he can never escape the fact that he is and always will be a terrified little boy” (Trump, 2020, pp. 209–210).

<sup>11</sup> “All behavior exhibited by infants and toddlers is a form of attachment behavior, which seeks a positive, comforting, response from a caregiver—a smile to elicit a smile, tears to prompt a hug. Even under normal circumstances, Fred would have considered any expression of that kind an annoyance, but Donald and Robert were likely even needier because they missed their mother and were actively distressed by her absence. The greater their distress, however, the more Fred rebuffed them (Trump, 2020, p. 25).

“Donald’s needs, which had been met inconsistently before his mother’s illness, were barely met at all by his father” (Trump, 2020, p. 25).

<sup>12</sup> “Gam asked him about his kids, if anything was new with him and Ivana. He didn’t have much to say; clearly bored, he left after ten minutes or so” (Trump, 2020, p. 132).

<sup>13</sup> “In order to understand what brought Donald—and all of us—to this point, we need to start with my grandfather and his own need for recognition, a need that propelled him to encourage Donald’s reckless hyperbole and unearned confidence that hid Donald’s pathological weakness and insecurities. // As Donald grew up, he was forced to become his own cheerleader, first because he needed his father to believe he was a better and more confident son than Freddy was; then because Fred required it of him; and finally because he began to believe his own hype, even as he paradoxically suspected on a very deep level that nobody else did” (Trump, 2020, p. 11).

“Fred’s monster—the only child of his who mattered to him—would ultimately be rendered unlovable by the very nature of Fred’s preference for him. In the end, there would be no love for Donald at all, just his agonizing thirsting for” (Trump, 2020, p. 14).

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<sup>16</sup> “The atmosphere of division my grandfather created in the Trump family is the water in which Donald has always swum, and division continues to benefit him at the expense of everybody else” (Trump, 2020, p. 15).

<sup>17</sup> “Fred destroyed Donald, too, but not by snuffing him out as he did Freddy; instead, he short-circuited Donald’s ability to develop and experience the entire spectrum of human emotion. By limiting Donald’s access to his own feelings and rendering many of them unacceptable, Fred perverted his son’s perception of the world and damaged his ability to live in it” (Trump, 2020, p. 43)

<sup>18</sup> “A large minority of people still confuse his arrogance for strength, his false bravado for accomplishment, and his superficial interest in them for charisma” (Trump, 2020, p. 44).

“Donald’s chiefs of staff are prime examples of this phenomenon. John Kelly, at least for a while, and Mick Mulvaney, without any reservations at all, would behave the same way—until they were ousted for not being sufficiently “loyal.” That’s how it always works with the sycophants. First they remain silent no matter what outrages are committed; then they make themselves complicit by not acting. Ultimately, they find they are expendable when Donald needs a scapegoat” (Trump, 2020, p.108).

“Donald’s need for affirmation is so great that he doesn’t seem to notice that the largest group of his supporters are people he wouldn’t condescend to be seen with outside of a rally. His deep-seated insecurities have created in him a black hole of need that constantly requires the light of compliments that disappears as soon as he’s soaked it in. Donald is not simply weak, his ego is a fragile thing that must be bolstered every moment because he knows deep down that he is nothing of what he claims to be. He knows he has never been loved. So he must draw you in if he can by getting you to assent to even the most seemingly insignificant thing: ‘Isn’t this plane great?’ Then he makes his vulnerabilities and insecurities your responsibility: you must assuage them, you must take care of him. Failing to do so leaves a vacuum that is unbearable for him to withstand for long. If you’re someone who cares about his approval, you’ll say anything to retain it. He has suffered mightily, and if you aren’t doing all you can to alleviate that suffering” (Trump, 2020, pp.197–198).

<sup>19</sup> “None of the Trump siblings emerged unscathed from my grandfather’s sociopathy and my grandmother’s illnesses, both physical and psychological, but my uncle Donald and my father, Freddy, suffered more than the rest” (Trump, 2020, pp. 11–12).

<sup>20</sup> “Nobody sent their sons to NYMA for a better education, and Donald understood it rightly as a punishment” (Trump, 2020, p. 50).

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<sup>21</sup> “Fred wielded the complete power of the torturer, but he was ultimately trapped in the circumstance of Freddy’s growing dependence due to his alcoholism and declining health as Freddy was tied to him (Trump, 2020, pp. 115–116).

<sup>22</sup> “‘They told me your mother won’t make it through the night,’ he said to his daughter. A little while later, as he was leaving for the hospital to be with his wife, he told her, ‘Go to school tomorrow. I’ll call you if there’s any change.’ She understood the implication” (Trump, 2020, p. 22)

“Donald’s problem was that the combative, rigid persona he developed in order to shield him from the terror of his early abandonment, along with his having been made to witness his father’s abuse of Freddy, cut him off from real human connection” (Trump, 2020, p. 51).

<sup>23</sup> “None of the Trump siblings emerged unscathed from my grandfather’s sociopathy and my grandmother’s illnesses, both physical and psychological, but my uncle Donald and my father, Freddy, suffered more than the rest” (Trump, 2020, p. 11).

“... she was the kind of mother who used her children to comfort herself rather than comforting them. She attended to them when it was convenient for her, not when they needed her to. Often unstable and needy, prone to self-pity and flights of martyrdom, she frequently put herself first. Especially when it came to her sons, she acted as if there were nothing she could do for them” (Trump, 2020, p. 40).

“The impact was especially dire for Donald and Robert, who at two and a half years and nine months old, respectively, were the most vulnerable of her children. ... The five kids were essentially motherless. Whereas Mary was needy, Fred seemed to have no emotional needs at all. In fact, he was a high-functioning sociopath. Although Having a sociopath as a parent, especially if there is no one else around to mitigate the effects, all but guarantees severe disruption in how children understand themselves, regulate their emotions, and engage with the world. Fred’s callousness, indifference, and controlling behaviors. All behavior exhibited by infants and toddlers is a form of attachment behavior, which seeks a positive, comforting response from the caregiver—a smile to elicit a smile, tears to prompt a hug. Even under normal circumstances, Fred would have considered any expressions of that kind an annoyance, but Donald and Robert were likely even needier because they missed their mother and were actively distressed by her absence. The greater their distress, however, the more Fred rebuffed them. By engaging in behaviors that were biologically designed to trigger soothing, comforting responses from their parents, the little boys instead provoked their father’s anger or indifference” (Trump, 2020, pp. 24–25).

“Because of the disastrous circumstances in which he was raised, Donald knew intuitively, based on plenty of experience, that he would never be comforted or soothed, especially when he most needed to be. There was no point, then, in acting needy. The rigid personality he developed as a result was a suit of armor that often protected him against pain and loss. But it also kept him from figuring out how to trust people enough to get close to them. He became bolder and more aggressive because he was rarely challenged or held to account by the only person in the world who mattered—his father. Mary couldn’t control him at all, and Donald disobeyed her at every turn. Any attempt at discipline by her was rebuffed. He talked back. He couldn’t ever admit he was wrong; he contradicted her even when she was right; and he refused to back down. He tormented his little brother and stole his toys. He refused to do his chores or anything else he was

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told to do. Perhaps worst of all to a fastidious woman like her, he was a slob who refused to pick up after himself no matter how much she threatened him” (Trump, 2020, pp. 48–49)

<sup>24</sup> “Whereas Mary was needy, Fred seemed to have no emotional needs at all. In fact, he was a high-functioning sociopath. Although having a sociopath as a parent, especially if there is no one else around to mitigate the effects, all but guarantees severe disruption in how children understand themselves, regulate their emotions, and engage with the world. Fred’s callousness, indifference, and controlling behaviors. All behavior exhibited by infants and toddlers is a form of attachment behavior, which seeks a positive, comforting response from the caregiver—a smile to elicit a smile, tears to prompt a hug. Even under normal circumstances, Fred would have considered any expressions of that kind an annoyance, but Donald and Robert were likely even needier because they missed their mother and were actively distressed by her absence. The greater their distress, however, the more Fred rebuffed them. by engaging in behaviors that were biologically designed to trigger soothing, comforting responses from their parents, the little boys instead provoked their father’s anger or indifference” (Trump, 2020, p. 25)

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<sup>26</sup> “The atmosphere of division my grandfather created in the Trump family is the water in which Donald has always swum, and division continues to benefit him at the expense of everybody else” (Trump, 2020, p. 15).

<sup>27</sup> “For Donald, lying was primarily a mode of self-aggrandizement meant to convince other people he was better than he actually was” (Trump, 2020, p. 40).

“For Donald and Robert, ‘needing’ became equated with humiliation, despair, and hopelessness” (Trump, 2020, p. 25).