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THE PERSONALITY PROFILE AND LEADERSHIP STYLE OF U.S. PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP IN OFFICE

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Abstract

The Personality Profile and Leadership Style of U.S. President Donald J. Trump in Office

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This paper presents the results of an indirect assessment, from the conceptual perspective of personologist Theodore Millon, of the personality of Donald J. Trump, 45th president of the United States, based solely on personality dynamics revealed by his political behavior in office.

Psychodiagnostically relevant data were collected from biographical sources and media reports of Trump's postinaugural political behavior from January 20, 2017 until July 2020 and synthesized into a personality profile using the Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria (MIDC), 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. 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 is 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.

Trump's executive **leadership style** in office has been bold, competitive, and self-assured (i.e., ambitious); tough and directive (i.e., dominant); impulsive and undisciplined (i.e., outgoing); and disruptively tradition-defying, with an inclination to shade the truth and skirt the law (i.e., dauntless).

Introduction

This paper reports the results of a psychodiagnostic case study of the political behavior of Donald J. Trump, 45th president of the United States, from his inauguration on January 20, 2017 until the completion of the study in July 2020. The present investigation is a follow-up study of then-candidate Trump conducted 2015–2016 during the 2016 presidential election cycle (Immelman, 2016).

Conceptually, the study is informed by Theodore Millon's (1969, 1986a, 1986b, 1990, 1991, 1994, 1996, 2003; Millon & Davis, 2000; Millon & Everly, 1985) model of personality as adapted (Immelman, 1993, 1998, 2002, 2003, 2005) for the study of personality in politics.

I employ the terms *personality* and *politics* in Fred Greenstein's (1992) narrowly construed sense. Politics, by this definition, "refers to the politics most often studied by political scientists — that of civil government and of the extra-governmental processes that more or less directly impinge upon government, such as political parties" and campaigns. Personality, as narrowly construed in [political psychology](#), "excludes political attitudes and opinions ... and applies only to nonpolitical personal differences" (p. 107).

Personality may be concisely defined as:

a complex pattern of deeply embedded psychological characteristics that are largely nonconscious and not easily altered, expressing themselves automatically in almost every facet of functioning. Intrinsic and pervasive, these traits emerge from a complicated matrix of biological dispositions and experiential learnings, and ultimately comprise the individual's distinctive pattern of perceiving, feeling, thinking, coping, and behaving. (Millon, 1996, p. 4)

Greenstein (1992) makes a compelling case for studying personality in government and politics: "Political institutions and processes operate through human agency. It would be remarkable if they were *not* influenced by the properties that distinguish one individual from another" (p. 124).

That perspective provides the context for the current paper, which presents an analysis of the personality of Donald Trump in office; compares and contrasts his personality as president with his personality profile derived from data collected before his election; and evaluates the accuracy of broad predictions, made prior to his inauguration, regarding his leadership style and executive performance as president (Immelman, 2017).

The methodology employed in this study involves the construction of a theoretically grounded personality profile derived from empirical analysis of biographical source materials (see Immelman, 2003, 2005, 2014).

A comprehensive review of Millon's personological model and its applicability to political personality has been provided elsewhere (e.g., Immelman, 1993, 2003, 2005; Immelman & Millon, 2003). Briefly, Millon's model encompasses eight attribute domains: expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object representations, and morphologic organization (see Table 1).

Table 1
Millon’s Eight Attribute Domains

Attribute	Description
Expressive behavior	The individual’s characteristic behavior; how the individual typically appears to others; what the individual knowingly or unknowingly reveals about him- or herself; what the individual wishes others to think or to know about him or her.
Interpersonal conduct	How the individual typically interacts with others; the attitudes that underlie, prompt, and give shape to these actions; the methods by which the individual engages others to meet his or her needs; how the individual copes with social tensions and conflicts.
Cognitive style	How the individual focuses and allocates attention, encodes and processes information, organizes thoughts, makes attributions, and communicates reactions and ideas to others.
Mood/temperament	How the individual typically displays emotion; the predominant character of an individual’s affect and the intensity and frequency with which he or she expresses it.
Self-image	The individual’s perception of self-as-object or the manner in which the individual overtly describes him- or herself.
Regulatory mechanisms	The individual’s characteristic mechanisms of self-protection, need gratification, and conflict resolution.
Object representations	The inner imprint left by the individual’s significant early experiences with others; the structural residue of significant past experiences, composed of memories, attitudes, and affects that underlie the individual’s perceptions of and reactions to ongoing events and serve as a substrate of dispositions for perceiving and reacting to life’s ongoing events.
Morphologic organization	The overall architecture that serves as a framework for the individual’s psychic interior; the structural strength, interior congruity, and functional efficacy of the personality system (i.e., ego strength).

Note. From *Disorders of Personality: DSM-IV and Beyond* (pp. 141–146) by T. Millon, 1996, New York: Wiley; *Toward a New Personology: An Evolutionary Model* (chapter 5) by T. Millon, 1990, New York: Wiley; and *Personality and Its Disorders: A Biosocial Learning Approach* (p. 32) by T. Millon and G. S. Everly, Jr., 1985, New York: Wiley. Copyright © 1996, © 1990, © 1985 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Adapted by permission of John Wiley & Sons, Inc. and Theodore Millon.

Method

Materials

The materials consisted of biographical sources and the personality inventory employed to systematize and synthesize diagnostically relevant information collected from the literature on Donald Trump.

Sources of data. Diagnostic information pertaining to Trump was collected from a broad array of more than 600 media reports that offered useful, diagnostically relevant psychobiographical information.

Personality inventory. The assessment instrument, the Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria (MIDC; Immelman, 2015), was compiled and adapted from Millon's (1969, 1986b; 1990, 1996; Millon & Everly, 1985) prototypal features and diagnostic criteria for normal personality styles and their pathological variants. Information concerning the construction, administration, scoring, and interpretation of the MIDC is provided in the Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria manual (Immelman, 2014).¹ The 12-scale (see Table 2) instrument taps the first five "noninferential" (Millon, 1990, p. 157) attribute domains previously listed in Table 1.

The 12 MIDC scales correspond to major personality patterns posited by Millon (1994, 1996), which are 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 these disorders are rooted, as described by Millon and Everly (1985), Millon (1994), Oldham and Morris (1995), and Strack (1997). Scales 1 through 8 (comprising 10 scales and subscales) have three gradations (a, b, c) yielding 30 personality variants, whereas Scales 9 and 0 have two gradations (d, e) yielding four variants, for a total of 34 personality designations, or types. Table 2 displays the full taxonomy.

Diagnostic Procedure

The diagnostic procedure, termed *psychodiagnostic meta-analysis*, can be conceptualized as a three-part process: first, an *analysis* phase (data collection) during which source materials are reviewed and analyzed to extract and code diagnostically relevant content; second, a *synthesis* phase (scoring and interpretation) during which the unifying framework provided by the MIDC prototypal features, keyed for attribute domain and personality pattern, is employed to classify the diagnostically relevant information extracted in phase 1; and finally, an *evaluation* phase (inference) during which theoretically grounded descriptions, explanations, inferences, and predictions are extrapolated from Millon's theory of personality based on the personality profile constructed in phase 2 (see Immelman, 2003, 2005, 2014 for a more detailed account of the procedure).

¹ Inventory and manual available to eligible professionals upon request.

Table 2
Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria: Scales and Gradations

Scale 1A:	Dominant pattern a. Asserting b. Controlling c. Aggressive (Sadistic; <i>DSM-III-R</i> , Appendix A)
Scale 1B:	Dauntless pattern a. Adventurous b. Dissenting c. Aggrandizing (Antisocial; <i>DSM-5</i> , 301.7)
Scale 2:	Ambitious pattern a. Confident b. Self-serving c. Exploitative (Narcissistic; <i>DSM-5</i> , 301.81)
Scale 3:	Outgoing pattern a. Congenial b. Gregarious c. Impulsive (Histrionic; <i>DSM-5</i> , 301.50)
Scale 4:	Accommodating pattern a. Cooperative b. Agreeable c. Submissive (Dependent; <i>DSM-5</i> , 301.6)
Scale 5A:	Aggrieved pattern a. Unpresuming b. Self-denying c. Self-defeating (<i>DSM-III-R</i> , Appendix A)
Scale 5B:	Contentious pattern a. Resolute b. Oppositional c. Negativistic (Passive-aggressive; <i>DSM-III-R</i> , 301.84)
Scale 6:	Conscientious pattern a. Respectful b. Dutiful c. Compulsive (Obsessive-compulsive; <i>DSM-5</i> , 301.4)
Scale 7:	Reticent pattern a. Circumspect b. Inhibited c. Withdrawn (Avoidant; <i>DSM-5</i> , 301.82)
Scale 8:	Retiring pattern a. Reserved b. Aloof c. Solitary (Schizoid; <i>DSM-5</i> , 301.20)
Scale 9:	Distrusting pattern d. Suspicious e. Paranoid (<i>DSM-5</i> , 301.0)
Scale 0:	Erratic pattern d. Unstable e. Borderline (<i>DSM-5</i> , 301.83)

Note. Equivalent *DSM* terminology and codes are specified in parentheses.

Results

The analysis of the data includes a summary of descriptive statistics yielded by the MIDC scoring procedure, the MIDC profile for Donald Trump, diagnostic classification of the subject, and the clinical interpretation of significant MIDC scale elevations derived from the diagnostic procedure.

Trump received 46 affirmative and 18 equivocal/affirmative endorsements (total = 64) on the 170-item MIDC. Judging from endorsement-rate deviations from the mean (see Table 3), data on Trump’s expressive behavior (14 endorsements) were most easily obtained and may be overrepresented in the data set, whereas data on his mood/temperament (6 endorsements) were most difficult to obtain and may be underrepresented in the data set.

Descriptive statistics for Trump’s MIDC ratings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3
MIDC Item Endorsement Rate by Attribute Domain for Donald Trump

Attribute domain	Diagnostic criteria (Items)	
	Present	Possible
Expressive behavior	14	17
Interpersonal conduct	10	13
Cognitive style	8	12
Mood/temperament	6	13
Self-image	8	9
Sum	46	64
Mean	9.2	12.8
Standard deviation	2.7	2.6

Trump’s MIDC scale scores are reported in Table 4. The same data are presented graphically in the profile displayed in Figure 1.

Table 4
MIDC Scale Scores for Donald Trump

Scale	Personality pattern	Lower	Upper
1A	Dominant: Asserting–Controlling–Aggressive (Sadistic)	22	28
1B	Dauntless: Adventurous–Dissenting–Aggrandizing (Antisocial)	14	22
2	Ambitious: Confident–Self-serving–Exploitative (Narcissistic)	22	30
3	Outgoing: Congenial–Gregarious–Impulsive (Histrionic)	20	26
4	Accommodating: Cooperative–Agreeable–Submissive (Dependent)	0	0
5A	Aggrieved: Unpresuming–Self-denying–Self-defeating (Masochistic)	0	0
5B	Contentious: Resolute–Oppositional–Negativistic (Passive-aggressive)	2	4
6	Conscientious: Respectful–Dutiful–Compulsive (Obsessive-compulsive)	0	0
7	Reticent: Circumspect–Inhibited–Withdrawn (Avoidant)	0	0
8	Retiring: Reserved–Aloof–Solitary (Schizoid)	0	0
	Subtotal for basic personality scales	80	110
9	Distrusting: Suspicious–Paranoid (Paranoid)	8	22
0	Erratic: Unstable–Borderline (Borderline)	5	13
	Full-scale total	93	145

The MIDC profile yielded by Trump’s raw scores is displayed in Figure 1.²

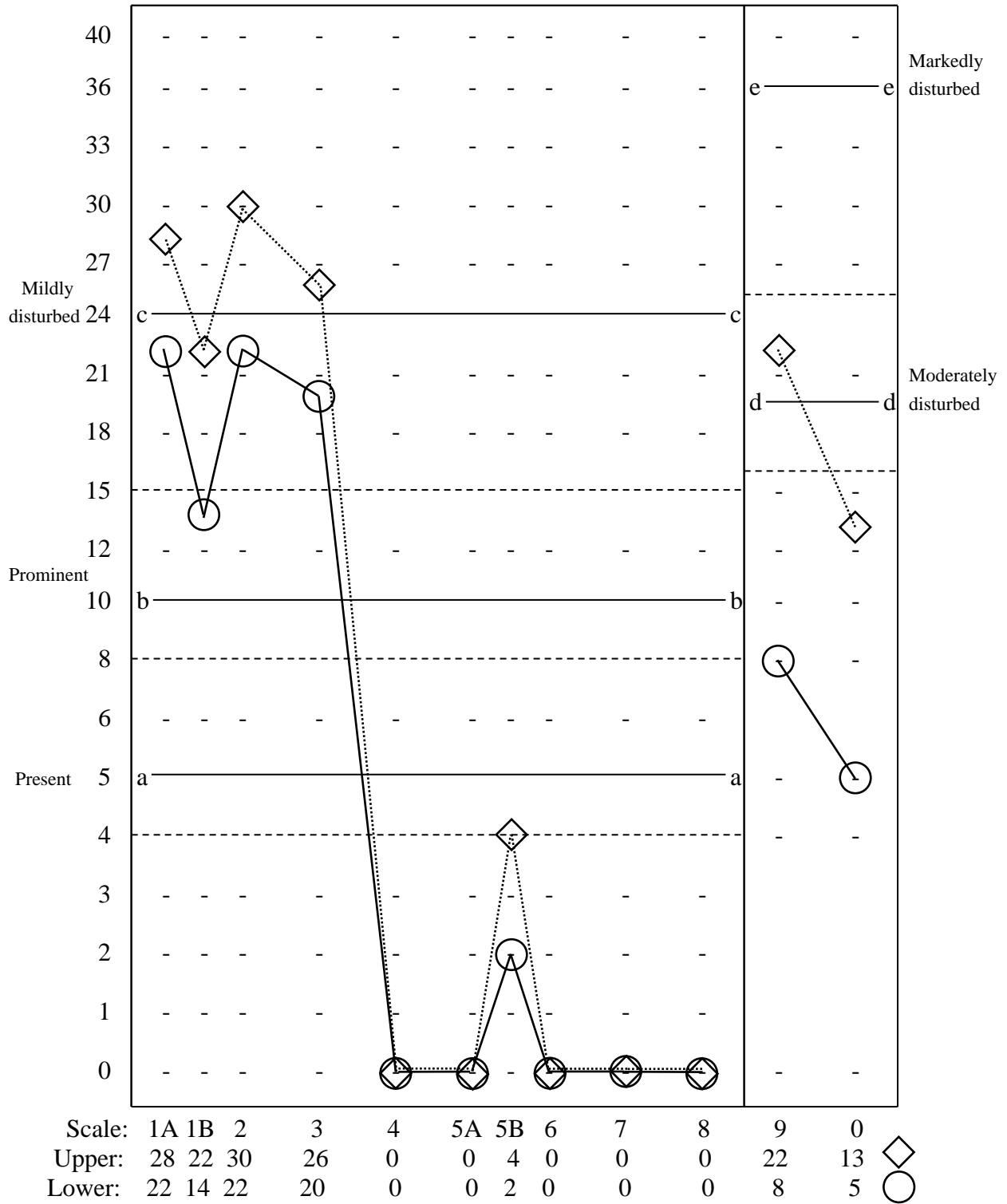
Trump’s primary scale elevations occurred on Scale 2 (Ambitious), with a score of 22; Scale 1A (Dominant), also with a score of 22; and Scale 3 (Outgoing), with a score of 20. All three scales are well within the *prominent* (10–23) range, approaching *mildly dysfunctional* (24–30). In addition, Trump obtained a secondary elevation on Scale 1B (Dauntless), with a score of 14, which is in the *prominent* (10–23) range. In addition, minor subsidiary tendencies were observed on Scale 5B (Contentious), Scale 9 (Distrusting), and Scale 10 (Erratic); however, the scale elevations did not meet the criteria for unequivocal psychodiagnostic significance.

In terms of MIDC scale gradation (see Table 2 and Figure 1) criteria, supplemented by clinical judgment, Trump was classified as primarily an Ambitious/self-serving (equivocally exploitative), Dominant/controlling (equivocally aggressive), and Outgoing/gregarious (equivocally impulsive) personality with secondary Dauntless/dissenting features.³

² Solid horizontal lines on the profile form signify cut-off scores between adjacent scale gradations. For Scales 1–8, scores of 5 through 9 signify the *presence* (gradation *a*) of the personality pattern in question; scores of 10 through 23 indicate a *prominent* (gradation *b*) variant; and scores of 24 to 30 indicate an exaggerated, *mildly dysfunctional* (gradation *c*) variation of the pattern. For Scales 9 and 0, scores of 20 through 35 indicate a *moderately disturbed* syndrome and scores of 36 through 45 a *markedly disturbed* syndrome. See Table 2 for scale names.

³ In each case, the label preceding the slash signifies the categorical personality pattern, whereas the label following the slash indicates the specific scale gradation, or personality type, on the dimensional continuum; see Table 2.

Figure 1. Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria: Profile for Donald Trump



Discussion

The discussion of the results examines Donald Trump's MIDC scale elevations from the perspective of Millon's (1994, 1996; Millon & Davis, 2000) model of personality, supplemented by the theoretically congruent portraits of Oldham and Morris (1995) and Strack (1997). The discussion concludes with a synthesis of the practical political implications of Trump's personality profile.

Few people exhibit personality patterns in "pure" or prototypical form; more often, individual personalities represent a blend of two or more primary orientations. With his highly elevated scores on Scale 2 (Ambitious), Scale 1A (Dominant), and Scale 3 (Outgoing), Trump emerged from the assessment as a blend of the *self-serving*, *controlling*, and *gregarious* types — prominent variants of respectively, the Ambitious, Dominant, and Outgoing patterns. The Millon Index of Personality Styles manual (Millon, 1994), employing the label *Asserting*, describes Ambitious personalities as bold, competitive, and self-assured individuals who easily assume leadership roles, expect others to recognize their special qualities, and often act as though entitled (p. 32). Dominant personalities — labeled *Controlling* — are described as tough, unsentimental, intimidating individuals talented in the powers of persuasion (p. 34). Outgoing personalities are described as 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, and become easily bored, especially when faced with repetitive and mundane tasks (pp. 31–32).

The interpretation of Trump's profile must also account for a secondary elevation in the *dissenting* range of Scale 1B (Dauntless). Millon (1994) describes Dauntless personalities as unconscientious, risk-taking individuals who tend to flout tradition, act in a notably autonomous fashion, dislike following the same routine day after day, sometimes act impulsively and irresponsibly, and are inclined to elaborate on or shade the truth and skirt the law (p. 33).

Scale 2: The Ambitious Pattern

The Ambitious pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive. At the well-adjusted pole are confident, socially poised, assertive personalities.⁴ Slightly exaggerated Ambitious features occur in personalities that are sometimes perceived as self-promoting, overconfident, or arrogant.⁵ In its most deeply ingrained, inflexible form, the Ambitious pattern manifests itself in extreme self-absorption or exploitative behavior patterns that may be consistent with a clinical diagnosis of narcissistic personality disorder.⁶

Normal, adaptive variants of the Ambitious pattern (i.e., confident and self-serving types) correspond to Oldham and Morris's (1995) *Self-Confident* style, Strack's (1997) *confident* style, and Millon's (1994) *Asserting* pattern. Millon's *Asserting* pattern is positively correlated with

⁴ Relevant to Donald Trump.

⁵ Relevant to Donald Trump.

⁶ Marginally applicable to Donald Trump.

the five-factor model's *Extraversion* and *Conscientiousness* factors and negatively correlated with its *Neuroticism* factor (Millon, 1994, p. 82). It is associated with "social composure, or poise, self-possession, equanimity, and stability" — a constellation of adaptive traits that in stronger doses shades into its dysfunctional variant, the narcissistic personality (Millon, 1994, p. 32). In combination with an elevated Outgoing (Scale 3) pattern (as in the case of Trump), it bears some resemblance to Simonton's (1988) *charismatic* executive leadership style.

Millon (1994) summarizes the Asserting (i.e., Ambitious) pattern as follows:

An interpersonal boldness, stemming from a belief in themselves and their talents, characterize[s] those high on the ... Asserting [Ambitious] scale. Competitive, ambitious, and self-assured, they naturally assume positions of leadership, act in a decisive and unwavering manner, and expect others to recognize their special qualities and cater to them. Beyond being self-confident, those with an ... [Ambitious] profile often are audacious, clever, and persuasive, having sufficient charm to win others over to their own causes and purposes. Problematic in this regard may be their lack of social reciprocity and their sense of entitlement — their assumption that what they wish for is their due. On the other hand, their ambitions often succeed, and they typically prove to be effective leaders. (p. 32)

Oldham and Morris (1995) offer the following portrait of the normal (*Self-Confident*) prototype of the Ambitious pattern:

Self-Confident [Ambitious] individuals stand out. They're the leaders, the shining lights, the attention-getters in their public or private spheres. Theirs is a star quality born of self-regard, self-respect, self-certainty — all those *self* words that denote a faith in oneself and a commitment to one's self-styled purpose. Combined with the ambition that marks this style, that ... self-regard can transform idle dreams into real accomplishment. ... Self-Confident [Ambitious] men and women know what they want, and they get it. Many of them have the charisma to attract plenty of others to their goals. They are extroverted and intensely political. They know how to work the crowd, how to motivate it, and how to lead it. (p. 85)

Strack (1997) provides the following description of the normal (*confident*) prototype of the Ambitious pattern, based on Millon's theory, empirical findings from studies correlating his Personality Adjective Check List (PACL; 1991) scales with other measures, and clinical experience with the instrument:

Aloof, calm, and confident, these personalities tend to be egocentric and self-reliant. They may have a keen sense of their own importance, uniqueness, or entitlement. Confident [Ambitious] individuals enjoy others' attention and may be quite bold socially, although they are seldom garish. They can be self-centered to a fault and may become so preoccupied with themselves that they lack concern and empathy for others. These persons have a tendency to believe that others share, or should share, their sense of worth. As a result, they may expect others to submit to their wishes and desires, and to cater to them. ... When feeling exposed or undermined, these individuals are frequently disdainful, obstructive, or vindictive. In the workplace, confident [Ambitious] persons like to take charge in an emphatic manner, often doing so in a way that instills confidence in others. Their self-assurance, wit, and charm often win them supervisory and leadership positions. (Adapted from Strack, 1997, pp. 489–490, with minor modifications)

Millon's personality patterns have well-established diagnostic indicators associated with each of the eight attribute domains of expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object-representations, and morphologic

organization. Millon's (1996) attribute domains accentuate the maladaptive range of the personality patterns in his taxonomy—in the case of the Ambitious pattern, the exploitative pole of the confident–self-serving–exploitative continuum. The major diagnostic features of the prototypal maladaptive variant of the Ambitious pattern are summarized below, along with “normalized” (i.e., de-pathologized; cf. Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 273–277) descriptions of the more adaptive variants of this pattern.

Expressive behavior. The core diagnostic feature of the expressive acts of Ambitious individuals is their *confidence*; they are socially poised, self-assured, and self-confident, conveying an air of calm, untroubled self-assurance. More exaggerated variants of the Ambitious pattern tend to act in a *conceited* manner, their natural self-assurance shading into supreme self-confidence, hubris, immodesty, or presumptuousness. They are self-promoting and may display an inflated sense of self-importance. They typically have a superior, supercilious, imperious, haughty, disdainful manner. Characteristically, though usually unwittingly, they exploit others, take them for granted, and frequently act as though entitled. The most extreme variants of this pattern are *arrogant*; they are self-serving, reveal a self-important indifference to the rights of others, and are manipulative and lacking in integrity. They commonly flout conventional rules of shared social living, which they view as naive or inapplicable to themselves. All variants of this pattern are to some degree self-centered and lacking in generosity and social reciprocity. (Millon, 1996, p. 405; Millon & Everly, 1985, pp. 32, 39)

Interpersonal conduct. The core diagnostic feature of the interpersonal conduct of Ambitious individuals is their *assertiveness*; they stand their ground and are tough, competitive, persuasive, hardnosed, and shrewd. More exaggerated variants of the Ambitious pattern are *entitled*; they lack genuine empathy and expect favors without assuming reciprocal responsibilities. The most extreme variants of this pattern are *exploitative*; they shamelessly take others for granted and manipulate and use them to indulge their desires, enhance themselves, or advance their personal agenda, yet contributing little or nothing in return. Ironically, the nerve and boldness of all variants of this pattern, rather than being clearly seen for what it is — impertinence, impudence, or sheer audacity — often conveys confidence and authority and evokes admiration and compliance from others. Indeed, these personalities are skilled at sizing up those around them and conditioning those so disposed to adulate, glorify, and serve them. (Millon, 1996, pp. 405–406; Millon & Everly, 1985, pp. 32, 39)

Cognitive style. The core diagnostic feature of the cognitive style of Ambitious individuals is their *imaginativeness*; they are inventive, innovative, and resourceful, ardently believing in their own efficacy. More exaggerated variants of the Ambitious pattern are cognitively *expansive*; they display extraordinary confidence in their own ideas and potential for success and redeem themselves by taking liberty with facts or distorting the truth. The most extreme variants of this pattern are cognitively *unconstrained*; they are preoccupied with self-glorifying fantasies of accomplishment or fame, are little constrained by objective reality or cautionary feedback, and deprecate competitors or detractors in their quest for glory. All variants of this pattern to some degree harbor fantasies of success or rationalize their failures; thus, they tend to exaggerate their achievements, transform failures into successes, construct lengthy and intricate justifications that inflate their self-worth, and quickly deprecate those who refuse to bend to or enhance their admirable sense of self. (Millon, 1996, p. 406; Millon & Everly, 1985, pp. 32, 39)

Mood/temperament. The core diagnostic feature of the characteristic mood and temperament of Ambitious individuals is their social *poise*; they are self-composed, serene, and optimistic, and are typically imperturbable, unruffled, and cool and levelheaded under pressure. More exaggerated variants of the Ambitious pattern are *insouciant*; they manifest a general air of nonchalance, imperturbability, or feigned tranquility. They characteristically appear coolly unimpressible or buoyantly optimistic, except when their narcissistic confidence is shaken, at which time either rage, shame, or emptiness is briefly displayed. The most extreme variants of this pattern are *exuberant*; they experience a pervasive sense of emotional well-being in their everyday life — a buoyancy of spirit and an optimism of outlook — except when their sense of superiority is punctured. When emotionally deflated, their air of nonchalance and imperturbability quickly turns to edgy irritability and annoyance. Under more trying circumstances, sham serenity may turn to feelings of emptiness and humiliation, sometimes with vacillating episodes of rage, shame, and dejection. All variants of this pattern to some degree convey a self-satisfied smugness, yet are easily angered when criticized, obstructed, or crossed. (Millon, 1996, p. 408; Millon & Everly, 1985, pp. 32, 39)

Self-image. The core diagnostic feature of the self-perception of Ambitious individuals is their *certitude*; they have strong self-efficacy beliefs and considerable courage of conviction. More exaggerated variants of the Ambitious pattern have an *admirable* sense of self; they view themselves as extraordinarily meritorious and esteemed by others, and have a high degree of self-worth, though others may see them as egotistic, inconsiderate, cocksure, and arrogant. The most extreme variants of this pattern have a *superior* sense of self. They view themselves as having unique and special qualities, deserving of great admiration and entitled to unusual rights and privileges. Accordingly, they often act in a pompous or grandiose manner, often in the absence of commensurate achievements. In high-level leadership positions, some of these individuals may exhibit a messianic self-perception; those failing to pay proper respect or bend to their will typically are treated with scorn and contempt. (Millon, 1996, p. 406)

Regulatory mechanisms. The core diagnostic features of the unconscious regulatory (i.e., ego-defense) mechanisms of Ambitious individuals are *rationalization* and *fantasy*; when their subjectively admirable self-image is challenged or their confidence shaken, they maintain equilibrium with facile self-deceptions, devising plausible reasons to justify their self-centered and socially inconsiderate behaviors. They rationalize their difficulties, offering alibis to put themselves in a positive light despite evident shortcomings and failures. When rationalization fails, they turn to fantasy to assuage their feelings of dejection, shame, or emptiness, redeem themselves, and reassert their pride and status. (Millon, 1996, p. 407)

Object representations. The core diagnostic feature of the internalized object representations of Ambitious individuals is their *contrived* nature; the inner imprint of significant early experiences that serves as a substrate of dispositions (i.e., templates) for perceiving and reacting to current life events consists of illusory and changing memories. Consequently, problematic experiences are refashioned to appear consonant with their high sense of self-worth, and unacceptable impulses and deprecatory evaluations are transmuted into more admirable images and percepts. (Millon, 1996, pp. 406–407)

Morphologic organization. The core diagnostic feature of the morphological organization of Ambitious individuals is its *spuriousness*; the interior design of the personality system, so to speak, is essentially counterfeit, or bogus. Owing to the misleading nature of their early experiences — characterized by the ease with which good things came to them — these individuals may lack the inner skills necessary for regulating their impulses, channeling their needs, and resolving conflicts. Accordingly, commonplace demands may be viewed as annoying incursions and routine responsibilities as pedestrian or demeaning. Excuses and justifications are easily mustered and serve to perpetuate selfish behaviors and exploitative, duplicitous social conduct. (Millon, 1996, pp. 407–408)

Scale 1A: The Dominant Pattern

The Dominant pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive. At the well-adjusted pole⁷ are strong-willed, commanding, assertive personalities. Slightly exaggerated Dominant features⁸ occur in forceful, intimidating, controlling personalities. In its most deeply ingrained, inflexible form,⁹ the Dominant pattern displays itself in domineering, belligerent, aggressive behavior patterns that may be consistent with a clinical diagnosis of sadistic personality disorder.

Normal, adaptive variants of the Dominant pattern (i.e., asserting and controlling types) correspond to Oldham and Morris's (1995) *Aggressive* style, Strack's (1997) *forceful* style, Millon's (1994) *Controlling* pattern, and the *managerial* segment of Leary's (1957) managerial–autocratic continuum. Millon's Controlling pattern is positively correlated with the five-factor model's *Conscientiousness* factor, has a more modest positive correlation with its *Extraversion* factor, is negatively correlated with its *Agreeableness* and *Neuroticism* factors, and is uncorrelated with its *Openness to Experience* factor (see Millon, 1994, p. 82). Thus, these individuals — though controlling and somewhat disagreeable — tend to be emotionally stable and conscientious. According to Millon (1994), Controlling (i.e., Dominant) individuals

enjoy the power to direct and intimidate others, and to evoke obedience and respect from them. They tend to be tough and unsentimental, as well as gain satisfaction in actions that dictate and manipulate the lives of others. Although many sublimate their power-oriented tendencies in publicly approved roles and vocations, these inclinations become evident in occasional intransigence, stubbornness, and coercive behaviors. Despite these periodic negative expressions, controlling [Dominant] types typically make effective leaders, being talented in supervising and persuading others to work for the achievement of common goals. (p. 34)

Oldham and Morris (1995) supplement Millon's description with the following portrait of the normal (*Aggressive*) prototype of the Dominant pattern:

While others may aspire to leadership, Aggressive [Dominant] men and women move instinctively to the helm. They are born to assume command as surely as is the top dog in the pack. Theirs is a

⁷ Relevant to Donald Trump.

⁸ Relevant to Donald Trump.

⁹ Marginally applicable to Donald Trump.

strong, forceful personality style, more inherently powerful than any of the others. They can undertake huge responsibilities without fear of failure. They wield power with ease. They never back away from a fight. They compete with the supreme confidence of champions. ... When put to the service of the greater good, the Aggressive [Dominant] personality style can inspire a man or woman to great leadership, especially in times of crisis. (p. 345)

Finally, Strack (1997) offers the following description of the normal (*forceful*) prototype of the Dominant pattern, based on Millon's theory, empirical findings from studies correlating his Personality Adjective Check List (PACL; 1991) scales with other measures, and clinical experience with the instrument:

Like confident [Ambitious] persons, forceful [Dominant] individuals can be identified by an inclination to turn toward the self as the primary source of gratification. However, instead of the confident [Ambitious] personality's internalized sense of self-importance, forceful [Dominant] people seem driven to prove their worthiness. They are characterized by an assertive, dominant, and tough-minded personal style. They tend to be strong-willed, ambitious, competitive, and self-determined. Feeling that the world is a harsh place where exploitiveness is needed to assure success, forceful [Dominant] individuals are frequently gruff and insensitive in dealing with others. In contrast to their preferred, outwardly powerful appearance, these individuals may feel inwardly insecure and be afraid of letting down their guard. In work settings, these personalities are often driven to excel. They work hard to achieve their goals, are competitive, and do well where they can take control or work independently. In supervisory or leadership positions, these persons usually take charge and see to it that a job gets done. (From Strack, 1997, p. 490, with minor modifications)

Millon's personality patterns have predictable, reliable, observable psychological indicators (expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object representations, and morphologic organization). Millon's (1996) attribute domains accentuate the maladaptive range of the personality patterns in his taxonomy — in the case of the Dominant pattern, the aggressive pole of the asserting–controlling–aggressive continuum. The diagnostic features of the Dominant pattern with respect to each of Millon's eight attribute domains are summarized below, along with “normalized” (i.e., de-pathologized; cf. Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 514–515) descriptions of the more adaptive variants of this pattern. Nonetheless, some of the designated traits may be less pronounced and more adaptive in the case of individuals for whom this pattern is less elevated.

Expressive behavior. The core diagnostic feature of the expressive acts of Dominant individuals is *assertiveness*; they are tough, strong-willed, outspoken, competitive, and unsentimental. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern are characteristically *forceful*; they are controlling, contentious, and at times overbearing, their power-oriented tendencies being evident in occasional intransigence, stubbornness, and coercive behaviors. When they feel strongly about something, these individuals can be quite blunt, brusque, and impatient, with sudden, abrupt outbursts of an unwarranted or precipitous nature. The most extreme variants of this pattern are *aggressive*; they are intimidating, domineering, argumentative, and precipitously belligerent. They derive pleasure from humiliating others and can be quite malicious. For this reason, people often shy away from these personalities, sensing them to be cold, callous, and insensitive to the feelings of others. All variants of this pattern tend to view tender emotions as a sign of weakness, avoid expressions of warmth and intimacy, and are suspicious of gentility, compassion, and kindness. Many insist on being seen as faultless; however, they invariably are

inflexible and dogmatic, rarely conceding on any issue, even in the face of evidence negating the validity of their position. They have a low frustration threshold and are especially sensitive to reproach or deprecation. When pushed on personal matters, they can become furious and are likely to respond reflexively and often vindictively, especially when feeling humiliated or belittled. Thus, they are easily provoked to attack, their first inclination being to dominate and demean their adversaries. (Millon, 1996, pp. 483, 487)

Interpersonal conduct. The core diagnostic feature of the interpersonal conduct of Dominant individuals is their *commanding* presence; they are powerful, authoritative, directive, and persuasive. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern are characteristically *intimidating*; they tend to be abrasive, contentious, coercive, and combative, often dictate to others, and are willing and able to humiliate others to evoke compliance. Their strategy of assertion and dominance has an important instrumental purpose in interpersonal relations, as most people are intimidated by hostility, sarcasm, criticism, and threats. Thus, these personalities are adept at having their way by browbeating others into respect and submission. The most extreme variants of this pattern are *belligerent*; they reveal satisfaction in intimidating, coercing, and humiliating others. Individuals with all gradations of this pattern frequently find a successful niche for themselves in roles where hostile and belligerent behaviors are socially sanctioned or admired, thus providing an outlet for vengeful hostility cloaked in the guise of social responsibility. (Millon, 1996, p. 484; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 32)

Cognitive style. The core diagnostic feature of the cognitive style of Dominant individuals is its *opinionated* nature; they are outspoken, emphatic, and adamant, holding strong beliefs that they vigorously defend. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern tend to be *dogmatic*; they are inflexible and closed-minded, lacking objectivity and clinging obstinately to preconceived ideas, beliefs, and values. The most extreme variants of this pattern are narrow-mindedly *bigoted*; they are socially intolerant and inherently prejudiced, especially toward envied or derogated social groups. Some of these individuals have a crude, callous exterior and seem coarsely unperceptive. This notwithstanding, all variants of this pattern are finely attuned to the subtle elements of human interaction, keenly aware of the moods and feelings of others, and skilled at using others' foibles and sensitivities to manipulate them for their own purposes. The more extreme variants of this pattern, in particular, are quick to turn another's perceived weaknesses to their own advantage — often in an intentionally callous manner — by upsetting the other's equilibrium in their quest to dominate and control. (Millon, 1996, pp. 484–485)

Mood/temperament. The core diagnostic feature of the characteristic mood and temperament of Dominant individuals is *irritability*; they have an excitable temper that they may at times find difficult to control. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern tend to be *cold* and unfriendly; they are disinclined to experience and express tender feelings and have a volatile temper that readily flares into contentious argument and physical belligerence. The most extreme variants of this pattern evince pervasive *hostility* and anger; they are fractious, mean-spirited, and malicious, with callous disregard for the rights of others. Their volcanic temper seems perpetually primed to erupt, sometimes into physical belligerence. More than any other personality type, people with this extreme variant of the Dominant pattern are willing to do harm and persecute others if necessary to have their way. All variants of this pattern are prone to anger and to a greater or lesser extent deficient in the capacity to share warm or tender feelings, to

experience genuine affection and love for another, or to empathize with the needs of others. (Millon, 1996, p. 486; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 32)

Self-image. The core diagnostic feature of the self-image of Dominant individuals is that they view themselves as *assertive*; they perceive themselves as forthright, unsentimental, and bold. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern recognize their fundamentally *competitive* nature; they are strong-willed, energetic, and commanding, and may take pride in describing themselves as tough and realistically hardheaded. The most extreme variants of this pattern perceive themselves as *powerful*; they are combative, viewing themselves as self-reliant, unyielding, and strong — hard-boiled, perhaps, but unflinching, honest, and realistic. They seem proud to characterize themselves as competitive, vigorous, and militantly hardheaded, which is consistent of their “dog-eat-dog” view of the world. Though more extreme variants may enhance their sense of self by overvaluing aspects of themselves that present a pugnacious, domineering, and power-oriented image, it is rare for these personalities to acknowledge malicious or vindictive motives. Thus, hostile behavior on their part is typically framed in prosocial terms, which enhances their sense of self. (Millon, 1996, p. 485; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 32)

Regulatory mechanisms. The core diagnostic feature of the regulatory (i.e., ego-defense) mechanisms of highly Dominant individuals is *isolation*; they are able to detach themselves emotionally from the impact of their aggressive acts upon others. In some situations — politics being a case in point — these personalities may have learned that there are times when it is best to restrain and transmute their more aggressive thoughts and feelings. Thus, they may soften and redirect their hostility, typically by employing the mechanisms of *rationalization*, *sublimation*, and *projection*, all of which lend themselves in some fashion to finding plausible and socially acceptable excuses for less than admirable impulses and actions. Thus, blunt directness may be rationalized as signifying frankness and honesty, a lack of hypocrisy, and a willingness to face issues head on. On the longer term, socially sanctioned resolution (i.e., sublimation) of hostile urges is seen in the competitive occupations to which these aggressive personalities gravitate. Finally, these personalities may preempt the disapproval they anticipate from others by projecting their hostility onto them, thereby justifying their aggressive actions as mere counteraction to unjust persecution. Individuals with extreme, malignant variations of this pattern may engage in group scapegoating, viewing the objects of their violations impersonally as despised symbols of a devalued people, devoid of dignity and deserving degradation. (Millon, 1996, pp. 485–486)

Object representations. The core diagnostic feature of the internalized object representations of highly Dominant individuals is their *pernicious* nature. Characteristically, there is a marked paucity of tender and sentimental objects, and an underdevelopment of images that activate feelings of shame or guilt. For individuals with extreme, malignant variations of this pattern, the inner imprint of significant early experiences that serves as a substrate of dispositions (i.e., templates) for perceiving and reacting to current life events is composed of aggressive feelings and memories, and images comprising harsh relationships and malicious attitudes. Consequently, their life experience is recast to reflect the expectancy of hostility and the need to preempt it. These dynamics undergird a “jungle philosophy” of life where the only perceived recourse is to act in a bold, critical, assertive, and ruthless manner. Of particular relevance to politics is the harsh, antihumanistic disposition of the more extreme variants of these

personalities. Some are adept at pointing out the hypocrisy and ineffectuality of so-called “do-gooders”; they rail against the devastating consequences of international appeasement. Others justify their toughness and cunning by pointing to the hostile and exploitative behavior of others; to them, the only way to survive in this world is to dominate and control. (Millon, 1996, p. 485)

Morphologic organization. The core diagnostic feature of the morphologic organization of highly Dominant individuals is its *eruptiveness*; powerful energies are so forceful that they periodically overwhelm these personalities’ otherwise adequate modulating controls, defense operations, and expressive channels, resulting in the harsh behavior commonly seen in these personalities. This tendency is exacerbated by the unrestrained expression of intense and explosive emotions stemming from early life experiences. Moreover, these personalities dread the thought of being vulnerable, of being deceived, and of being humiliated. Viewing people as basically ruthless, these personalities are driven to gain power over others, to dominate them and outmaneuver or outfox them at their own game. Personal feelings are regarded as a sign of weakness and dismissed as mere maudlin sentimentality. (Millon, 1996, p. 486)

Scale 3: The Outgoing Pattern

The Outgoing pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive. At the well-adjusted pole are warm, congenial personalities.¹⁰ Slightly exaggerated Outgoing features occur in sociable, gregarious personalities.¹¹ In its most deeply ingrained, inflexible form, extraversion manifests itself in impulsive, self-centered, overdramatizing behavior patterns that may be consistent with a clinical diagnosis of histrionic personality disorder.¹²

Normal, adaptive variants of the Outgoing pattern (i.e., congenial and gregarious types) correspond to Strack’s (1997) *sociable* style and Millon’s (1994) *Outgoing* pattern. It overlaps with the *cooperative* segment of Leary’s (1957) *cooperative–overconventional* continuum (which is, however, more congruent with the Accommodating pattern). Millon’s Outgoing pattern is highly correlated with the five-factor model’s *Extraversion* factor, moderately correlated with its *Conscientiousness* and *Openness to Experience* factors, has a moderate negative correlation with its *Neuroticism* factor, and is uncorrelated with its *Agreeableness* factor (see Millon, 1994, p. 82).

In combination with the Ambitious pattern (as in the case of Trump), the Outgoing pattern bears some resemblance to Simonton’s (1988) *charismatic* executive leadership style.

Chief executives with an elevated Outgoing scale, accompanied by prominent Dauntless (Scale 1B) and Ambitious (Scale 2) patterns and a low score on Scale 6 (Conscientious), as in the case of Trump, may be susceptible to errors of judgment related to “neglect of the role demands

¹⁰ Relevant to Donald Trump.

¹¹ Relevant to Donald Trump.

¹² Marginally applicable to Donald Trump.

of political office, low resistance to corrupting influences, and impulsiveness. ... [as well as] favoring loyalty and friendship over competence-for-the-position in making appointments to high-level public office” (Immelman, 1993, p. 736).

Millon (1994) summarizes the Outgoing pattern as follows:

At the most extreme levels of the Outgoing pole are persons characterized by features similar to the DSM’s histrionic personality. At less extreme levels, gregarious persons go out of their way to be popular with others, have confidence in their social abilities, feel they can readily influence and charm others, and possess a personal style that makes people like them. Most enjoy engaging in social activities. ... Talkative, lively, socially clever, they are often dramatic attention-getters who thrive on being the center of social events. Many become easily bored, especially when faced with repetitive and mundane tasks. ... [Although prone to] intense and shifting moods, gregarious types are sometimes viewed as fickle and excitable. On the other hand, their enthusiasms often prove effective in energizing and motivating others. Inclined to be facile and enterprising, outgoing people may be highly skilled at manipulating others to meet their needs. (pp. 31–32)

Strack (1997) provides the following portrait of the normal (*sociable*) prototype of the Outgoing pattern, based on Millon’s theory, empirical findings from studies correlating his Personality Adjective Check List (PACL; 1991) scales with other measures, and clinical experience with the instrument:

They are characterized by an outgoing, talkative, and extraverted style of behavior and tend to be lively, dramatic, and colorful. These people are typically viewed by others as spontaneous, clever, enthusiastic, and vigorous. ... Sociable individuals may also be seen as fickle in their attachments. They may have quickly shifting moods and emotions and may come across as shallow and ungenue. These persons tend to prefer novelty and excitement and are bored by ordinary or mundane activities. ... They often do well interacting with the public, may be skilled and adept at rallying or motivating others, and will usually put their best side forward even in difficult circumstances. (From Strack, 1997, p. 489, with minor modifications)

In politics, leadership ability may well be compromised in individuals who “become easily bored, especially when faced with repetitive and mundane tasks,” and who are prone to “intense and shifting moods.” Those limitations must, however, be weighed against the high degree of skill with which Outgoing leaders are able to engage their capacity for “energizing and motivating” the public.

Millon’s personality patterns have predictable, reliable, observable psychological indicators (expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object representations, and morphologic organization). Owing to the clinical emphasis of his model, Millon’s (1996) attribute domains accentuate the maladaptive range of the personality patterns in his taxonomy — in the case of the Outgoing pattern, the impulsive pole of the congenial–gregarious–impulsive continuum. The “normalized” (i.e., de-pathologized; cf. Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 238–240) diagnostic features of the Outgoing pattern are summarized below, along with the diagnostic features of maladaptive variants of the pattern. Generally, one would expect the designated traits to be attenuated, less pronounced and more adaptive, in the case of well-functioning political leaders.

Expressive behavior. The core diagnostic feature of the expressive acts of Outgoing individuals is *sociability*; they are typically friendly, engaging, lively, extraverted, and gregarious. More exaggerated variants of the Outgoing pattern are predisposed to *impulsiveness*, intolerant of inactivity and inclined to seek sensation or excitement to prevent boredom; such individuals may display a penchant for momentary excitements, fleeting adventures, and short-sighted hedonism. The most extreme variants of this pattern are *dramatic*; they are self-dramatizing, overreactive, and volatile, typically with a highly emotional, theatrical responsiveness. As leaders, Outgoing personalities may be somewhat lacking in “gravitas,” inclined to make spur-of-the-moment decisions without carefully considering alternatives, predisposed to reckless, imprudent behaviors, and prone to scandal. (Millon, 1996, pp. 366–367, 371; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 33)

Interpersonal conduct. The core diagnostic feature of the interpersonal conduct of Outgoing individuals is *demonstrativeness*; they are amiable and display their feelings openly. More exaggerated variants of the Outgoing pattern tend to be *attention seeking*, being attentive to popular appeal and actively soliciting praise and approval. The most extreme variants of this pattern are interpersonally *seductive*; they are flamboyant, exhibitionistic, or provocative and manipulate others to solicit praise or attract attention to themselves. In a political leadership role, Outgoing personalities display a substantial need for validation, one manifestation of which may be an overreliance on polls as an instrument of policy direction and formulation. (Millon, 1996, pp. 367–368, 371; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 33)

Cognitive style. The core diagnostic feature of the cognitive style of Outgoing individuals is *unreflectiveness*; they avoid introspective thought and focus on practical, concrete matters. More exaggerated variants of the Outgoing pattern tend to be *superficial*, which is sometimes associated with flightiness in reasoning or thinking. They are not paragons of deep thinking or self-reflection and tend to speak and write in impressionistic generalities; though talkative, they tend to avoid earnest or complex matters and their words may lack detail and substance. The most extreme variants of this pattern have a *scattered* cognitive style; they are poor integrators of experience, which results in scattered learning, difficulty in learning from mistakes, and poor judgment. In politics, more extreme variants of the Outgoing pattern may be associated with lapses of judgment and flawed decision making. (Millon, 1996, pp. 368–369, 371; Millon & Davis, 2000, p. 236)

Mood/temperament. The core diagnostic feature of the temperamental disposition and prevailing mood of Outgoing individuals is emotional *expressiveness*; they are animated, uninhibited, and affectively responsive. More exaggerated variants of the Outgoing pattern are quite *changeable*, with occasional displays of short-lived and superficial moods. The most extreme variants of this pattern are *impetuous*; they are over-excitable, capricious, and exhibit a pervasive tendency to be easily enthused and as easily angered or bored. Leaders with an Outgoing personality pattern are skilled at staying in touch with public sentiments, but may be mercurial, volatile, or heedless, prone to periodic emotional outbursts, and easily angered or bored. (Millon, 1996, pp. 370–371)

Self-image. The core diagnostic feature of the self-image of Outgoing individuals is their view of themselves as being socially desirable, well liked, and *charming*. More exaggerated variants of the Outgoing pattern tend to perceive themselves as stimulating, popular, and *gregarious*. The most extreme variants of this pattern are *hedonistic*; they are self-indulgent, enjoying the image of attracting acquaintances by pursuing a busy and pleasure-oriented life. Given their appealing self-image, these personalities are confident in their social abilities. In politics, Outgoing personalities, more than any other character types, are political animals strongly attracted to the lure of campaigning. They thrive on the self-validation offered by adulating crowds and the frenetic, connect-with-people activity of whistle-stop tours, political rallies, and town meetings. (Millon, 1996, pp. 369, 371; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 33)

Regulatory mechanisms. The core diagnostic feature of the regulatory (i.e., ego-defense) mechanisms of Outgoing individuals is *self-distraction*; their preferred stress-management strategy is to engage in relatively mindless activities — for example, games, physical diversions, or other forms of amusement or recreation. The most extreme variants of the Outgoing pattern may employ the defense mechanism of *dissociation* (sometimes referred to as “compartmentalization” by political commentators, but technically a misnomer) to cope with conflict and anxiety. Whereas healthy self-distraction is generally adaptive in coping with the stress of high-level public office, some of its political implications may be troubling—including a leader’s failure to face up to unpleasant or dissonant thoughts, feelings, and actions, which may be compounded by cosmetic image-making as revealed in a succession of socially attractive but changing facades. (Millon, 1996, p. 370)

Object representations. The core diagnostic feature of the internalized object representations of Outgoing individuals is their *shallow* nature. Outgoing personalities characteristically seek stimulation, attention, and excitement, presumably to fill an inner void. The most extreme variants of the Outgoing pattern may lack a core identity apart from others, and therefore must draw sustenance and validation from those around them. In politics, Outgoing leaders thrive on the thrill of political campaigns and the international spotlight, and in office may not be averse to instigating a crisis for instrumental purposes. Thus, although generally conflict averse, they may engage in brinkmanship to force a desired outcome and secure a legacy — especially if narcissistic tendencies feature prominently in their personality profile. (Millon, 1996, p. 369)

Morphologic organization. The core diagnostic feature of the morphologic organization of Outgoing individuals is *exteroceptiveness*; they tend to focus on external matters and the here-and-now, being neither introspective nor dwelling excessively on the past, presumably to blot out awareness of a relatively insubstantial inner self. The most exaggerated variants of the Outgoing pattern tend to have a *disjointed*, loosely knit and haphazard morphological structure that contributes to a disconnection of thoughts, feelings, and actions; their internal controls are relatively scattered and unintegrated, with ad hoc methods for restraining impulses, coordinating defenses, and resolving conflicts. The personal political style of Outgoing leaders, hypothetically, may have a similar quality, with ad hoc strategies sometimes displacing the disciplined pursuit of carefully formulated policy objectives. (Millon, 1996, p. 370)

Scale 1B: The Dauntless Pattern

The Dauntless pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive. At the well-adjusted pole are individualistic, daring, adventurous personalities.¹³ Exaggerated Dauntless features occur in somewhat unconscientious, risk-taking, dissenting personalities.¹⁴ In its most deeply ingrained, inflexible form, the Dauntless pattern displays itself in reckless, irresponsible, self-aggrandizing behavior patterns that may be consistent with a clinical diagnosis of antisocial personality disorder.¹⁵

A recurring theme in armchair analysis of Trump's personal psychology throughout the 2016 election campaign has been the frequency with which labels such as "psychopath," "sociopath," or even "antisocial personality disorder" have been attached to the candidate (see, for example, a review by Hamblin, 2016). Consequently, the Dauntless pattern warrants special consideration in empirical examination of Trump's personality profile.

Normal, adaptive variants of the Dauntless pattern (i.e., adventurous and dissenting types) are congruent with Oldham and Morris's (1995) *Adventurous* style, Millon's (1994) *Dissenting* pattern, and the low pole of Simonton's (1988) *interpersonal* executive leadership style. Theoretically, the normal, adaptive variant of the Dauntless pattern incorporates facets of the five-factor model's *Extraversion* factor and the low pole of its *Agreeableness* factor; however, the Dissenting scale of the Millon Index of Personality Styles (Millon, 1994) is uncorrelated with the NEO Personality Inventory's (Costa & McCrae, 1985) Extraversion factor, though — as expected — this scale is negatively correlated with its *Agreeableness* factor. In addition, the Dissenting pattern is moderately correlated with the NEO Personality Inventory's *Neuroticism* factor, has a small negative correlation with its *Conscientiousness* factor, and is uncorrelated with its *Openness to Experience* factor (see Millon, 1994, p. 82). The Dauntless pattern, as conceptualized in the MIDC, is congruent with the low poles of Simonton's (1988) *deliberative* and *interpersonal* leadership styles and incorporates elements of his *neurotic* and *charismatic* styles.

According to Oldham and Morris (1995, pp. 227–228), the following eight traits and behaviors are reliable clues to the presence of an Adventurous style:

1. *Nonconformity*. Live by their own internal code of values; not strongly influenced by the norms of society.
2. *Challenge*. Routinely engage in high-risk activities.
3. *Mutual independence*. Not overly concerned about others; expect each individual to be responsible for him- or herself.
4. *Persuasiveness*. "Silver-tongued" charmers talented in the art of social influence.
5. *Wanderlust*. Like to keep moving; live by their talents, skills, ingenuity, and wits.

¹³ Relevant to Donald Trump.

¹⁴ Marginally relevant to Donald Trump.

¹⁵ It is possible that some of these more dysfunctional features are present in Donald Trump; however, the results suggest that any such traits would be of secondary significance and nonpervasive.

6. *Wild oats*. History of childhood and adolescent mischief and hell-raising.
7. *True grit*. Courageous, physically bold, and tough.
8. *No regrets*. Live in the present; little guilt about the past or anxiety about the future.

Oldham and Morris (1995) provide the following description of the *Adventurous* style:

[People] with this personality style venture where most mortals fear to tread. ... They live on the edge, challenging boundaries and restrictions, pitting themselves for better or for worse in a thrilling game against their own mortality. No risk, no reward, they say. Indeed, for people with the Adventurous personality style, the risk is the reward. (p. 227)

Ultimately, adventurous types “are fundamentally out for themselves” (Oldham & Morris, 1995, p. 228); they “do not need others to fuel their self-esteem or to provide purpose to their lives, and they don’t make sacrifices for other people, at least not easily” (p. 229). Furthermore, they believe in themselves and do not require anyone’s approval; they have “a definite sense of what is right or wrong for them, and if something is important to them, they’ll do it no matter what anyone thinks” (p. 229). This may be one of Trump’s political strengths, because career politicians are usually socialized or at least conditioned to be responsive to public and peer approval. Despite their self-orientation, adventurous people are capable of advancing a cause incidentally in the service of their personal desires or ambition; but, fundamentally, what matters is the momentary excitement, emotional vitality, or sense of aliveness that they experience, not love of person, country, or cause (p. 229).

Technically, Oldham and Morris’s Adventurous style appears to be a more adaptive variant of Millon’s “risk-taking psychopath,” a composite of his aggrandizing (antisocial) and gregarious (histrionic) personality patterns (see Millon, 1996, p. 452; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164; Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 111–112).

Millon (1994), who uses the term *Dissenting* as a label for the normal, adaptive variant of the aggrandizing, antisocial pattern, asserts that these individuals tend to “flout tradition,” “act in a notably autonomous fashion,” “are not social-minded,” and “are not inclined to adhere to conventional standards, cultural mores, and organizational regulations” (p. 32). They are

unconventional persons who seek to do things their own way and are willing to take the consequences for doing so. They act as they see fit regardless of how others judge them. Inclined at times to elaborate on or shade the truth, as well as ride close to the edge of the law, they are not conscientious — that is, they do not assume customary responsibilities. Rather, they frequently assert that too many rules stand in the way of people who wish to be free and inventive, and that they prefer to think and act in an independent and often creative way. Many believe that persons in authority are too hard on people who don’t conform. Dissenters dislike following the same routine day after day and, at times, act impulsively and irresponsibly. They will do what they want or believe to be best without much concern for the effects of their actions on others. Being skeptical about the motives of most people, and refusing to be fettered or coerced, they exhibit a strong need for autonomy and self-determination. (p. 33)

Although the Adventurous (Oldham & Morris, 1995) and Dissenting (Millon, 1994) personality styles are adaptive variants of antisocial personality disorder, it should be noted that antisocial-spectrum personality patterns commonly become less pervasive, intrusive, and maladaptive by early middle age. According to *DSM-IV*, “Antisocial Personality Disorder has a

chronic course but may become less evident or remit as the individual grows older, particularly in the fourth decade of life” (APA, 1994, p. 648).

Millon (1996), in examining the developmental background of these so-called “socially sublimated antisocials” (p. 462), asserts that their experiential history is often characterized by secondary status in the family. He writes:

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. 462)

Finally, Millon and Davis (2000) specifically address the relevance of the Dauntless pattern to leadership — notably the intermediate range of the continuum, where normality shades into the more aggrandizing variant of this pattern. They suggest that within this range “we find persons [e.g., some very successful industrialists, entrepreneurs, and corporate executives] who have never come into conflict with the law, but only because they are very effective in covering their tracks”:

For many politicians, the deception of doublespeak is a talent necessary for survival. Skirting the edge of deceitfulness, they “spin” objective events by minimizing negatives and exaggerating positives. When cornered, they focus attention on mitigating circumstances and lie by omission by failing to report the total circumstances and full motives of their actions. Moreover, they deliberately create public policy so complex that any particular aspect might be singled out to impress the special interest of the moment. (p. 107)

Millon’s personality patterns have well-established diagnostic indicators associated with each of the eight attribute domains of expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object-representations, and morphologic organization. The diagnostic features of the Dauntless pattern with respect to each of these attribute domains are summarized below. Because of the clinical emphasis of his model, Millon’s (1996) attribute domains accentuate the maladaptive range of the personality patterns in his taxonomy — in the case of the Dauntless pattern, the aggrandizing pole of the adventurous–dissenting–aggrandizing continuum. The “normalized” (i.e., de-pathologized; cf. Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 107–109) diagnostic features of the Dauntless pattern are summarized below; nonetheless, some of the designated traits may be attenuated or less pronounced, and more adaptive in the case of well-functioning political leaders — especially in cases where dauntlessness constitutes a less elevated secondary or subsidiary pattern in the leader’s overall personality profile.

Expressive behavior. Dauntless personalities are typically adventurous, fearless, and daring, attracted to challenge and undeterred by personal risk. They do things their own way and are willing to accept the consequences for doing so. Not surprisingly, they often act hastily and spontaneously, failing to plan ahead or heed consequences, making spur-of-the-moment decisions without carefully considering alternatives. This penchant for shooting from the hip can signify boldness and the courage of one’s convictions as easily as it may constitute shortsighted imprudence and poor judgment. (Millon, 1996, pp. 444–445, 449–450; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164)

Interpersonal conduct. Dauntless personalities are rugged individualists, not compromisers or conciliators. They take clear stands on the issues that matter, backed up by the self-confidence and personal skills and talents to prevail. Though generally jovial and convivial, they become confrontational and defiant when obstructed or crossed. (Millon, 1996, pp. 445–446, 449–450; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164)

Cognitive style. Dauntless personalities are original, independent-minded, and unconventional. At their best, these personalities are enterprising, innovative, and creative. They are nonconformists first and foremost, disdainful — even contemptuous — of traditional ideals and values. Moreover, Dauntless personalities shirk orthodoxy and typically believe that too many rules stand in the way of freedom. In politics, these individuals may be described as “mavericks.” (Millon, 1996, pp. 446–447, 449–450; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164)

Mood/temperament. Dauntless personalities are untroubled and easygoing, but quickly become irritable and aggressive when crossed. They are cool, calm, and collected under pressure, restless and disgruntled when restricted or confined. Tough-minded and unsentimental, they display their feelings openly and directly. (Millon, 1996, pp. 448–449, 449–450; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164)

Self-image. Dauntless personalities are self-confident, with a corresponding view of themselves as self-sufficient and autonomous. They pride themselves on their independence, competence, strength, and their ability to prevail without social support, and they expect the same of others. (Millon, 1996, pp. 447, 449–450; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164)

Regulatory mechanisms. Dauntless personalities are unconstrained. They express their impulses directly, often in rash and precipitous fashion, and generally without regret or remorse. They rarely refashion their thoughts and actions to fit a socially desirable mold. (Millon, 1996, p. 448)

Object representations. Dauntless personalities are driven by restive impulses to discredit established cultural ideals and mores yet are skilled in arrogating for themselves what material spoils they can garner from society. Though fundamentally driven by self-serving motives, they are capable of incidentally advancing social causes in the service of their own ambition. (Millon, 1996, p. 447)

Morphologic organization. The inner drives and impulses of Dauntless personalities are unruly, recalcitrant, and rebellious, which gives rise to unfettered self-expression, a marked intolerance of delay or frustration, and low thresholds for emotional discharge, particularly those of a hostile nature. (Millon, 1996, p. 448)

Summary and Formulation: The Ambitious–Dominant–Outgoing–Dauntless Composite Pattern

With his primary elevations on Scales 2 (Ambitious), 1A (Dominant), and 3 (Outgoing) and his secondary elevation on Scale 1B (Dauntless), Donald Trump is classified as Composite Type 2-1A-3-1B. Drawing from the work of Theodore Millon (Millon, 1996, pp. 375–376, 409–410,

412–413; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 162, p. 163; Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 243–244, 277–278, 279–280), the character of individuals with this particular personality composite may be summarized as follows:

The cardinal trait of predominantly Ambitious (narcissistic) individuals who also possess prominent Dominant (aggressive) features, is self-assured, daring aggressiveness — a personality style prevalent among top military leaders, star athletes, famed lawyers, eminent surgeons, highly successful entrepreneurs, and powerful politicians. Napoleon and Mussolini provide real-world historical examples.

Beneath a veneer of idealistic concern, these personalities tend to be contemptuous of ordinary people or indifferent to the welfare of others. They generally covet recognition, actively engage in self-promotion, and often flaunt symbols of their personal status and achievement — for example, advertising themselves, boasting about their achievements (whether substantive or pseudo-achievements), and exaggerating their accomplishments (making everything they have done seem extraordinary and impressive). They tend to be upwardly mobile and seek to cultivate their sense of special standing in society by associating with high-status people.¹⁶ Moreover, to these personalities the appearance of things is perceived as objective reality; their inflated self-image is their intrinsic substance, with little ability to recognize or acknowledge any shortcomings. This creates a divide between their actual self and their self-presentation.

These cognitive and self-perceptual deficits spill over into their social relations as these personalities constantly create comparisons between themselves and others, turning personal relationships into public competitions and contests. Unrivaled in the pursuit of one-upmanship, the grounds for this goal are not determined principally by genuine accomplishments, but by the degree to which they can convince others of its reality, flimsy though its substance may be.

When the Ambitious, Dominant pattern is complemented by Outgoing and Dauntless patterns, it provides the personological underpinnings for an individual who makes a good first impression and seems sociable and sincere — exhibiting such spontaneity and charm that others quickly lower their defenses. However, the interaction between these more adaptive social skills rooted in the Outgoing pattern and the Dauntless personality's ability to read the motives and desires of others can yield a scheming, calculating, deceitful interpersonal orientation, in which manipulation is employed for ends other than simple attention and approval — culminating in a willingness to violate social rules, break promises, disregard the rights of others, and shatter loyalties, which may yield frequent personal and family difficulties and occasional legal entanglements.

Finally, the Outgoing–Dauntless synergy produces an unreflective tendency revealed in frequently responding before thinking and acting thoughtlessly or impulsively. It is further characterized by a strong need for excitement — even if it involves conflict — and a correspondingly low tolerance for boredom and routine activities or tasks that require sustained focus and attention to detail.

¹⁶ This “status by association” may partially explain Trump’s affinity for strong leaders.

Putting Trump's Personality-Based Leadership Predictions to the Test

As noted at the time of his inauguration (Immelman, 2017), Donald Trump's personality profile (Immelman, 2016) offered an empirically based framework for anticipating Trump's performance as chief executive by coordinating the results of the personality assessment conducted prior to his election with complementary theories of political leadership.

Stanley Renshon (1996), for example, 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).

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 currently 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.

Similarly, Lloyd Etheredge (1978) and Margaret Hermann (1987) developed personality-based models of foreign policy leadership orientation that 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.

James David Barber (1972/1992), focusing more 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.

Following are the predictions of the general tenor of the Trump presidency made prior to Trump's inauguration (Immelman, 2017), annotated with endnotes documenting the emergence of those leadership traits and behaviors during Trump's term of office.

In terms of Renshon's (1996) three critical components of political leadership, Trump's greatest strength, by dint of his outgoing personality in concert with supreme self-confidence, is *mobilization*, which will be instrumental in rallying, energizing, and motivating his supporters.¹ In the sphere of *orchestration*, Trump's dearth of personality traits related to conscientiousness (e.g., diminished capacity for sustained focus² and insufficient attention to detail³), along with his extravert's impulsiveness⁴ and susceptibility to boredom,⁵ may serve as an impediment to presidential performance.⁶ Finally, his ambition⁷ and dominant⁸ personality attributes, including the drive to excel,⁹ goal-directedness,¹⁰ and proficiency in taking charge and seeing that the job gets done, will serve Trump well in the arena of *consolidation*,¹¹ potentially augmenting his outgoing, "retail" politician's skills in consummating his policy objectives.

From Simonton's perspective, Trump's MIDC elevations on the Outgoing, Ambitious, and Dominant scales imply a *charismatic*¹² leadership style, which conceptually corresponds to the "Big Five" Extraversion factor. According to Simonton (1988), the charismatic leader

typically "finds dealing with the press challenging and enjoyable"¹³ ... [Outgoing], ... "consciously refines his own public image"¹⁴ ... [Outgoing, Ambitious], "has a flair for the dramatic"¹⁵ ... [Outgoing], "conveys [a] clear-cut, highly visible personality"¹⁶ ... [Outgoing], is a "skilled and self-confident negotiator"¹⁷ ... [Dominant, Ambitious], "uses rhetoric effectively"¹⁸ ... [Ambitious, Dominant], is a "dynamo of energy and determination"¹⁹ ... [Outgoing, Ambitious, Dominant], ... "keeps in contact with the American public and its moods"²⁰ ... [Outgoing], "has [the] ability to maintain popularity"²¹ ... [Outgoing], [and] "exhibits artistry in manipulation"²² ... [Ambitious, Dominant]. (p. 931; associated Millon patterns added)

In addition, the charismatic leader "rarely permits himself to be outflanked"²³ [Dominant, Ambitious] and rarely "suffers health problems that tend to parallel difficult and critical periods in office" (pp. 930, 931; associated MIDC patterns added).

Trump's weak loadings on the Conscientious (Scale 6) pattern, along with his elevations on the Dauntless (Scale 1B) and Outgoing (Scale 4) patterns, suggest that he is *not* likely to display Simonton's "deliberative" leadership style, which conceptually corresponds to the "Big Five" Conscientiousness factor. According to Simonton (1988), the deliberative leader

commonly "understands [the] implications of his decisions;²⁴ exhibits depth of comprehension"²⁵ ..., is "able to visualize alternatives and weigh long-term consequences"²⁶ ..., "keeps himself thoroughly informed; reads briefings [and] background reports"²⁷ ..., is "cautious, conservative in action"²⁸ ..., and only infrequently "indulges in emotional outbursts."²⁹ (p. 931)

As a *nondeliberative* leader, Trump would be inclined "to force decisions to be made prematurely,"³⁰ lose sight of his limitations,³¹ and place "political success over effective policy"³² (pp. 930, 931).

Concerning his likely foreign policy orientation, Trump's profile most closely resembles what Etheredge (1978), in his "four-fold speculative typology" of "fundamental personality-based differences in orientation towards America's preferred operating style and role in the international system" (p. 434), has called the *high-dominance extrovert*. Etheredge contends that high-dominance extraverts (such as Presidents Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, John Kennedy, and Lyndon Johnson) share high-dominance introverts' tendency "to use military force"³³

[b]ut in general ... are more flexible and pragmatic, more varied in the wide range and scope of major foreign policy initiatives³⁴. ... [In contrast to high-dominance introverts, they] want to lead rather than contain.³⁵ They advocate change, seek to stir up things globally³⁶.... [and] are relatively more interested in *inclusion*³⁷ [compared with high-dominance introverts, who favor exclusion], initiating programs and institutions for worldwide leadership and cooperative advance on a wide range of issues.³⁸ (p. 449)

Etheredge's high-dominance extravert appears to be most similar in character to Hermann's (1987) "influential" orientation to foreign affairs, which, with the exception of its hypothesized cognitive complexity, appears to be highly congruent with Trump's psychological profile.

According to Hermann, the *influential* foreign policy orientation is characterized by an “[i]nterest in having an impact on other nations’ foreign policy behavior³⁹ ... [and] in playing a leadership role in regional or international affairs”⁴⁰ (p. 168). Its component variables are power motivation⁴¹ (i.e., high dominance), belief in one’s ability to control events⁴² (i.e., ambition/narcissism), cognitive complexity (not evident in Trump’s profile), self-confidence⁴³ (i.e., ambition/narcissism), and an interpersonal orientation (i.e., outgoing).⁴⁴

In terms of presidential temperament, Trump seems most similar to Barber’s (1972/1992) *active-positive* presidential character — leaders like Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, who as president were self-confident,⁴⁵ optimistic,⁴⁶ and derived pleasure from the exercise of power in pursuit of political objectives.⁴⁷

Employing executive leadership-style models developed by Hermann and Preston (1995) and Kaarbo (1997; Kaarbo & Hermann, 1998), as adapted by Steinberg (2008, pp. 349–356) and Immelman (2011), Trump’s psychological profile raises the following generalized expectancies regarding his leadership style as president:

Leadership motivation. As an extraordinarily confident individual with an unshakable belief in his own talents,⁴⁸ leadership ability,⁴⁹ and potential for success,⁵⁰ a quest for *power*⁵¹ will be the prime motivator for Trump’s leadership behavior, punctuated by a need to control situations⁵² and dominate adversaries.⁵³ Furthermore, Trump’s outgoing nature suggests concern with popular approval⁵⁴ and a striving for *self-validation*⁵⁵ to affirm his inflated self-esteem.⁵⁶ In addition, he will likely be more *pragmatic*⁵⁷ than ideological in pursuing his political objectives.

Leadership orientation. Given his supreme self-confidence and high dominance,⁵⁸ Trump will likely be more *goal directed* than relationship oriented.⁵⁹ As a task-oriented leader, Trump will not permit the maintenance of good relations to stand in the way of goal achievement.⁶⁰ 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 loyalty⁶¹ among his advisers and members of his administration.

Job performance. Big egos have a strong drive to prove themselves.⁶² Thus, Trump can be expected to be *tireless*⁶³ (committed⁶⁴ and energetic⁶⁵) in the amount of effort invested in carrying out the duties of his office. This tendency will be reinforced by strong power⁶⁶ motivation stemming from high dominance and dynamic energy derived from his extraverted,⁶⁷ outgoing personality.

Managerial style. In organizing and managing the decision-making process, Trump will be heavy on self-promotion⁶⁸ and persuasion,⁶⁹ making him more of an *advocate* for his policy agenda⁷⁰ than a consensus builder or an arbitrator.⁷¹

Executive style. In dealing with Congress, members of his Cabinet, and senior government officials, Trump will likely be highly involved, acting in ways that could

variously be described as *attention seeking*,⁷² *demanding*,⁷³ *domineering*,⁷⁴ *antagonistic*,⁷⁵ *competitive*,⁷⁶ *controlling*,⁷⁷ *combative*,⁷⁸ *manipulative*,⁷⁹ and *exploitative*⁸⁰ — though he certainly is capable of behaving in a *collegial*,⁸¹ *cooperative*, *harmonious*⁸² fashion if he believes it will serve his own self-interest.

Media relations. In his dealings with the press, Trump will maintain a measure of harmony,⁸³ to the extent he feels he can dictate or manipulate the media.⁸⁴ However, the likelihood of a highly critical press, in conjunction with Trump’s sensitivity to personal slights,⁸⁵ portends a relatively *closed* (inaccessible,⁸⁶ uninformative, unfriendly⁸⁷) relationship with the media characterized by a lack of cooperation⁸⁸ that could quickly escalate into outright hostility.⁸⁹

Public relations. In relating to the public, outgoing, confident leaders such as Trump typically are *active*⁹⁰ (preferring direct engagement⁹¹), articulating and defending their policies in person rather than relying on surrogates and proxies.⁹² This tendency will be reinforced by Trump’s dominant, strong-willed,⁹³ outspoken personality⁹⁴ and fueled by his extraversion,⁹⁵ which will feed his preference for direct engagement with the public.⁹⁶

Conclusion

Immelman (2017) predicted that a president Trump’s major personality-based leadership strengths would be the important political skills of connecting with critical constituencies,⁹⁷ mobilizing popular support, and retaining a following and his self-confidence in the face of adversity.⁹⁸

Trump’s major personality-based limitations were anticipated to be the propensity for a superficial grasp of complex issues,⁹⁹ a predisposition to be easily bored¹⁰⁰ by routine (with the attendant risk of failing to keep himself adequately informed),¹⁰¹ an inclination to act impulsively¹⁰² without fully appreciating the implications of his decisions or the long-term consequences¹⁰³ of his policy initiatives, and a predilection to favor personal connections and loyalty over competence in his staffing decisions and appointments¹⁰⁴ — all of which would render a Trump administration relatively vulnerable to errors of judgment and political scandal.¹⁰⁵

“In the final analysis,” Immelman (2017) concluded, “the matter of greatest concern regarding President Trump’s fitness to govern is the question of temperament.”¹⁰⁶ Specifically, it was anticipated that the impending Trump presidency combined “a perilous combination of sparse political experience¹⁰⁷ and the potential for a level of impulsiveness¹⁰⁸ and hubris¹⁰⁹ rarely ... seen in occupants of the Oval Office.”

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Endnotes

¹ “There is a certain kind of genius to winning the presidency like it was an entry-level job,” said Dave Shiflett, the co-writer of Trump’s first book about his political views, “The America we deserve,” which was published in 2000. **“To go into those campaign rallies with just a few notes and connect with people he wasn’t at all like, that takes a certain genius. His genius is he’ll say anything to connect with people. He won by telling the rally crowds that the people who didn’t like them also didn’t like him.”** (Fischer, 2018)

² Pentagon sources describe meetings in which senior officials have struggled with what they described as the President’s (Trump’s) mercurial moods, **lack of focus**, impulsive decision-making and resistance to information that doesn’t fit his views. (Starr & Gaouette, 2019)

³ Trump is mercurial and impulsive, conferring with friends, family and friendly talk-show hosts but relying most of all on his own gut. **He is not a detail man**; fact-checkers often conclude various statements he makes are untrue. He draws energy from raucous rallies in which he routinely speaks for more than hour and basks in the adoration of his most fervent supporters. (Page, 2019)

⁴ From the time the virus was first identified as a concern, the administration’s response was plagued by the rivalries and factionalism that routinely swirl around Mr. Trump and, along with the president’s **impulsiveness**, undercut decision making and policy development. (Lipton, Sanger, Haberman, Shear, Mazzetti, & Barnes, 2020)

⁵ A **bored and distracted** Trump, scowling with his arms crossed, dismissed what he was being told, declared that America’s allies were ripping it off, meandered into asking whether they had seen the French president’s aggressive handshake and then free-associated into his enthusiasm for France’s Bastille Day military parade — demanding a “Victory Day” parade of his own, with tanks rolling through Washington. (Savage, 2019)

⁶ **Almost never**, according to CNN’s sources, **would Trump read the briefing materials prepared for him** by the CIA and NSC staff in advance of his calls with heads of state. (Bernstein, 2020)

I know more than the general and we have seen it with his long list of situations where he [Trump] basically contradicts his own experts, his own military leaders and **says I’m the military Commander in Chief**. I was elected and **without being briefed or without following the briefing that he gets from his leaders** saying **I’m going with my gut on everything** from whether we should pull troops out of Syria to whether or not we should keep troops in Afghanistan. (Henderson, 2019)

She [Mary Trump] even suggests that Trump suffers a “long undiagnosed learning disability” that **hinders his processing of information**. (Lozada, 2020)

⁷ In his first foreign trip as President, which begins Friday, Trump has planned a pilgrimage of sorts, visiting the homelands of all three Abrahamic faiths — Judaism, Christianity and Islam — before heading to Europe for meetings with Pope Francis and NATO leaders. In all, it's an **ambitious** nine-day, five-country tour that will test the religious acumen and diplomatic skills of a President who, beyond courting conservative Christians and casting suspicion on Muslims, rarely talks about religion. (Burke, 2017)

⁸ The third trait that most characterizes Trump is his **need for dominance**, and the evident pleasure he takes in exercising it. (Schwartz, 2020)

⁹ As Mary Trump puts it, “Every one of Donald’s transgressions became an **audition for his father’s favor**, as if he were saying, ‘See, Dad, I’m the tough one. I’m the killer.’” (Lozada, 2020)

¹⁰ There’s **an underlying consistency in Trump’s goals**, even if his messages are contradictory and his methods chaotic. (Bennett, 2020)

¹¹ “But as assertive leaders, both Xi and Trump are eager to win internationally to **consolidate** their domestic status. Thus, it is hard for them to compromise with each other.” (Will dream, 2017)

¹² Donald Trump created the blueprint for building an avalanche of earned media momentum: be the loudest, most outrageous voice in the room. Generate buzz with confrontational statements, outsized self-promotion, and **abundant charisma**. (Wolf, 2017)

¹³ Viewed through the lens of pathology, Trump’s behavior – from military-school reports that he was too competitive to have close friends to his recent impromptu press conference, where he **seemed to revel in the hour and a half he spent center stage**, spouting paranoia and insults – can be seen as a constant quest for narcissistic supply. (Morris, 2017)

More than any president in living memory, Donald Trump has conducted a **dogged, remorseless assault** on the press. He portrays the news media not only as a **dedicated adversary** of his administration but of the entire body politic. These attacks have forced the media where it does not want to be, at the center of the political debate. (Edsall, 2018)

¹⁴ **His [Trump’s] desire to convey an image of speed and determination** has resulted in executive orders stopped by judicial intervention and a legislature that is quarrelsome and confused. (Continetti, 2017)

Instead, he [Trump] **obsesses** over TV ratings and the economy as if **his image in the media** and the ups and downs of Wall Street indices matter more than life itself. (D’Antonio, 2020)

¹⁵ It was a summit Trump had impulsively asked for, with little pre-planning, based on his faith in his negotiating prowess and his **penchant for making a dramatic and historic show**, a U.S. official familiar with the matter says. (Bennett, 2019c)

“I’ve grown increasingly concerned about the strike against Soleimani and what it might mean for the safety of American troops in the region and the future of America’s involvement in the Middle East,” Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said Tuesday on the Senate floor. “The president’s [Trump’s] decision-making has been erratic. It’s been impulsive without regard for the long-term consequences of America’s actions abroad. **He prefers reality-show diplomacy and photo-ops with foreign leaders to substantive progress.** As a result, the president’s foreign policy has been dangerously incompetent. When you look at nearly every hot spot around the globe, he’s made the situation worse, not better.” (Cook, 2020)

¹⁶ “I’m not aware of any organized” effort, (GOP Sen. Marco Rubio) said. “I’m sure if we spoke, he’d (Trump) bring it up. But **I don’t need to talk to him to know his feeling** about it. **He makes it pretty clear** on a regular basis.” (Everett & Cook, 2019)

The Republican Party is learning what should have been obvious from the outset: Mr. Trump’s **chaotic personality** can’t be contained. Indeed, combining it with the awesome power of the presidency virtually guaranteed he would become more volatile and transgressive. (Wehner, 2018)

¹⁷ In typical Trump fashion, of course, **he [Trump] thought he, the great dealmaker, could finish the job single-handedly.** (Stein, 2020)

For the president [Trump], it was another example of his usual negotiating stance of **building maximum leverage through escalating demands.** (Bennett, 2019a)

¹⁸ One thing people who have never interacted with Trump don’t get is how incredibly solicitous he is — particularly of the media. He wants to be seen as a good guy and a smart guy... It’s almost as though all of **his rhetoric about the “fake news” is just a ploy to throw red meat to his base!** (Cillizza, 2018b)

Trump’s needlessly **aggressive** rhetoric (“trade wars are good”) and his open disregard for alliances (claiming that we’re “ripped off by virtually every country in the world, whether it’s friend or enemy”) could be part of the case. (Saletan, 2018)

¹⁹ No president has ever run a midterm campaign remotely as **determined** as this president [Trump] will, his objective performance in office is good — the economy, the border, and trade; his only weaknesses are stylistic, but he is a good deal more substantial and even likable than his gutter-sniping enemies. (Black, 2019)

He [Trump] **roars into any melee he finds**, encouraging street uprisings against public health measures advanced by his own government, hurling made-up murder charges against a critic, accusing his predecessor of unspecified crimes, vowing to crack down on a social media company that angered him and then seemingly threatening to meet violence with violence in Minneapolis. (Baker, 2020b)

²⁰ In this account, Trump is as he ever was: craven, feckless, moody, narcissistic, mendacious, forgetful. He is sympathetic to the Dreamers he meets in private, but is willing to place their lives and futures in jeopardy to **feed the passions of his supporters. He is addicted to inflaming the basest instincts of his base.** And it is all a show. (Klein, 2019)

²¹ He [Trump] draws energy from raucous rallies in which he routinely speaks for more than hour and basks in the adoration of his most **fervent supporters.** (Page, 2019)

²² Trump is indeed correct to self-describe as “stable,” because throughout his life and career he has demonstrated the same traits: narcissism, aggression, disregard for the truth, and a belief in brute force and imposition of his will through **manipulation** and threat. (Pettengill, 2018)

²³ I know more than the general and we have seen it with his long list of situations where he [Trump] basically contradicts his own experts, his own military leaders and **says I’m the military Commander in Chief.** I was elected and without being briefed or without following the briefing that he gets from his leaders saying **I’m going with my gut on everything** from whether we should pull troops out of Syria to whether or not we should keep troops in Afghanistan. (Henderson, 2019)

²⁴ [Disconfirming] Trump began withdrawing troops without even a rudimentary plan to protect his retreating soldiers, who had to destroy their own headquarters in their mad scramble to escape. This impulsive style of decision-making yet again reveals a pattern of rash and poor judgment. Trump seems **unaware of likely consequences from his actions** and unwilling to delay, consider facts or listen to anyone. But this time he didn’t just post an offensive Tweet. He destabilized an entire region. (Gartner, Buser, & Reiss, 2019)

[Disconfirming] Trump’s immediate and voracious appetites allow **no concern for others or understanding of tomorrow. He reacts instinctively,** not emotionally, morally or intellectually. He is insensitive to truth and incapable of discipline or strategy. (Castellanos, 2019)

²⁵ [Disconfirming] In fact, because he [Trump] can never focus his attention for long, his knowledge about any subject tends to be **superficial** and severely limited. (Schwartz, 2020)

²⁶ [Disconfirming] Trump displays signs of “extreme present hedonism,” the tendency to live in the moment **without considering consequences,** seeking to bolster one’s self-esteem no matter the risk. Or he exhibits “narcissistic personality disorder,” which includes believing you’re better than others, exaggerating your achievements and expecting constant praise. (Lozada, 2017)

²⁷[Disconfirming] **Almost never,** according to CNN’s sources, **would Trump read the briefing materials prepared for him** by the CIA and NSC staff in advance of his calls with heads of state. (Bernstein, 2020)

[Disconfirming] The calls with Putin and Erdogan were particularly egregious in terms of Trump **almost never being prepared substantively** and thus leaving him susceptible to being taken advantage of in various ways, according to the sources. ... (Bernstein, 2020)

[Disconfirming] John R. Bolton, the former national security adviser, plans to publish a damning book next week depicting President Trump as a **corrupt, poorly informed, reckless leader who used the power of his office to advance his own personal and political needs even ahead of the nation's interests.** (Baker, 2020c)

[Disconfirming] President Donald Trump was often so **unprepared** for calls with foreign leaders that he was coached by several staff members and advisers as the calls took place to avoid veering off track, a source familiar with the calls through White House chief of staff John Kelly's tenure, which ended in December 2018, told CNN. (Gangel & Vazquez, 2019)

[Disconfirming] In hundreds of highly classified phone calls with foreign heads of state, President Donald Trump was so **consistently unprepared for discussion** of serious issues, so often outplayed in his conversations with powerful leaders like Russian President Vladimir Putin and Turkish President Recep Erdogan, and so abusive to leaders of America's principal allies, that the calls helped convince some senior US officials — including his former secretaries of state and defense, two national security advisers and his longest-serving chief of staff — that the President himself posed a danger to the national security of the United States, according to White House and intelligence officials intimately familiar with the contents of the conversations. (Bernstein, 2020)

²⁸ [Disconfirming] But something very different is going on in the Republican Party today. It has become the institutional expression of Donald Trump's distorted and **impulsive personality.** (Wehner, 2018)

His [Trump's] decisions **are made on impulse, driven by impulse**, with **no thought of future consequences or reflection** on past mistakes. Unlike most of us who worry about the impact of our most controversial actions, Trump responds recklessly to assuage his ego needs. (Sheehy & Sword, 2018)

²⁹ [Disconfirming] After learning about the raid, the president **again erupted in anger.** He told reporters that federal authorities had “broke into the office” and he called it a “a disgraceful situation” and “a total witch hunt.” (Haberaman & Schmidt, 2018)

[Disconfirming] Daniel Henninger described Trump as volatile and personality-driven in his political campaign and further explained that the **Trump White house is a permanent volcano.** (Henninger, 2017)

³⁰ There are more instances of Trump throwing gasoline on fires. To ensure that Neil Gorsuch is appointed to the Supreme Court, Trump **prematurely urged the Senate** to “go nuclear” and deny Democrats the right to filibuster. Before talk of “going nuclear,” why not try the “conventional” method of seeking 60 votes? Trump's confrontational tactics increase pressure on Democrats to oppose a nominee they might otherwise have accepted. (President Donald Trump's reckless, 2017)

³¹ This behavior thrills many in his base, who see in it **a president [Trump] willing to ignore traditional norms** to get government moving again on their behalf. (Newell, 2017)

Impeachment followed by acquittal could help Mr. Trump win reelection. And a reelected Mr. Trump who has survived impeachment could grow even **bolder in busting the norms of presidential behavior**. Such a turn of events would send the Reagan-era party even further into the rearview mirror. (Feldmann, 2019)

Technically, a president does have the power to sack an FBI director. It's just that the unwritten rules have always said a president shouldn't. **Trump saw those unwritten rules and walked all over them**. (Freedland, 2017)

³² While the exact reason for Trump's IQ obsession is difficult to nail down, people who know him suspect it stems in part from **his desire to project an image of success** and competence, despite scattered business failings and repeated allegations from critics that he's incompetent. (Restuccia, 2019)

³³ Top military leaders say they are concerned about Trump's divisive rhetoric and **politicization of the military**. (Starr & Gaouette, 2019)

President Trump's Iran policy over the weekend was both erratic and masterful. Doves and isolationists, panicked by what they see as the **administration's inexorable drift toward war**, rejoiced when Mr. Trump announced that a military strike had been called back. (Mead, 2019)

A bored and distracted Trump, scowling with his arms crossed, dismissed what he was being told, declared that America's allies were ripping it off, meandered into asking whether they had seen the French president's aggressive handshake and then free-associated into **his enthusiasm for France's Bastille Day military parade — demanding a "Victory Day" parade of his own, with tanks rolling through Washington**. (Savage, 2019)

³⁴ Indeed, Trump has **struggled to maintain unified GOP support for his foreign-policy moves** — often making impulse-driven **decisions that shock Trump's congressional allies and foes alike**. Thursday's vote further underscored the hawk-versus-dove divisions among Republicans when it comes to foreign policy and national security issues. (LeVine & Desiderio, 2020)

³⁵ Trump **wants to be viewed as a great president and a great leader**. If his public pronouncements are any indicator, it seems likely that he believes to some extent that he is one, that the limits imposed on his popularity are artificial ones from Democrats and the news media. (Bump, 2020)

³⁶ The contention that Trump really has been reined in, until now, by wiser, more experienced advisers is itself questionable. For example, James Mattis, his former defense secretary, failed to prevent Trump's **serial assaults on NATO or his rash decision to withdraw US troops from Syria**. (Tisdall, 2019)

The coming weeks will test whether Trump's unconventional behavior and demagogic appeals have created a strong enough shield for him — and Republican lawmakers — to avoid normal political consequences for **his efforts to get foreign governments to take down his political enemies**. (Bierman & Stokols, 2019)

³⁷ Trump and his aides have taken several, **norm-shattering steps** to end the decades-old, seemingly intractable U.S. conflict with North Korea. That includes having Trump become the first sitting U.S. president to meet with a North Korean leader and the first to set foot on North Korean soil. (Toosi, 2019)

In his first foreign trip as President, which begins Friday, **Trump has planned a pilgrimage of sorts, visiting the homelands of all three Abrahamic faiths — Judaism, Christianity and Islam — before heading to Europe for meetings with Pope Francis and NATO leaders**. In all, it's an ambitious nine-day, five-country tour that will test the religious acumen and diplomatic skills of a President who, beyond courting conservative Christians and casting suspicion on Muslims, rarely talks about religion. (Burke, 2017)

³⁸ [Disconfirming] As we sat around the Resolute desk, he [Trump] beckoned aides to bring various documents for him to show us: a map marking the demise of ISIS; a birthday greeting from the North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un (“a very nice letter,” Trump called it); a typed list of his accomplishments as President that he distributed, one copy for each of us. The three-page document cites everything from decreased unemployment to **pulling out of the Paris climate deal** to calling for a defense force for outer space. (Felsenthal, 2019)

³⁹ In **asking his European and NATO allies to have a bigger involvement in his standoff with Iran, Trump is essentially asking them to make a choice**: stay on good terms with new friends in Beijing, Moscow and Tehran; or fall in line behind its old ally, despite the fact it's currently led by a man [Trump] who is considered worryingly erratic by most European diplomats and might not even be in office after this year. (McGee, 2020)

⁴⁰ A recurring theme is mendacity. Even though Mattis's spokeswoman denied press reports that the Pentagon was being caught flat-footed by **Trump's abrupt policy announcements — like creating a Space Force and ending joint military exercises with South Korea** — Snodgrass says the reports were accurate and portrays her as lying because “it would be political suicide to admit that Trump was catching us off guard.” He recounts how the Pentagon, **defense contractors and foreign allies sought to manage Trump by permitting him to falsely claim credit for things like lowering the price of F-35 fighters or raising NATO members' annual military spending** — changes that had been arranged years earlier, he notes. (Savage, 2019)

⁴¹ Trump **wants to be viewed as a great president and a great leader**. If his public pronouncements are any indicator, it seems likely that **he believes to some extent that he is one**, that the limits imposed on his popularity are artificial ones from Democrats and the news media. (Bump, 2020)

⁴² In typical Trump fashion, of course, **he [Trump] thought he, the great dealmaker, could finish the job single-handedly.** (Stein, 2020)

Trump’s rambling interviews and embrace of conspiracy theories have unnerved his colleagues. Other blinking warning lights have included his fragile self-esteem, his belligerence on Twitter, his **grandiose declarations** — **“I alone” can make America great again** — his frequent falsehoods, his storied history of cheating business contractors and customers, and his tendency to make erratic decisions that appear to hurt him politically. (Blakely, 2018)

⁴³ Granted, anyone with the audacity to assume that he or she has what it takes to lead the world’s superpower will exhibit an **excess of narcissism** and its offspring — **a sense of entitlement** — **along with a grandiosity of ambition and some degree of messianic belief that she or he is the ideal rescuer-protector for the times.** But early on, Donald Trump crashed through the sound barrier on all such temperamental traits (Sheehy & Sword, 2018)

⁴⁴ “I think he’s [Trump’s] ultra gifted in the things in politics you need for relationship-building,” he said. “He’s an impresario at this stuff.” Added Ticktin, the pro-Trump NYMA classmate: “Normal socializing with people, I don’t think that’s ever really been his thing. But he knows how to work a room. He’s charming, and **he knows how to connect with people in a room** and make them feel like they’ve been acknowledged.” (Kruse, 2017)

⁴⁵ Administration officials Monday played down GOP anxiety as passing and typical of difficult junctures for Trump, but congressional allies said they remain uneasy about the president’s freewheeling style amid multiple investigative and political threats — and said they are making that clear to the president, **who remains confident in his abilities.** (Olorunnipa & Costa, 2019)

The task will be a supremely challenging one, for Trump is as bullishly **self-confident** as he is ignorant. (The Observer, 2017)

⁴⁶ As leading public health experts from across the government have tried to provide clear and consistent information about the deadly coronavirus, they have found their messages undercut, drowned out and muddled by President Trump’s push to downplay the outbreak with a mix of **optimism**, bombast and pseudoscience. (Olorunnipa, 2020)

There’s an additional explanation for these statements: Trump is a lifelong student and proponent of the power of **positive thinking.** (Blumenthal, 2020)

⁴⁷ John R. Bolton, the former national security adviser, plans to publish a damning book next week depicting President Trump as a **corrupt, poorly informed, reckless leader who used the power of his office to advance his own personal and political needs even ahead of the nation’s interests.** (Baker, 2020c)

⁴⁸ Trump had two main messages in the interviews: first, that **he is respected, cheered, saluted, and loved**. The people crying by the roadside were the ones “that couldn’t get in” to his events. The second message: that his enemies are everywhere — indeed, no President has ever been so persecuted. (Davidson Sorkin, 2019)

“**Trump’s view is that he is a better judge of character than anyone else,**” said one of CNN’s sources. The President consistently rejected advice from US defense, intelligence and national security principals that the Russian president be approached more firmly and with less trust. (Bernstein, 2020)

⁴⁹ Trump **wants to be viewed as a great president and a great leader**. If his public pronouncements are any indicator, it seems likely that **he believes to some extent that he is one**, that the limits imposed on his popularity are artificial ones from Democrats and the news media. (Bump, 2020)

⁵⁰ Trump **incessantly boasted** to his fellow heads of state, including Saudi Arabia’s autocratic royal heir Mohammed bin Salman and North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un, **about his own wealth, genius, “great” accomplishments** as President, and the “idiocy” of his Oval Office predecessors, according to the sources. (Bernstein, 2020)

In his phone exchanges with Putin, the sources reported, the President [Trump] **talked mostly about himself**, frequently in over-the-top, **self-aggrandizing** terms: **touting his “unprecedented” success in building the US economy**; asserting in **derisive** language how much smarter and “**stronger**” he is than “the imbeciles” and “weaklings” who came before him in the presidency (especially Obama); reveling in his experience running the Miss Universe Pageant in Moscow, and **obsequiously courting Putin’s admiration and approval**. (Bernstein, 2020)

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⁵¹ “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,” Schwartz wrote. (Glasser, 2020)

⁵² [James] Dolan, like Trump, **appears only in places where he can personally control the audience and the message**. (Leitch, 2019)

⁵³ The President’s critics continue to dismiss him as a cable-TV-obsessed, narcissistic know-nothing even as he dominates American and world politics. What they miss is that Mr. Trump not only possesses an instinctive ability to **dominate** media coverage; he is also a keen judge of power. (Mead, 2019)

⁵⁴ For those few seconds, while he [Trump, booed by the crowd at a World Series baseball game in Washington, DC] stands there trying not to look at anyone, he was fully, purely himself without all the preening excess and pretend swagger, a **guy who doesn't work toward anything except approval**. (Bryant, 2019)

The lengthy interview, which aired late Wednesday night, provided a glimpse of the President and his state of mind on his fifth full day in office. It revealed a man who is **obsessed with his own popularity** and eager to provide evidence of his likability, even if that information does not match reality. (Johnson, 2017)

President Trump, now famously **touchy about his approval ratings**, is not doing well on that front. (Rosenberg, Haberman, & Gardiner, 2017)

⁵⁵ **Harping on difficulty of an Electoral College victory is a way of saying that he [Trump] accomplished the hard part of an election** and of creating an excuse for any potential future failure. Which is tied to another aspect of Trump's insecurity: his childlike **need for constant affirmation**. (Bouie, 2017)

Viewed simply as a pattern of Mr. Trump's speech, the **self-aggrandizement** is singular for an American leader. But his approach is even more extraordinary because he is taking credit and **demanding affirmation** while he asks people to look beyond themselves and bear considerable hardship to help slow the spread of the virus. (Peters, Plott, & Haberman, 2020)

Addressing an audience of Jewish Americans on Saturday, President Donald Trump **clearly relished the chants of four more years** and the peppering of red Make America Great Again hats throughout the crowded ballroom. The Jewish state has never had a better friend in the White House than your president, Donald J. Trump, he proudly told thousands gathered at the Israeli-American Council National Summit before lashing Hillary Clinton, Democrats and the previous administration. (McGraw, 2019)

"His [Trump's] **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," she [Mary Trump] argues. (Lozada, 2020)

⁵⁶ In his phone exchanges with Putin, the sources reported, the President [Trump] **talked mostly about himself**, frequently in over-the-top, **self-aggrandizing** terms: **touting his "unprecedented" success in building the US economy**; asserting in **derisive** language how much smarter and "**stronger**" he is than "the imbeciles" and "weaklings" who came before him in the presidency (especially Obama); reveling in his experience running the Miss Universe Pageant in Moscow, and **obsequiously courting Putin's admiration and approval**. (Bernstein, 2020)

In one of the earliest calls between Putin and Trump, the President's son-in-law Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump were in the room to listen — joining McMaster, Tillerson, Hill, and a State Department aide to Tillerson. // “The call was all over the place,” said an NSC deputy who read a detailed summary of the conversation — with Putin speaking substantively and at length, and **Trump propping himself up** in short autobiographical **bursts of bragging, self-congratulation and flattery** toward Putin. As described to CNN, Kushner and Ivanka Trump were immediately effusive in their praise of how Trump had handled the call — while Tillerson (who knew Putin well from his years in Russia as an oil executive), Hill and McMaster were skeptical. // Hill — author of a definitive biography of Putin — started to explain some of the nuances she perceived from the call, according to CNN's sources — offering insight into Putin's psychology, his typical “smooth-talking” and linear approach and what the Russian leader was trying to achieve in the call. Hill was cut off by Trump, and the President continued discussing the call with Jared and Ivanka, making clear he **wanted to hear the congratulatory evaluation of his daughter and her husband**, rather than how Hill, Tillerson or McMaster judged the conversation. (Bernstein, 2020)

In numerous calls with Putin that were described to CNN, Trump left top national security aides and his chiefs of staff flabbergasted, less because of specific concessions he made than because of his manner — **inordinately solicitous of Putin's admiration** and seemingly **seeking his approval** — while usually ignoring substantive policy expertise and important matters on the standing bilateral agenda, including human rights; and an arms control agreement, which never got dealt with in a way that advanced shared Russian and American goals that both Putin and Trump professed to favor, CNN's sources said. (Bernstein, 2020)

He [Trump] has regularly used hyperbole to try to cast his leadership as historic in scope, even **placing himself in the pantheon of presidents like Lincoln and Roosevelt** who led the nation through some of its darkest moments. “We have done a job, the likes of which nobody has ever done,” he declared at his April 13 briefing. (Peters, Plott, & Haberman, 2020)

⁵⁷ Indeed, Trump has **struggled to maintain unified GOP support for his foreign-policy moves** — often making impulse-driven **decisions that shock Trump's congressional allies and foes alike**. Thursday's vote further underscored the hawk-versus-dove divisions among Republicans when it comes to foreign policy and national security issues. (LeVine & Desiderio, 2020)

⁵⁸ It strikes me that Trump's words and actions — and even this conflict with his advisers — reflect a **President who believes that “maximum pressure”** of the sort he is bringing to bear on Iran can bring the country to the negotiating table, just as he believes it did with North Korea. (Glasser, 2019)

I know more than the general and we have seen it with his long list of situations where he [Trump] basically contradicts his own experts, his own military leaders and **says I'm the military Commander in Chief**. I was elected and **without being briefed or without following the briefing that he gets from his leaders** saying **I'm going with my gut on everything** from whether we should pull troops out of Syria to whether or not we should keep troops in Afghanistan. (Henderson, 2019)

⁵⁹ Mr. Trump is methodically shedding himself of those who have clashed with his views, including Rex W. Tillerson, his secretary of state, who was fired last week. (Landler & Hirschfield Davis, 2018)

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)

⁶⁰ Trump by now was in one of his rages. He was so angry that he wasn't taking many breaths. All morning, he had been coarse and cavalier, but the next several things he bellowed went beyond that description. They stunned nearly everyone in the room, and some vowed that they would never repeat them. Indeed, they have not been reported until now. // **"I wouldn't go to war with you people," Trump told the assembled brass.** // Addressing the room, the commander in chief barked, **"You're a bunch of dopes and babies."** // For a president known for verbiage he euphemistically called "locker room talk," this was the gravest insult he could have delivered to these people, in this sacred space. (Leonning & Rucker, 2020)

Mr. Bush became more alarmed, according to Mr. Updegrave, when Mr. Trump described himself as **"my own advisor."** (Ballhaus, 2017)

⁶¹ Trump has made several misleading claims that have forced government scientists and officials to navigate publicly contradicting a **President who has placed a premium on loyalty**. (Olorunnipa, 2020)

Which brings us, as all things do these days, to Donald Trump — a man who has evident contempt for the rule of law and who, like Louis, **sees no distinction between loyalty to the nation and loyalty to himself**. (Krugman, 2018)

Trump **expects and demands loyalty**, but it only goes in one direction. (Schwartz, 2020)

[Mark] Cuban also said the Covid-19 pandemic has shown the cracks in Trump's leadership. // "I think that Donald doesn't put the best people in place any longer. He did at the beginning [of his presidency], and I was proud of him at the beginning. But now, **he just wants people that are loyal to him** and that's a problem. (Locke, 2020)

In many ways, game five was the perfect storm of Trump booing: **weeks of hiding from anyone but his most loyal supporters**; a month of reveals of his boorish, criminal behavior; ten seconds of angry fans (whose team was about to lose its third game in three nights) having the opportunity to vent their spleen; and his general obliviousness as to how this was going to turn out. (Leitch, 2019)

⁶² **His [Trump's] desire to convey an image of speed and determination** has resulted in executive orders stopped by judicial intervention and a legislature that is quarrelsome and confused. (Continetti, 2017)

In typical Trump fashion, of course, **he [Trump] thought he, the great dealmaker, could finish the job single-handedly**. (Stein, 2020)

“It’s not like the White House doesn’t have a plan to fill his [Trump’s] time productively but at the end of the day he’s in charge of his schedule,” said one person close to the White House. “**He does not like being managed.**” (Dawsey, Isenstadt, & Goldmacher, 2017)

As Mary Trump puts it, “Every one of Donald’s transgressions became **an audition for his father’s favor**, as if he were saying, ‘See, Dad, I’m the tough one. I’m the killer.’” (Lozada, 2020)

⁶³ While the staff sleeps on long airplane rides on foreign trips, Trump sometimes stays up and goes through the entirety of four to five boxes of newspapers, magazines and other printed matter, added a senior White House official. // “**He would literally sit on Air Force One for, like, 12 hours and go through stacks of newspapers,**” marveled one former senior administration official. “**It was amazing how religious he was about his newspapers.**” (Lippman, 2019)

That fits with Trump’s **self-aggrandizing self-image of a vigorous, ageless leader constantly getting things done**. During the 2016 campaign, he told Dr. Mehmet Oz that when he looks in the mirror, “**I would say I see a person who is 35 years old. ... I mean I feel the same.**” (Karni & Cadelago, 2018)

No president has ever run a midterm campaign remotely as **determined** as this president [Trump] will, his objective performance in office is good — the economy, the border, and trade; his only weaknesses are stylistic, but he is a good deal more substantial and even likable than his gutter-sniping enemies. (Black, 2019)

⁶⁴ Erratic and ill-disciplined though Mr. Trump often seems, there’s little doubt that he is proving a **consequential president**. On the evidence so far, **when he says something, he means it** — and when he says something consistently, it will happen. (Abbott, 2018)

The sources did cite some instances in which they said Trump **acted responsibly** and in the national interest during telephone discussions with some foreign leaders. (Bernstein, 2020)

⁶⁵ In a pair of combustible public appearances Wednesday — alongside the unfortunate Finnish President Sauli Niinistö — Trump, as he always does, **met a crisis with all guns blazing**. (Collinson, 2019b)

There is little that's routine about this presidency, but a certain rhythm has set in. Quiet days are followed by **bursts of activity and provocative tweets**, like the programming of a TV drama. (Feldmann, 2019)

In recent months, however, his tweeting appears to have taken an even darker, more **manic**, and more mendacious turn, as Trump struggles to manage the convergence of a massive public-health crisis and a simultaneous economic collapse while running for reelection. (Glasser, 2020)

"I don't know when the president [Trump] sleeps," [Republican Louisiana senator John Kennedy] said of his **manic style**. "He's not depressed or anything. He just really thinks he's being treated unfairly." (Everett & Cook, 2019)

⁶⁶ "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," Schwartz wrote. (Glasser, 2020)

Empathy has never been considered one of Trump's political assets. **He views public displays of sadness as weakness and has made a point of stressing resolve**, even at the risk of overlooking the deep pain afflicting so much of the country. **His favorite words in his televised appearances of recent weeks are "powerful" and "strong."** He talks of "incredible" days ahead without dwelling on the miserable days of now. He plans fireworks while Americans plan funerals. (Baker, 2020a)

⁶⁷ Donald Trump is perhaps the perfect example of an **extrovert**. (Väänänen, 2019)

⁶⁸ By far the most recurring utterances from Mr. Trump in the briefings are **self-congratulations**, roughly 600 of them, which are often predicated on **exaggerations** and **falsehoods**. He does credit others (more than 360 times) for their work, but he also blames others (more than 110 times) for inadequacies in the state and federal response. (Peters, Plott, & Haberman, 2020)

Trump **promptly declares himself a Russia expert, dismissing the expertise of then-Secretary of State Rex Tillerson**, who had worked closely with Putin since the 1990s, when Tillerson was working his way up the ExxonMobil corporate ladder and doing business with Russia. (Parker, 2020)

The President [Trump] has over-promised (such as announcing a Google website that did not exist), **sought undue credit** or tried to pin the blame for the crisis on others. (Kessler, Rizzo, & Kelly, 2020)

By far the most recurring utterances from Mr. Trump in the briefings are **self-congratulations**, roughly 600 of them, which are often predicated on exaggerations and falsehoods. He does credit others (more than 360 times) for their work, but he also blames others (more than 110 times) for inadequacies in the state and federal response. (Peters, Plott, & Haberman, 2020)

Mr. Trump **boasted** about marshaling federal resources to fight the virus, ignoring his early failures and smearing previous administrations. “Nobody has done anything like we’ve been able to do,” he claimed. (Peters, Plott, & Haberman, 2020)

The **self-regard**, the credit-taking, the **audacious rewriting of recent history to cast himself as the hero** of the pandemic rather than the president who was slow to respond: Such have been the defining features of Mr. Trump’s use of the bully pulpit during the coronavirus outbreak. (Peters, Plott, & Haberman, 2020)

Trump has **repeatedly credited his decision to restrict travel from China, saying it saved lives**. While that move may prove to be a key moment in the government’s response to the virus, Trump has also claimed without evidence that there was widespread opposition to the idea and that it was done “against the advice of a lot of great professionals” in his administration. (Olorunnipa, 2020)

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Mr. Trump spoke for nearly two hours and fired the crowd up with a **litany of claims about his accomplishments** during his first three years in office, many of them exaggerated or misleading. (Rogers, 2020)

⁶⁹ The sources said there was little evidence that the President [Trump] became more skillful or competent in his telephone conversations with most heads of state over time. Rather, he continued to **believe that he could either charm, jawbone or bully almost any foreign leader** into capitulating to his will, and often pursued goals more attuned to his own agenda than what many of his senior advisers considered the national interest. (Bernstein, 2020)

As we sat around the Resolute desk, he [Trump] beckoned aides to bring various documents for him to show us: a map marking the demise of ISIS; a birthday greeting from the North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un (“a very nice letter,” Trump called it); **a typed list of his accomplishments as President that he distributed**, one copy for each of us. **The three-page document cites everything from decreased unemployment to pulling out of the Paris climate deal to calling for a defense force for outer space.** (Felsenthal, 2019)

⁷⁰ Like Bolton, CNN’s sources said that the President [Trump] seemed to continually **conflate his own personal interests** — especially for purposes of re-election and revenge against perceived critics and political enemies — **with the national interest.** (Bernstein, 2020)

John R. Bolton, the former national security adviser, plans to publish a damning book next week depicting President Trump as a corrupt, poorly informed, reckless leader who used the power of his office **to advance his own personal and political needs even ahead of the nation’s interests.** (Baker, 2020c)

As for compromise, Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer remain adamant they won’t fund the wall, and **Trump appears adamant** the government will stay closed until they do. (Dennis, 2018)

⁷¹ “With almost every problem, all it takes [in his phone calls] is someone asking him [Trump] to do something as President on behalf of the United States and he doesn’t see it that way; he goes to being ripped off; **he’s not interested in cooperative issues or working on them together**; instead he’s deflecting things or pushing real issues off into a corner,” said a US official. (Bernstein, 2020)

“We were starting to get out on the wrong path, and we really needed to have a course correction and needed to educate, to teach, to help him understand the reason and basis for a lot of these things,” said one senior official involved in the planning. “We needed to change how he thinks about this, to course correct. Everybody was on board, 100 percent agreed with that sentiment. [But] they were dismayed and in shock when not only did it not have the intended effect, but he [Trump] **dug in his heels and pushed it even further on the spectrum, further solidifying his views.**” (Leonning & Rucker, 2020)

Mr. Trump was furious and **insisted for days that he had been correct.** He displayed or posted outdated maps, including one that had been apparently altered with a Sharpie pen to make it look like Alabama had been in the path of the storm. (Friedman & Walker, 2019)

Like a laser, he [Trump] **locks onto a thought or belief and becomes tone deaf to other viewpoints** or existing analysis. He rarely retreats from a position unless forced to by practical reasons or the potential for embarrassment. (Serpico, 2017)

Pentagon sources describe meetings in which senior officials have struggled with what they described as the President's [Trump's] mercurial moods, lack of focus, impulsive decision-making and **resistance to information that doesn't fit his views**. (Starr & Gaouette, 2019)

President Trump **doubled down** on calling the new contagion a "Chinese virus," ignoring a growing chorus of criticism that the term is racist and anti-Chinese. (Ives, 2020)

Mr. Trump has presented himself as someone who **seeks conflict, not conciliation, a fighter, not a peacemaker. And he has lived up to his self-image** at a perilous time. (Baker, 2020b)

⁷² In a provocative new essay, Trump's onetime ghostwriter Tony Schwartz — who wrote Trump's best-selling 1987 book, "The Art of the Deal," but has since turned on him—argues that the Presidency has transformed Trump from an **attention-seeking** narcissist, who spent decades lying about his golf trophies, his sex life, and his real-estate properties, into an ends-justify-the-means ruler who has increasingly and ominously escalated his lies and extreme behavior. (Glasser, 2020)

Reporters love him [Trump] because he's colorful, dramatic, walking-talking click bait. (Noonan, 2015)

According to Jane Mayer in her article in New Yorker magazine, Schwartz considered Trump's personality, "pathological and impulsive." ... Schwartz said it this way: "Dump only takes two positions. Either you're a scummy loser, liar, whatever or you're the greatest" That's Trump all right, dramatic, impulsive, **attention seeking**, lying, no conscience and polarizing. (McIntosh, 2017)

⁷³ Trump's capacity to **browbeat GOP senators into supporting him**, even if some harbor doubts about his behavior reflects his greatest political success — the transformation of the Republican Party in his own fact-denying image. (Collinson, 2020)

⁷⁴ The moment provides a glimpse into why the Trump re-election operation runs on perpetual outrage. Those closest to him know a conventional campaign couldn't regulate a man who scorns political and ethical norms and is **unable to let challenges to his authority pass**. He isn't faking his outrage — about the media, the Mueller report, his opponents — and that anger, whatever its ultimate source, is politically powerful. (Bennett, 2019b)

Prime Minister May ... became "flustered and nervous" in her conversations with the President [Trump]. "**He clearly intimidated her and meant to**," said one of CNN's sources. (Bernstein, 2020)

Trump's conversations with May, the UK Prime Minister from 2016 to 2019, were described as "**humiliating and bullying**," with Trump attacking her as "a fool" and spineless in her approach to Brexit, NATO and immigration matters. // "He'd get **agitated** about something with Theresa May, then he'd get **nasty** with her on the phone call," one source said. "It's the same interaction in every setting — coronavirus or Brexit — with just no filter applied." (Bernstein, 2020)

⁷⁵ In addition to Merkel and May, the sources said, Trump regularly **bullied** and **disparaged** other leaders of the western alliance during his phone conversations — including French President Emmanuel Macron, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison — in the same **hostile** and **aggressive** way he discussed the coronavirus with some of America's governors. (Bernstein, 2020)

But his most **vicious attacks**, said the sources, were aimed at women heads of state. In conversations with both May and Merkel, the President [Trump] demeaned and denigrated them in diatribes described as "**near-sadistic**" by one of the sources and confirmed by others. "Some of the things he said to Angela Merkel are just unbelievable: he called her 'stupid,' and accused her of being in the pocket of the Russians. ... He's toughest [in the phone calls] with those he looks at as weaklings and weakest with the ones he ought to be tough with." // The official described Trump's behavior with Merkel in the calls as "**very aggressive**" and said that the circle of German officials involved in monitoring Merkel's calls with Trump has shrunk: "It's just a small circle of people who are involved and the reason, the main reason, is that they are indeed problematic." (Bernstein, 2020)

"**I like conflict**," he [Trump] joyfully observed on Tuesday when a reporter asked about turmoil in his Cabinet. "I like watching it, I like seeing it." (Saletan, 2018)

Meanwhile, the President [Trump] **regularly bullied and demeaned the leaders of America's principal allies**, especially two women: telling Prime Minister Theresa May of the United Kingdom she was weak and lacked courage; and telling German Chancellor Angela Merkel that she was "stupid." (Bernstein, 2020)

⁷⁶ To understand how this catastrophe occurred, one would have to examine how the broader culture of insatiable greed and **competitive** vanity that Trump embodies took hold in India. (Mishra, 2020)

⁷⁷ Adds Michael Doyle, a professor of international relations at Columbia University in New York and a former assistant secretary-general of the U.N.: "**For Trump, cooperation is a one-way street**. It's others accepting a series of policies, a series of priorities that the president himself cites and a vision he himself holds, and insisting that others simply follow them. It's all 'my way or the highway,' but that's not an approach that others are likely to find enticing." (LaFranchi, 2019)

⁷⁸ **Aggressive, flamboyant, unpredictable, and combative**, Trump's impulsivity has benefited him as a businessman and as a candidate, but not as a president. (Continetti, 2017)

Irritable and combative — he [Trump] often cut others off with “Excuse me!” and complained of “fake news” — Trump refused to judge the white nationalists on a “moral plane” and repeated his argument that blame for the ugliness should be distributed among both the racists and anti-racists. (D’Antonio, 2017)

During the combative news conference Wednesday, Trump **lashed out at the media**, accusing journalists of undermining U.S. democracy and being “corrupt people.” (Noack & O’Grady, 2019)

Trump’s invective offers a window into how he wields power — by creating a **charged and chaotic** political atmosphere in which he seems more comfortable than other leaders. (Collinson, 2019c)

He [Trump] roars into any melee he finds, **encouraging street uprisings** against public health measures advanced by his own government, hurling made-up murder charges against a critic, accusing his predecessor of unspecified crimes, **vowing to crack down** on a social media company that angered him and then seemingly **threatening to meet violence with violence** in Minneapolis. (Baker, 2020b)

George gets under Donald’s very thin skin because **Trump’s temper is so frighteningly volcanic** and because he’s used to being lathered with praise by a docile staff so anxious to avoid it, they’re afraid to mention the egregious things he does. (Carlson, 2019)

The insidious effect of the conversations comes from Trump’s tone, his **raging outbursts** at allies while fawning over authoritarian strongmen, his ignorance of history and lack of preparation as much as it does from the troubling substance, according to the sources. (Bernstein, 2020)

[French president] Macron usually got “nowhere” on substantive matters, while Trump became **irritated** at the French President’s stream of requests and subjected him to **self-serving** harangues and lectures that were described by one source as personalized **verbal “whippings,”** especially about France and other countries not meeting NATO spending targets, their liberal immigration policies or their trade imbalances with the US. (Bernstein, 2020)

Dunford tried to come to Nicholson’s defense, but the mild-mannered general struggled to convey his points to the **irascible** president. (Leonning & Rucker, 2020)

In the West Wing, **Trump is a temperamental commander-in-chief, prone to bursts of anger that dissipate as quickly as they came on.** (Merica, 2017)

⁷⁹ Adds Michael Doyle, a professor of international relations at Columbia University in New York and a former assistant secretary-general of the U.N.: “**For Trump, cooperation is a one-way street.** It’s others accepting a series of policies, a series of priorities that the president himself cites and a vision he himself holds, and insisting that others simply follow them. It’s all ‘my way or the highway,’ but that’s not an approach that others are likely to find enticing.” (LaFranchi, 2019)

Mr. Trump was furious and insisted for days that he had been correct. **He displayed or posted outdated maps, including one that had been apparently altered with a Sharpie pen** to make it look like Alabama had been in the path of the storm. (Friedman & Walker, 2019)

The more the conversation continued, the more the binary distinctions between truth and falsehood blurred, the telltale sign of a veteran and **strategic misleader** [Trump] who knows enough to leave himself an escape route when he tosses a bomb. (Scherer, 2017)

⁸⁰ Like many other Trump critics, I believed that he was driven by an insatiable narcissistic hunger to be loved, accepted, admired, and praised. That remains prima facie true, but it deflects attention from what drives Trump more deeply: **the need to dominate. His primary goal is to win at any cost and the end always justifies the means.** Ultimately, he doesn’t care what anyone else thinks or feels. (Schwartz, 2020)

⁸¹ One thing people who have never interacted with Trump don’t get is how incredibly **solicitous** he is — particularly of the media. He wants to be seen as a good guy and a smart guy... It’s almost as though all of his rhetoric about the “fake news” is just a ploy to throw red meat to his base! (Cillizza, 2018b)

Trump was suppressing his natural Trump-ness: Trump, for anyone who knows him, is hugely (and overly) **solicitous** one-on-one. This is true when dealing with reporters, politicians or world leaders. (Yes, **Trump is flattering with reporters one-on-one**). (Cillizza, 2018a)

⁸² His 90-minute Q&A in the East Room of the White House on Wednesday was expansive, combative, boastful, gripping, outlandish, **conciliatory**, amusing — and unlike any postelection news conference we’ve ever seen (even without Trump mentioning, by the by, that he was firing his attorney general). (Lowry, 2018)

⁸³ He [Trump] even **praised** the media — whom he accused last week of trying to “inflame the CoronaVirus situation far beyond what the facts would warrant” — for recent coverage of his administration’s response to the crisis. (Orr & Cook, 2020)

⁸⁴ Trump was suppressing his natural Trump-ness: Trump, for anyone who knows him, is hugely (and overly) **solicitous** one-on-one. This is true when dealing with reporters, politicians or world leaders. (Yes, **Trump is flattering with reporters one-on-one**). (Cillizza, 2018a)

His [Trump’s] **obsessive tweets** and **overheated blasts** calling the news media “the enemy of the American people” serve the president’s political purposes. (Abramson, 2017)

⁸⁵ In lashing out at the British government and its envoy, Trump showed familiar traits — he’s **thin skinned and reacts poorly to public criticism** — even when it comes from a country and a government he’s often rebuked himself. And he rarely lets pass a chance for revenge. (Collinson, 2019a)

He [Trump] has often spouted contempt at the news media, which **he says never gives him the credit** he deserves. (Peters, Plott, & Haberman, 2020)

Unfortunately, the speech won’t be remembered for any of that because the president [Trump] went off script to attack the media and **claim that none of his predecessors has been treated as badly as he**. (Continetti, 2017)

“He [Trump] knows he has never been loved.” The president **withdraws to comfort zones such as Twitter and Fox News because “he is and always will be a terrified little boy.”** And she [Mary Trump] contends that Trump has been “institutionalized” for most of his adult life, in that he has been shielded from his shortcomings — whether by his father bailing him out of terrible investments or by a federal government now deployed to protect his ego. (Lozada, 2020)

⁸⁶ Trump promised he would “take just a second” to re-litigate how the events unfolded. He proceeded to lambast the media response to his remarks for almost 25 minutes, finding tangents in every direction that revealed an angry, **defensive** President. (Liptak, 2017)

⁸⁷ Still, the President [Trump] has **bristled at negative media coverage** since Mulvaney’s news conference and has sought to reshape the narrative on his own. On Monday, Trump followed his hour-long televised Cabinet remarks with a taped interview with Fox News host Sean Hannity. (Olorunnipa & Costa, 2019)

Trump has been adamant about discrediting the media because the media has discredited him. (Peters, 2019a)

⁸⁸ In a pair of combustible public appearances Wednesday — alongside the unfortunate Finnish President Sauli Niinistö — Trump, as he always does, met a crisis with all guns blazing. // The President **bickered bitterly with reporters**, mocked his enemies with juvenile nicknames, twisted the facts of his own conduct and bemoaned how unfairly he’d been treated. // His unhinged mood was encapsulated in an encounter between the President and Jeff Mason of Reuters, one of the most down-the-line and courteous reporters in Washington. (Collinson, 2019b)

He’s [Trump] constantly sharing useful Fox News clips with his millions of followers on Twitter and has in the past **criticized** the network when it dared to step outside a pro-Trump orthodoxy. (Bump, 2019)

During the combative news conference Wednesday, Trump **lashed out at the media**, accusing journalists of undermining U.S. democracy and being “corrupt people.” (Noack & O’Grady, 2019)

⁸⁹ More than any president in living memory, Donald Trump has conducted a **dogged, remorseless assault** on the press. He portrays the news media not only as a **dedicated adversary** of his administration but of the entire body politic. These attacks have forced the media where it does not want to be, at the center of the political debate. (Edsall, 2018)

Trump almost daily **accuses the media of bias and threatens** them with libel action. It took Trump’s lawyers less than 48 hours to issue a “cease and desist” threat to Wolff’s publishers. (Luce, 2018)

⁹⁰ “**Trump is a guy of action. He likes to move,**” said Chris Ruddy, a close friend. “He doesn’t necessarily worry about all the collateral damage or the consequences.” (Dawsey, Isenstadt, & Goldmacher, 2017)

⁹¹ In his conversations with both Putin and Erdogan, Trump took special delight in trashing former Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama and **suggested that dealing directly with him** — Trump — would be far more fruitful than during previous administrations. “They didn’t know BS,” he said of Bush and Obama — one of several derisive tropes the sources said he favored when discussing his predecessors with the Turkish and Russian leaders. (Bernstein, 2020)

⁹² Ever **disdainful of experts**, Trump has yet to wear a protective face mask in public despite guidance from federal health authorities and the White House coronavirus task force. (Stokols, 2020)

Mr. Bush became more alarmed, according to Mr. Updegrove, when Mr. Trump described himself as “**my own advisor.**” (Ballhaus, 2017)

⁹³ “**He’s very much his own man,**” [Roger] Stone said of Trump. “This is not a guy who’s ever told what to do, what to say, where to go, who he can meet with, who he can’t meet with, who he can talk to, who he can’t talk to, where he can travel to. **He’s really a free spirit and he deeply resents attempts to handle him or manage him or control him.** Which is why ultimately I believe General Kelly will fail.” (Kruse, 2017)

McMaster viewed that early phone call with Putin as indicative of the conduct of the whole relationship between Russia and the Trump administration, according to the sources — a conclusion subsequent national security advisers and chiefs of staff, and numerous high-ranking intelligence officials also reached: unlike in previous administrations, there were relatively few meaningful dealings between military and diplomatic professionals, even at the highest levels, because Trump — **distrustful of the experts and dismissive of their attempts to brief him — conducted the relationship largely ad hoc with Putin and almost totally by himself.** Ultimately, Putin and the Russians learned that “nobody has the authority to do anything” — and the Russian leader used that insight to his advantage, as one of CNN’s sources said. (Bernstein, 2020)

⁹⁴ As leading public health experts from across the government have tried to provide clear and consistent information about the deadly coronavirus, they have found their **messages undercut, drowned out and muddled by President Trump’s push to downplay the outbreak** with a mix of optimism, bombast and pseudoscience. (Olorunnipa, 2020)

Less than 24 hours after formally being acquitted by the Senate, President Donald Trump ruffed for over an hour from inside the White House — a **vengeful, angry, fact-challenged spew** of score-settling that even for this most **unorthodox** of presidents was eye-opening in its tone and jaw-dropping in its boundary busting. (Cillizza, 2020)

⁹⁵ Loose and jovial, the president [Trump] **quickly eased into his trademark extemporaneous riffs**, evoking enthusiastic boos and cheers from the crowd adorned with red Trump-Pence signs and various “Keep America Great” accessories. “With your help on November 3, we are going to defeat the radical, socialist Democrats,” Trump said. (Greenberg, McGrane, & Pindell, 2020)

He [Trump] was in a jovial mood, according to people who spoke with him, engaging in **animated** conversations with chief executives like Brian Moynihan of Bank of America, Sundar Pichai of Alphabet and Marc Benioff of Salesforce. (Karni, Gelles, & Baker, 2020)

⁹⁶ Grounded at home, the president. [Trump] **has replaced the campaign rallies with his near-daily briefings** at the White House on the pandemic. These news conferences have also been a rich source of misinformation. (Kessler, Rizzo, & Kelly, 2020)

“There is a certain kind of genius to winning the presidency like it was an entry-level job,” said Dave Shiflett, the co-writer of Trump’s first book about his political views, “The America We Deserve,” which was published in 2000. **“To go into those campaign rallies with just a few notes and connect with people he [Trump] wasn’t at all like, that takes a certain genius. His genius is he’ll say anything to connect with people. He won by telling the rally crowds that the people who didn’t like them also didn’t like him.”** (Fischer, 2018)

He [Trump] draws energy from **raucous rallies** in which he routinely speaks for more than hour and basks in the adoration of his most fervent supporters. (Page, 2019)

⁹⁷ “There is a certain kind of genius to winning the presidency like it was an entry-level job,” said Dave Shiflett, the co-writer of Trump’s first book about his political views, “The America We Deserve,” which was published in 2000. **“To go into those campaign rallies with just a few notes and connect with people he wasn’t at all like, that takes a certain genius. His genius is he’ll say anything to connect with people. He won by telling the rally crowds that the people who didn’t like them also didn’t like him.”** (Fischer, 2018)

“I think he’s [Trump’s] ultra gifted in the things in politics you need for relationship-building,” he said. “He’s an impresario at this stuff.” Added Ticktin, the pro-Trump NYMA classmate: “Normal socializing with people, I don’t think that’s ever really been his thing. But he knows how to work a room. He’s charming, and **he knows how to connect with people in a room** and make them feel like they’ve been acknowledged.” (Kruse, 2017)

⁹⁸ Trump’s reluctance to assemble a war room inside the West Wing is shaped in part by **his confidence in his ability to defend himself**, according to advisers who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations. (Olorunnipa & Costa, 2019)

This was consistent with the **nonchalance that Mr. Trump has tried to project about impeachment** and questions of his political vulnerabilities. (Peters, 2019b)

Even after Mr. Azar first briefed him about the potential seriousness of the virus during a phone call on Jan. 18 while the president was at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida, **Mr. Trump projected confidence** that it would be a passing problem. (Lipton, Sanger, Haberman, Shear, Mazzetti, & Barnes, 2020)

Trump, who has been a polarizing, **name-calling and often chaotic president, is publicly expressing confidence** about his re-election prospects in 2020. (Holland & Rampton, 2019)

President Trump expressed **confidence** Friday that he could rally recalcitrant Republicans around legislation strengthening background checks and persuade the nation’s powerful gun lobby to drop its long-standing opposition to such measures, tasks that have proved elusive following other mass shootings on his watch. (Dawsey, Wagner, & Kim, 2019)

But he [Trump] again **emphasized that the crisis was not as bad as many imagine**. “Compared to other places, **we are in really good shape**,” he said, “and we want to keep it that way.” (Baker & Haberman, 2020)

Administration officials Monday played down GOP anxiety as passing and typical of difficult junctures for Trump, but congressional allies said they remain uneasy about the president’s freewheeling style amid multiple investigative and political threats — and said they are making that clear to the president, **who remains confident in his abilities**. (Olorunnipa & Costa, 2019)

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Mr. Trump appeared **heedless of his staff, unconcerned about Washington decorum, or the latest stock market dive, and confident of his instincts**. (Landler & Hirschfield Davis, 2018)

⁹⁹ The calls with Putin and Erdogan were particularly egregious in terms of Trump **almost never being prepared substantively** and thus leaving him susceptible to being taken advantage of in various ways, according to the sources. ... (Bernstein, 2020)

In hundreds of highly classified phone calls with foreign heads of state, President Donald Trump was so **consistently unprepared for discussion of serious issues, so often outplayed in his conversations with powerful leaders** like Russian President Vladimir Putin and Turkish President Recep Erdogan, and so abusive to leaders of America's principal allies, that the calls helped convince some senior US officials — including his former secretaries of state and defense, two national security advisers and his longest-serving chief of staff — that the President himself posed a danger to the national security of the United States, according to White House and intelligence officials intimately familiar with the contents of the conversations. (Bernstein, 2020)

Two sources compared many of the President's conversations with foreign leaders to Trump's recent press "briefings" on the coronavirus pandemic: **free form, fact-deficient stream-of-consciousness ramblings, full of fantasy and off-the-wall pronouncements based on his intuitions**, guesswork, the opinions of Fox News TV hosts and social media misinformation. (Bernstein, 2020)

¹⁰⁰ A **bored and distracted** Trump, scowling with his arms crossed, dismissed what he was being told, declared that America's allies were ripping it off, meandered into asking whether they had seen the French president's aggressive handshake and then free-associated into his enthusiasm for France's Bastille Day military parade — demanding a "Victory Day" parade of his own, with tanks rolling through Washington. (Savage, 2019)

Mattis, Cohn, and Tillerson and their aides decided to use maps, graphics, and charts to tutor the president [Trump], figuring they would help **keep him from getting bored**. (Leonning & Rucker, 2020)

Trump appeared peeved by the schoolhouse vibe but also allergic to the dynamic of his advisers talking at him. **His ricocheting attention span** led him to repeatedly interrupt the lesson. He heard an adviser say a word or phrase and then seized on that to interject with his take. (Leonning & Rucker, 2020)

Bannon [is] just one of the many Trump insiders who are quoted in an explosive, new book that paints a personal portrait of an incapable, **disinterested, distracted**, paranoid, petty, petulant President of the United States. // [Richard Painter said] "... He's very paranoid. He is paranoid about Robert Mueller and the investigation. He is paranoid about the press and thinks the press is out to get him." (Burnett, 2018)

¹⁰¹ **Almost never**, according to CNN's sources, **would Trump read the briefing materials prepared for him** by the CIA and NSC staff in advance of his calls with heads of state. (Bernstein, 2020)

The calls with Putin and Erdogan were particularly egregious in terms of Trump **almost never being prepared substantively** and thus leaving him susceptible to being taken advantage of in various ways, according to the sources. ... (Bernstein, 2020)

John R. Bolton, the former national security adviser, plans to publish a damning book next week depicting President Trump as a **corrupt, poorly informed, reckless** leader who **used the power of his office to advance his own personal and political needs even ahead of the nation's interests**. (Baker, 2020c)

President Donald Trump was often so **unprepared** for calls with foreign leaders that he was coached by several staff members and advisers as the calls took place to avoid veering off track, a source familiar with the calls through White House chief of staff John Kelly's tenure, which ended in December 2018, told CNN. (Gangel & Vazquez, 2019)

In hundreds of highly classified phone calls with foreign heads of state, President Donald Trump was so **consistently unprepared for discussion** of serious issues, so often outplayed in his conversations with powerful leaders like Russian President Vladimir Putin and Turkish President Recep Erdogan, and so abusive to leaders of America's principal allies, that the calls helped convince some senior US officials — including his former secretaries of state and defense, two national security advisers and his longest-serving chief of staff — that the President himself posed a danger to the national security of the United States, according to White House and intelligence officials intimately familiar with the contents of the conversations. (Bernstein, 2020)

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¹⁰² In Trump, we have a frightening Venn diagram consisting of three circles: The first is extreme present hedonism [Outgoing pattern]; the second, narcissism [Ambitious pattern]; and the third, bullying behavior [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, Sheehy, Zimbardo, Sword, & Gilligan, 2017)

Trump has also turned his **impulsive** style of diplomacy toward the intractable problem of North Korea’s nuclear program. (Bennett, 2019c)

His [Trump’s] decisions **are made on impulse, driven by impulse, with no thought of future consequences or reflection** on past mistakes. Unlike most of us who worry about the impact of our most controversial actions, Trump responds recklessly to assuage his ego needs. (Sheehy & Sword, 2018)

Trump’s **lack of impulse control** hinders him, his administration, and his party. (Geraghty, 2019)

But something very different is going on in the Republican Party today. It has become the institutional expression of Donald Trump’s distorted and **impulsive personality**. (Wehner, 2018)

Indeed, Trump has struggled to maintain unified GOP support for his foreign-policy moves — often making **impulse-driven** decisions that shock Trump’s congressional allies and foes alike. Thursday’s vote further underscored the hawk-versus-dove divisions among Republicans when it comes to foreign policy and national security issues. (LeVine & Desiderio, 2020)

The traits that might earn Mr. Trump a diagnosis of personality disorder were on display during the election campaign. His supporters judged that egotism was compatible with leadership. He is governing as he campaigned. He is **impulsive**, erratic, belligerent and vengeful. (Kramer & Satel, 2017)

Democrats, some of whom support a more adversarial economic relationship with China, have nonetheless criticized Trump’s penchant for making **impulsive moves** that have enraged farmers and businesses. (Paletta, 2019)

¹⁰³ These anecdotes complement previous reports that Trump demands that he be given a folder of positive news about himself twice a day. With the assistance of family members and employees who have scrambled to avoid the president’s unpredictable rage, Trump has been able to cocoon himself in reports of his own competence, outsourcing the fallout from his scam-riddled campaign and presidency to others in his orbit. He seems unable or **unwilling to consider inevitable consequences**, pursuing momentary comfort over necessary conflict every time. (Cauterucci, 2019)

The calls caused former top Trump deputies — including national security advisers H.R. McMaster and John Bolton, Defense Secretary James Mattis, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, and White House chief of staff John Kelly, as well as intelligence officials — to conclude that the President was often “**delusional**,” as two sources put it, in his dealings with foreign leaders. (Bernstein, 2020)

¹⁰⁴ In Trump, we have a frightening Venn diagram consisting of three circles: The first is extreme present hedonism [Outgoing pattern]; the second, narcissism [Ambitious pattern]; and the third, bullying behavior [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, Sheehy, Zimbardo, Sword, & Gilligan, 2017)

¹⁰⁵ When the first Manafort indictment came down in 2017, the *Wall Street Journal* reassured its readers that Trump was guilty of nothing more than “**poor judgement**” in hiring a “notorious Beltway operator,” as it called the man who had been directing Russian overseas political operations in Ukraine. (Chait, 2019)

As the coronavirus has engulfed his presidency, Donald Trump has grown insular and paranoid, retreating to the comfort zones he’s enjoyed at other **scandal points in office** and lashing out against perceived foes with a mix of defiance and impetuosity. (Suebsaeng & Stein, 2020)

¹⁰⁶ His mercurial **temperament** and thin skin make every day a new and potentially dark drama. (Pennington, 2017)

For whoever occupies the White House, policy differences with Europe — sometimes vehement ones — are nothing new. But Trump’s first visit as president prompted a wave of trepidation not only over issues ranging from climate change to women’s roles in society, but also his **impulsive mode of governance and mercurial temperament**. (Kirschbaum & King, 2017)

This is all about reminding Republican-leaning college-educated whites that a vote for the GOP ticket isn’t just a vote for Trump — whose racist campaign, **erratic temperament**, and abusive streak have alienated those voters — but also for the GOP agenda they’ve repeatedly voted for in the past. (Sargent, 2016)

¹⁰⁷ Trump came to the presidency with both a **complete lack of government experience** and grandly confident claims and promises. His inexperience stood in marked contrast to his opponent’s long and impressive list of credentials. (Moore, 2017)

¹⁰⁸ Trump’s **lack of impulse control** hinders him, his administration, and his party. (Geraghty, 2019)

But something very different is going on in the Republican Party today. It has become the institutional expression of Donald Trump's distorted and **impulsive personality**. (Wehner, 2018)

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It was a summit Trump had **impulsively** asked for, with **little pre-planning**, based on his faith in his negotiating prowess and his penchant for making a dramatic and historic show, a U.S. official familiar with the matter [Trump's cancelled plan to have Afghanistan's president meet with Taliban leaders at Camp David] says. (Bennett, 2019c)

Pentagon sources describe meetings in which senior officials have struggled with what they described as the President's (Trump's) mercurial moods, lack of focus, **impulsive decision-making** and resistance to information that doesn't fit his views. (Starr & Gaouette, 2019)

Trump's immediate and voracious appetites allow **no concern for others or understanding of tomorrow. He reacts instinctively**, not emotionally, morally or intellectually. He is insensitive to truth and incapable of discipline or strategy. (Castellanos, 2019)

¹⁰⁹ The transcripts show striking patterns and repetitions in the messages he [Trump] has conveyed, revealing a display of presidential **hubris** and self-pity unlike anything historians say they have seen before. (Peters, Plott, & Haberman, 2020)

The legitimate criticisms of President Trump are mostly the ones that were obvious to critics such as myself in 2016: He does not really know how to do the job and so has trouble with basic things like staffing his administration and moving his legislative priorities through Congress; he is mercurial and inconstant; he lies, even when there isn't any reason to, seemingly out of habit; **he is vain** and emotionally incontinent, which distorts his decision-making; he has surrounded himself with some very shady and untrustworthy people; he has some pretty loopy ideas about trade and about America's role in the world. (Williamson, 2019)

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