12-1-2023

Psychology in a Podcast Context: Do Brand Personality Perceptions and Social Nudges Explain Consumers' Behavioral Intentions to Subscribe to Breaking Points?

Stephen D. Berry
Southern Illinois University Carbondale, sdbpsychology@gmail.com

PSYCHOLOGY IN A PODCAST CONTEXT:
DO BRAND PERSONALITY PERCEPTIONS AND SOCIAL NUDGES EXPLAIN
CONSUMERS' BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS TO SUBSCRIBE TO *BREAKING POINTS*?

by

Stephen D. Berry

A.S., Arkansas State University, 2014
B.S., Arkansas State University, 2016
M.S., Arkansas State University, 2019

A Dissertation
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Doctor of Philosophy Degree

School of Psychological and Behavioral Sciences
in the Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
December 2023

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

PSYCHOLOGY IN A PODCAST CONTEXT:
DO BRAND PERSONALITY PERCEPTIONS AND SOCIAL NUDGES EXPLAIN
CONSUMERS' BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS TO SUBSCRIBE TO *BREAKING POINTS*?

by

Stephen D. Berry

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the field of Psychology

Approved by:

Dr. Reza Habib, Chair

Dr. Wayne Wilkinson, Co-Chair

Dr. Eric Jacobs

Dr. Rachel Whaley

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
October 23, 2023

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Stephen D. Berry, for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Psychology, presented on October 23, 2023, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: PSYCHOLOGY IN A PODCAST CONTEXT: DO BRAND PERSONALITY PERCEPTIONS AND SOCIAL NUDGES EXPLAIN CONSUMERS' BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS TO SUBSCRIBE TO *BREAKING POINTS*?

MAJOR PROFESSORS: Dr. Reza Habib and Dr. Wayne Wilkinson

Two psychological variables are of interest in the study of consumers: brand personality perceptions (per social cognition, beliefs that brands exhibit human-like attributes) and nudges (per behavioral economics, an attempt to influence behavioral change that benefits the consumer without taking away their right to choose). However, no known research exists about whether these variables explain behavioral intentions to consume podcasts, specifically. This is relevant because perceptions of mass media brands are historically negative, and consumers increasingly seek out independent media (e.g., *Breaking Points*). Therefore, this dissertation's purpose was to use *Breaking Points* as an example to study the influence of brand personality and nudges on behavioral intentions to subscribe to a podcast. In two survey experiments (total $N = 486$ United States adults recruited via CloudResearch's Connect), brand personality perceptions (i.e., sincerity, competence, status) were hypothesized to explain intentions to subscribe. Likewise, those exposed to the potential nudge were expected to report stronger intentions, compared to those unexposed. All participants viewed a description about and a clip from the podcast. Some were also randomly assigned to view a potential nudge from *Breaking Points'* YouTube channel. Then, all participants answered questions about the podcast's brand personality, about intentions to subscribe, and about psychographics. In both experiments, hierarchical regression revealed that brand personality significantly explained behavioral intentions while controlling for potential confounds (average $R^2 = 40\%$). The findings provide evidence that brand personality

knowledge can expand into podcasts. In contrast, future research should investigate other stimuli that could potentially nudge podcast consumers.

Keywords: brand personality perceptions, nudge, behavioral intentions, podcasts, media

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation, and all these years spent pursuing my dream of obtaining a Ph.D. in Psychology, to those who have positively impacted my life (past and present, named and unnamed). For each section, those named are listed in alphabetical order of last name.

Through my family who I love dearly (e.g., my twin brother Scott Berry, my mother Terry Berry), I discovered the value of psychology, resilience, and empathy.

Through professors met during my time at A-State (e.g., Dr. Jessica Curtis, Dr. Wayne Wilkinson, Dr. Karen Yanowitz), I discovered the value of academic research, teaching, and service.

Through friends met during my time at A-State (e.g., Hannah Gliemann, Prathik Harikrishnan, Blake Higdon, Brandon Higdon, Jakob McGowen, Makenna McGowen [née Budding], Tabitha O'Neal, Emily Raibley [née Johnson], Ethan Reed, Jarod Roberts), I discovered the value of seeking enlightenment by connecting with passionate colleagues.

Through colleagues met during my time at SIU (e.g., Dr. Emily Galeza, Dr. Chasity Ratliff, Malinda Suprise), I discovered the value of applied research, consulting, and leadership.

Through friends met during my time at SIU (e.g., Victoria Arndt, Jennifer Brantley, Aarren Minneyfield, Aradhna Mohan, Jackie Spence), I discovered the value of living life beyond school and work.

I close this dedication by quoting Kumiko, a character from the film *The Karate Kid Part II* and from the series *Cobra Kai*: "Put good into the world, and good will come back to you." To those who positively impacted my life, thank you for bringing good into my world. I truly hope I have brought good into yours.

–Stephen Dennis Berry

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The market exists primarily because the consumer exists…the consumer must be dealt

with as a psychological individual, as well as an organic, economic or political unit.

(Hollingworth & Poffenberger, 1923, p. 280)

As the discipline of psychology began to diverge from philosophy to pursue scientific

endeavors, there was great interest in applying the findings of laboratory-based research. Such

interest was reflected by Hollingworth and Poffenberger (1923), who were among many

researchers who highlighted the importance of studying consumers through research about

variables related to the use of products and services (Ajzen, 2008; Bettman, 1986; Kardes &

Herr, 2019; Sirgy, 1982). Of particular interest is brand personality perceptions, a variable that

emerged during the Cognitive Revolution in which researchers investigated the psychological

processes that explain consumer behavior and proxy variables like behavioral intentions (Dobni

& Zinkhan, 1990).

Brand personality perceptions is defined as the extent to which people associate human

attributes with a company's brand (i.e., sincerity, competence, and status; Davies et al., 2018), in

which a brand represents the public image of a company that is distinct from that of other

companies (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022). For example, Aaker (1997) found that United States

consumers commonly associated the brand personality attribute of competence to the *Wall Street*

Journal (i.e., the brand), in which Dow Jones (i.e., the company) sells news products under the

Wall Street Journal brand. The *Wall Street Journal* is a distinct news media brand, yet it is also

imitable as evident by the abundance of other companies that sell news products other under

brands (e.g., Jeff Bezos' Nash Holdings company selling news products under the *Washington*

Post brand). Understanding how consumers perceive brands is vital for companies because companies engage with consumers through signals regarding its prominence in consumers' lives (e.g., behavioral nudging in the form of social nudges) and through signals regarding information about its sincerity, competence, and status (i.e., brand personality perceptions); both can potentially influence behavioral intentions to consume a product (Juster, 1966; Kim & Sung, 2013; Priester et al., 2022; Spence, 1973; Thaler & Sunstein, 2008).

However, people's perceptions about mass media brands such as the *Wall Street Journal* have become more negative since the early 2000s (Brenan, 2022). Pew Research Center (2020) found that 52% of United States consumers reported little to no confidence that journalists from mass media brands "act in the best interests of the public." As a result, consumers are increasingly seeking out independent forms of news media. Thus, a valuable context to explore brand personality perceptions and related variables would be independent news media that is delivered to consumers via digital media, such as podcasts. In brief, podcasts are digital files that allow for listening to various kinds of informational content (e.g., news commentary, interviews) at any time via the Internet (MasterClass, 2021). Data from Statista (Götting, 2023) revealed the presence of approximately 82 million United States podcast listeners in 2021, and Pew Research Center (2021a) found that approximately 41% of United States adults listened to a podcast in the past month. In 2022, Pew Research Center reported that approximately 25% of United States adults consume news from podcasts. Pew Research Center (2023a) also reported that 55% of United States podcast listeners view learning as a major reason they listen to podcasts; likewise, 29% reported that "staying up to date about current events is a major reason they listen to podcasts."

One increasing form of podcast consumption entails news podcasts from independent

content creators. For example, Breaking Points LLC (i.e., a company founded in 2021 by journalists Krystal Ball and Saagar Enjeti) launched an independent news podcast under the brand *Breaking Points*, which continues to be a top-rated podcast in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2023b). In addition to the podcast hosted by Ball and Enjeti, the company frequently collaborates with other independent content creators (e.g., Ryan Grim and Emily Jashinsky, James Li, Spencer Snyder) to provide supplemental podcast episodes. To access the podcast's episodes, consumers can subscribe to *Breaking Points* for free on YouTube or on podcast platforms like Spotify. If consumers want to pay for exclusive content and for early access to the podcast's episodes, they can choose from one of three premium subscription options: monthly (i.e., $10 USD per month), yearly (i.e., $100 USD per year), or lifetime (i.e., $1,500 USD per lifetime). Based on a content analysis by Pew Research Center (2023b), *Breaking Points* shares common attributes with other top-rated podcasts in the United States (e.g., seeks financial support from the audience, features deep reporting and commentary).

Although podcast platforms rarely disclose precise data on the number of subscribers to any given podcast (S. Enjeti, personal communication, January 16, 2023), notable pieces of publicly available information can be reviewed to gauge *Breaking Points*' popularity. In 2021, it became the number one news podcast within a week of its launch and retained that title for several weeks (Berkowitz, 2021). In 2022, *Breaking Points* was in the top 1% most shared podcasts globally on Spotify (Breaking Points LLC, 2022a); likewise, it averaged in the top 10 news commentary podcasts on Spotify (S. Enjeti, personal communication, January 16, 2023). As of January 2023, *Breaking Points* had an average "tens of millions" of downloads on Spotify per year (S. Enjeti, personal communication, January 16, 2023). As of November 2023, the podcast had approximately 1.06 million subscribers on YouTube, reprised its status as the most

popular news podcast on Spotify in the United States, and featured an average 4.6 out of 5.0 rating based on approximately 25,000 reviews on Spotify.

Given its prevalence as an independent news media brand, it is of great interest to implement *Breaking Points* as a point of reference to investigate brand personality perceptions and related variables that may influence behavioral intentions (e.g., to subscribe to *Breaking Points*). Again, consideration of brand personality perceptions as a variable assumes that companies and their brands constantly signal information about themselves to consumers (e.g., sincerity, competence, status). Companies may also signal information to consumers through behavioral nudging, such as social nudges. For instance, Breaking Points LLC posted the following YouTube community message on its YouTube channel: "Our Spotify Wrapped is in for 2022 and we couldn't be more AMAZED to be in the top 1% most shared [podcasts] globally. Thank you to all our new listeners and dedicated long time audiences that keep tuning in every single morning. Cheers to all of you!" (Breaking Points LLC, 2022a). Another example entails reading comments on the aforementioned channel post, such as: "Let me just say this. You guys are doing so well because people (including myself) trust you. Not because we agree with you, not because we know we'll hear exactly what we want to hear but because you guys give honest perspectives on whatever it is you choose to report on…" (Meserve, 2022).

Both examples warrant testing for potential nudging effects because non-subscribers may consider subscribing to the podcast if they perceive that many other people are already subscribed or if they observe the positive opinions of others who are already subscribed (Thaler & Sunstein, 2021). Furthermore, based on prior research, social influence-based behavioral nudges can influence perceptions about a company's brand (Levitan & Verhulst, 2015; Prasetyo, 2020). In fact, the YouTube comment of Meserve (2022) evokes the brand personality attribute

4

of sincerity in their evaluation of *Breaking Points* by mentioning trust and honesty (see Aaker, 1997 and Davies et al., 2018).

Therefore, the purpose of the present dissertation is to use *Breaking Points* as a real-world example to study the influence of consumers' brand personality perceptions and companies' potential social nudges on consumers' behavioral intentions (i.e., intentions to subscribe to a podcast). The present dissertation can also be framed as addressing two key gaps in psychological literature to achieve methodological and theoretical contributions. Regarding the first literature gap, few studies have investigated the influence of brand personality perceptions and social nudges on behavioral intentions in digital media contexts. Of 11,852 peer-reviewed academic journal articles related to brand personality (per a search on the EBSCOhost database in November 2023), only 107 journal articles about brand personality in digital media contexts were found by Ghorbani et al. (2022) during a systematic literature review. The bulk of research they reviewed entailed survey methods, few studies used experimental methods, and even fewer studies used both. Additionally, whereas many studies featured antecedents and consequences of brand personality perceptions in isolation (e.g., bivariate correlations), an insufficient number utilized explanatory models (e.g., hierarchical multiple regression; Carvalho et al., 2021; Ghorbani et al., 2022; Saeed et al., 2022). Likewise, no known research has applied brand personality to the digital media context of podcasts (e.g., Breaking Points LLC and its podcast *Breaking Points*). To address the first literature gap, the present dissertation is among the first psychological studies about brand personality in relation to a podcast like *Breaking Points*, in which participants were asked to provide their opinions about a podcast's sincerity, competence, and status based on information given to them. The present dissertation is also among the first psychological studies about brand personality to utilize a comprehensive

explanatory model, in which brand personality perceptions (i.e., sincerity, competence, status) and social nudges were hypothesized to explain behavioral intentions to subscribe to a podcast. Specifically, no known research has investigated brand personality perceptions, social nudges, and behavioral intentions together in such an approach.

Regarding the second literature gap, few psychological studies have contrasted competing brand personality measures. Recent systematic literature reviews and meta-analyses have revealed mixed results, such as different dimensions of brand personality emerging across different studies due to the lack of a clear and consistent theoretical framework (e.g., Aaker, 1997; Austin et al., 2003; Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003; Geuens et al., 2009; Grohmann, 2009). For example, using the five-factor model of human personality, Aaker (1997) found support for a five-factor construct: sincerity, competence, sophistication/status, excitement, and ruggedness. In contrast, using theories of social cognition (i.e., signaling theory, stereotype content model theory), Davies et al. (2018) found support for a three-factor construct of brand personality: sincerity, competence, and sophistication/status. By addressing the second literature gap, the present dissertation is among the first psychological studies to pit two types of brand personality measures against each other (i.e., Aaker [1997] vs. Davies et al. [2018]) to see which one can better explain behavioral intentions. More broadly, the present dissertation attempts to generalize brand personality and social nudges to the podcast medium using two experiments.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

For numerous reasons the psychologist has found it necessary to devise methods of investigation peculiar to [their] science. Among these reasons may be mentioned the variability, complexity and delicacy of the materials which [they study]. (Hollingworth & Poffenberger, 1923, p. 236)

At the heart of research about brand personality perceptions is an endeavor often pursued in the science of psychology: investigating the psychological processes that influence behavior and its proxy variables (Ajzen, 2008). Brand personality was among many behavior-influencing variables that emerged during the Cognitive Revolution. The Cognitive Revolution entailed an intellectual movement with origins in the 1920s and prominence in the 1950s to 1990s amidst the publishing of interdisciplinary studies in academic disciplines relevant to psychology: computer science, linguistics, neuroscience, anthropology, and philosophy (Greenwood, 1999; Mandler, 2002; Miller, 2003; Sperry, 1993). Specifically, consumer behavior (e.g., using a product) and proxy variables like behavioral intentions (e.g., intentions to use a product) became desirable to explain, given their real-world impact on businesses and on society at large (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990; Juster, 1966, Morrison, 1979). Given its importance, the design of brand personality research should be maximized. To achieve this feat, two methodological gaps must be addressed.

Literature Gap 1: Few Studies Have Investigated the Influence of Brand Personality Perceptions and Social Nudges on Behavioral Intentions in Digital Media Contexts

Previous systematic literature reviews and meta-analyses have indicated a need for comprehensive research about brand personality in digital media contexts, such as podcasts (Carvalho et al., 2021; Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013; Ghorbani et al., 2022; Saeed et al.,

2022). As the social psychological world of consumerism continues to grow and to change, so do the ways in which consumers interact with companies and their brands (Kahle et al., 2022). Many companies utilize the activity of posting on digital media as a business function of engaging with consumers (Xia, 2013; Yun et al., 2019; Zhang, 2017). For example, video game and entertainment company Sega is known for its Sonic the Hedgehog brand's posts on Twitter (a.k.a. X). Because Sonic the Hedgehog is a character known for being warm and cheerful, Sega's Sonic the Hedgehog brand signals sincerity to consumers via memes and humorous advertisements for its video game products (Webster, 2016).

Given the newer phenomenon of digital media, it is of interest to observe the context-specific ways in which brands signal information to consumers (e.g., attempting a behavioral nudge on a YouTube community post to socially influence consumers' behavioral intentions) and the types of products that consumers use (e.g., digital content such as podcast subscriptions; Dutta et al., 2004; Tobin & Guadagno, 2022). However, Ghorbani et al. (2022) revealed in a systematic literature review that few peer-reviewed journal articles have applied brand personality knowledge to digital media contexts, resulting in little agreement within the literature regarding the ways in which brand personality research should be conducted. This contrasts with an estimated 11,852 peer-reviewed academic journal articles about brand personality overall (per a search on the EBSCOhost database at the time of revising this literature review in November 2023).

Three key findings can be gleaned from recent systematic literature reviews and meta-analyses. First, out of 107 studies reviewed by Ghorbani et al. (2022), only 17 studies about brand personality in digital media contexts implemented experimental methods. In contrast, content analysis and text mining were used in 36 studies; survey methods were used in 33

studies. Although different research questions may understandably require different methods, Ghorbani et al. (2022) recommended implementing multiple methods in research studies to advance brand personality research. Combining the internal validity potential of experimental designs (e.g., evidence of causal inference) with the external validity potential of survey designs (e.g., evidence of generalizability) may help strengthen the overall quality of research (Coppock, 2018; Mullinix et al., 2015; Mummolo & Peterson, 2018; Shadish et al., 2002).

Recent systematic literature reviews and meta-analyses have also indicated that brand personality perceptions and related variables such as social nudges are too often studied in isolation, rather than as part of a more comprehensive model to better understand consumers (Carvalho et al., 2021; Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013; Ghorbani et al., 2022; Prasetyo, 2020; Saeed et al., 2022; Thaler & Sunstein, 2021). Variables such as social nudges, brand personality perceptions, and behavioral intentions have too often been studied in more simplistic manners (e.g., bivariate correlations). As part of recent systematic literature reviews and meta-analyses, researchers have proposed explanatory models that should be empirically investigated. This is aligned with calls for psychology to work towards integrating multiple theories from different disciplines to better explain human behavior and its proxy variables (Gigerenzer, 2010).

Surprisingly, consistent with Ghorbani et al.'s (2022) concerns about a lack of research on emerging technologies, there is seemingly no prior research that investigated brand personality in relation to the digital media context of a podcast. Further evidence of this can be seen via a search of the EBSCOhost database (e.g., Academic Search Complete). At the time of revising this literature review in November 2023, no relevant studies appeared in the results when searching for "brand personality" and "podcast." The lack of podcast-related brand personality research is unusual, given the increasing popularity of podcasts and their impact on

consumers' lives (Tobin & Guadagno, 2022). Podcasts that have a strong social media base allow consumers the opportunity to seek ingroup members whose social values align with their own (Bratcher, 2022; Schulz et al., 2020; Tobin & Guadagno, 2022). Given the lack of brand personality research in the digital media context of podcasts, as well as the importance of podcasts in consumers' lives, such research should be prioritized.

One podcast trend worth investigating is the emergence of journalists as podcast creators and hosts. In attempts to break away from the older traditions of mass media (e.g., newspapers, cable news), journalists who become podcast creators and hosts in turn become public figures, in which a personal brand is signaled to consumers (Klaß & Wellbrock, 2019; Needham & Smith, 2015). Such efforts are made to bring more awareness to certain social values, such as populism (i.e., an anti-establishment and pro-working class political ideology), that are less frequently represented in traditional forms of mass media and its establishment journalists (Higdon & Lyons, 2022; Schulz et al., 2020). Such findings are aligned with a recent sociological paper; consumerism, as an endeavor of choice in products and ideas consumed, contributes to an increase in populist perspectives (i.e., pro-working class and anti-establishment ideologies) among citizens in representative democracies (Çakirdiken, 2022). Likewise, podcasts are reportedly becoming important sources of consuming information about politics among young adults (Bratcher, 2022; Pew Research Center, 2023a).

A recent example of populism represented in modern-day consumerism is *Breaking Points*, an independent news brand by journalists Krystal Ball (who leans politically left) and Saagar Enjeti (who leans politically right). As reported by Newport (2022), the two journalists shifted from mainstream media (i.e., *The Hill*) to independent media (i.e., podcasting on platforms such as YouTube and Spotify). Although Ball and Enjeti (2020) approach their

commentary from two different political orientations, they share the social values of populism

and discuss current events from that perspective. In addition to the brand's podcast hosted by

Ball and Enjeti (i.e., typically on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays), they also partner with

other journalists in the independent media ecosystem (e.g., Ryan Grim and Emily Jashinsky) to

create and share populist-themed informational content through their podcast. Because it became

the number one political podcast within one week of its launch and kept that title for several

weeks (Berkowitz, 2021), and because it was among the top 1% most shared podcasts globally

on Spotify (Breaking Points LLC, 2022a), *Breaking Points* is a valuable point of reference to

conduct brand personality research in the uninvestigated digital media context of podcasts.

Potential Solutions to Literature Gap 1

In summation, multiple literature reviews and meta-analyses have revealed a notable lack

of brand personality research in digital media contexts. Given that digital media is a newer

phenomenon in consumerism, brand personality research relating to it has been limited in

methodology and in application to emerging technologies. The implementation of multiple

methods (i.e., survey design and experimental design) to study brand personality perceptions and

related variables (i.e., social nudges and behavioral intentions) in the context of emerging

technologies (i.e., podcasts) may potentially expand the brand personality literature.

Using Theories Implemented in Psychology as the Foundation to Empirically Test a

Comprehensive Model

Prior research suggested that social nudges and brand personality perceptions (as

predictor variables) may potentially influence consumers' behavioral intentions (as the criterion

variable). However, as noted in multiple literature reviews, few studies have tested antecedents

and consequences of brand personality using comprehensive explanatory models (Carvalho et

al., 2021; Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013; Saeed et al., 2022). This is despite earlier sentiments by Dobni and Zinkhan (1990), who proposed that brand personality perceptions emerge through context (e.g., digital media) and through functions of the brand's company (e.g., marketing activities such as behavioral nudging).

As part of the proposal of a comprehensive explanatory model, theories implemented in psychology can be used to empirically investigate said model. First, theories of behavioral economics can be used to explain the influence of social nudges on behavioral intentions. Second, theories of social cognition can be used to explain the influence of brand personality perceptions on behavioral intentions. Third, theories of self-concept can be used to account for potential confounding variables when explaining behavioral intentions. Key tenets in the American Psychological Association (APA)'s *Handbook of Consumer Psychology* (Kahle et al., 2022) can assist with grounding a comprehensive explanatory model in theory, so that theory-driven hypotheses can be formulated and tested.

Theories of Behavioral Economics: Do Social Nudges Explain Consumers' Behavioral Intentions? Consistent with theories of behavioral economics, "businesses use psychology to carry out functions" (Kahle et al., 2022, p. 647) and "consumers live in a social psychological world" (Kahle et al., 2022, p. 299). Broadly, behavioral economics involve the psychological processes in which consumers utilize heuristics while exposed to businesses' functions and activities (Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013; Krajnović et al., 2018; Thaler, 1980; Weinmann et al., 2016). Per behavioral economics' nudge theory, companies utilize behavioral nudging to signal information to consumers in hope of influencing consumers' decision-making; from this perspective, such signals should not restrict consumers' ability to choose alternatives in their decision-making (Thaler & Sunstein, 2021). Eisend and Stokburger-Sauer (2013) defined

behavioral intentions as the "willingness to purchase and use a brand" (p. 207). As a quantitative proxy for consumer behavior, it is important to maximize the measurement of behavioral intentions (Brennan & Esslemont, 1994; McDonald & Alpert, 2001; Morrison, 1979; Risen & Risen, 2008). Thus, it is recommended to use Juster's (1966) purchase probability scale as a measure of behavioral intentions. The Juster scale allows for self-reporting using tangible and easily interpretable scale anchors. Given the more intuitive structure of the Juster scale, prior research suggests it is a better proxy of consumer behavior than other measures of behavioral intentions (Brennan & Esslemont, 1994; McDonald & Alpert, 2001; Risen & Risen, 2008).

Nudge theory in relation to digital media has more recently been considered in academic literature and by companies (Jesse & Jannach, 2021; Weinmann et al., 2016). For example, some companies may deem it beneficial to increase the salience of information they wish to signal to consumers using digital means such as a company's social media or website (Mochon & Frederick, 2011; Noggle, 2018; Reisch & Zhao, 2017; Thaler & Sunstein, 2021). Thus, digital nudges may elicit heuristics and biases within the psychological processes of consumers while online. One such nudge is a social nudge, in which consumers are influenced by the notion that other consumers are already doing and thinking something (Thaler & Sunstein, 2021). One early iteration of a social nudge, which is one of the most replicable and extendable aspects of behavior in psychological research (Bond & Smith, 1996), can be found in the work of Asch's (1956) conformity research; Asch (1956) found that people were significantly more likely to give an incorrect answer to an obvious question when surrounded by others who previously gave the incorrect answer. Social nudges have since been applied to perceptions about brands and to consumer decision-making (Levitan & Verhulst, 2015; Prasetyo, 2020). For example, Salganik et al. (2006) found that people were significantly more likely to download songs if they saw that

many others had already downloaded the songs.

In the present example of Breaking Points LLC (2022a), one could interpret a YouTube community message the company's brand posted as a potential social nudge: "Our Spotify Wrapped is in for 2022 and we couldn't be more AMAZED to be in the top 1% most shared [podcasts] globally. Thank you to all our new listeners and dedicated long time audiences that keep tuning in every single morning. Cheers to all of you!" The interpretation of a social nudge can be seen in the way that Breaking Points LLC (2022a) showcases that many people have already consumed the podcast (e.g., "in the top 1% most shared globally," "…dedicated long time audiences that keep tuning in every single morning"). Based on nudge theory, a social nudge that showcases how many people have subscribed and listened to the *Breaking Points* podcast could potentially influence consumers' behavioral intentions to subscribe to the podcast.

Therefore, Breaking Points LLC's YouTube community post provides a novel opportunity to experimentally test a possible implementation of behavioral nudging as part of a comprehensive explanatory model. Specifically, to see whether nudge theory can explain differences in behavioral intentions to subscribe to the podcast, it is of interest to establish social nudges as an experimental variable. To experimentally test the relationship between social nudges and behavioral intentions, half of participants could be randomly assigned to view a potential social nudge alongside basic information about the podcast, as originally implemented by Breaking Points LLC on their YouTube channel. The other half of participants could be randomly assigned to view basic information about the podcast without a potential social nudge. Because the nudge is in relation to subscribing to the podcast, questions about behavioral intentions would need to be framed as how willing participants are to subscribe. The use of social nudges as an experimental variable is justifiable because it would help address prior

shortcomings in the brand personality literature (e.g., few studies implemented experimental designs and survey designs simultaneously, few studies implemented a digital media focal point, few studies have utilized social nudges and brand personality together to study the influences of behavioral intentions). The use of purchase probability as a quantitative measure of behavioral intentions is justifiable because prior research suggests it is a good proxy of consumer behavior, even when the product in question does not require a financial transaction (Brennan & Esslemont, 1994; Ghorbani et al., 2022; Juster, 1966; McDonald & Alpert, 2001; Risen & Risen, 2008).

Theories of Social Cognition: Do Brand Personality Perceptions Explain Consumers' Behavioral Intentions? Consistent with theories of social cognition, "businesses use psychology to communicate with consumers" (Kahle et al., 2022, p. 449) and "consumers process cognitions and affect" (Kahle et al., 2022, p. 527). Broadly, social cognition entails the psychological processes in which people receive and perceive schematic information in the world around them (Bandura; 1986; Winkielman & Schooler, 2009). One such process within the scope of consumers is brand personality perceptions, in which consumers constantly receive and process brand-related communications from companies about their brand's sincerity, competence, and status (Davies et al., 2018; Fiske et al., 2007; Rao et al., 1999; Spence, 1973). Prior research suggested that companies' signaling of brand personality attributes is related to behavioral intentions to consume a product (Carvalho et al., 2021; Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013; Levitan & Verhulst, 2015; Prasetyo, 2020; Saeed et al., 2022; Salganik et al., 2006; Vahdati & Nejad, 2016).

Multiple researchers have previously argued that measures of brand personality perceptions lacked falsifiability due to the lack of a clear and consistent theoretical framework

(Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003; LeBel et al., 2017; Lieven, 2017; Popper, 2002). In contrast, Davies et al. (2018) found theoretical and empirical support for three universally occurring dimensions of brand personality (i.e., sincerity, competence, status) using a social cognition-based theoretical framework: signaling theory and stereotype content model theory. According to signaling theory, one party (e.g., a company) selectively communicates to another party (e.g., a consumer) latent information that is not directly observable (e.g., human-like attributes of a company's brand; Connelly et al., 2011; Rao et al., 1999; Spence, 1973). According to stereotype content model theory, people evaluate others using three universal signals (i.e., sincerity, competence, status; Fiske et al., 2002; 2007). Combining these two theories of social cognition would suggest that consumers make judgements about the brands of companies based on human-like attributes signaled to consumers by the companies (Aaker et al., 2010; Cuddy et al., 2008). Such theories are aligned with prior brand personality research that found sincerity, competence, and status to be positively correlated with one another (Lin, 2010).

Aligned with meta-analyses and systematic reviews, it is helpful to consider nudges as a potential antecedent of brand personality perceptions. Although little research presently exists about the relationship between social nudges and brand personality perceptions specifically (e.g., Lebrecque et al., 2011; Salganik et al., 2006), a broader concept relevant to behavioral nudging can be considered. In the meta-analysis of Eisend and Stokburger-Sauer (2013), they found product branding (i.e., "activities that support the creation of a unique and imitable brand") to be among the most important influences of brand personality perceptions overall. In an overall meta-analytic correlation that consisted of 57 effect sizes, product branding significantly accounted for brand personality perceptions, $r = .13$, $p < .01$. Specifically, when dimensions of brand personality were isolated, product branding significantly explained perceptions about

16

brands' sincerity ($r = .24$, $p < .01$). In contrast, product branding did not explain perceptions about brands' competence ($r = .23$, $p > .05$) or sophistication (i.e., status; $r = -.04$, $p > .05$).

Although product branding significantly explained brand personality perceptions overall and the dimension of sincerity specifically, both correlations were relatively small in magnitude. Likewise, the dimensions of competence and status were not significantly explained in the meta-analysis. One reason for this may entail the broadness of product branding as defined by Eisend and Stokburger-Sauer (2013) in their search for studies to include in their meta-analysis. More useful insights may be gleaned from specific activities carried out by a brand, such as behavioral nudging on a website (Carpentier et al., 2019; Poddar et al., 2009; Shahin et al., 2013; Shobeiri et al., 2013). As mentioned previously, social nudges have since been applied to perceptions about brands and to behavioral intentions (Levitan & Verhulst, 2015; Prasetyo, 2020). For example, Macy et al. (2019) studied the effect of social nudges on people's perceptions about political brands. They found that people were significantly more likely to oppose a position on a political issue if they saw in advance that other people of a different political party are in favor of that position. Likewise, people were significantly more likely to endorse a position on a political issue if they saw in advance that other people in their same political party endorsed the position. Thus, although preliminary evidence connects social nudges to brand personality perceptions, more research is needed, especially regarding whether there is a link between social nudges and behavioral intentions.

Furthermore, it is helpful to consider behavioral intentions as a potential consequence of brand personality perceptions. Deemed the most important consequence in their meta-analysis, Eisend and Stokburger-Sauer (2013) found a moderate meta-analytic correlation between brand personality and behavioral intentions, $r = .45$, $p < .01$. When isolating each dimension of brand

personality, moderate statistical relationships were found. Behavioral intentions significantly

correlated with perceptions about a brand's sincerity ($r = .54$, $p < .01$) and with perceptions about

a brand's competence ($r = .51$, $p < .01$). In contrast, sophistication (i.e., status) did not

significantly explain behavioral intentions ($r = .45$, $p > .05$). However, the latter finding may be

underpowered, since only four effect sizes were included in the meta-analysis regarding status

and behavioral intentions (Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013).

Subsequent research has supported these findings. Christeena and Preetha (2019) found

that nudges accounted for 57.30% of explained variance in behavioral intentions to purchase

products online. Toldos-Romero and Orozco-Gómez (2015) reported that brand personality

perceptions significantly accounted for 86% of explained variance in behavioral intentions.

Vahdati and Nejad (2016) found that brand personality was strongly related to behavioral

intentions, $r = .70$, $p < .05$. Zhang (2017) found that perceptions about a brand's sincerity and

competence significantly explained behavioral intentions. Davies et al. (2018) found that

sincerity, competence, and status significantly accounted for 23.4% of explained variance in

behavioral intentions to purchase. Qualitative research also provides insight into the aspects of

brand personality that consumers, themselves, believe influence behavioral intentions (e.g.,

status/sophistication; Maehle et al., 2011). Therefore, considering the literature as a whole, social

nudges and brand personality perceptions both influence consumers' behavioral intentions (see

also Morrison, 1979; Spears & Singh, 2004; Tormala & Rucker, 2022).

In the present example of Breaking Points LLC (2022a), there is a novel opportunity to

empirically test the three-factor version of brand personality perceptions found by Davies et al.

(2018) and assess whether each dimension (i.e., sincerity, competence, status) influences

behavioral intentions to subscribe to *Breaking Points*. The use of brand personality perceptions

as a quantitative measure of brand personality is justifiable; by utilizing three common dimensions of brand personality that are aligned with theories of social cognition, it addresses prior shortcomings in the brand personality literature (i.e., the lack of a clear and consistent theoretical framework in prior research). Furthermore, Davies et al. (2018) theorized based on findings from multiple datasets that sincerity, competence, and status emerge as dimensions of brand personality perceptions regardless of context. As such, the three-factor version of brand personality is theorized to exist in digital media contexts such as podcasts (Carpentier et al., 2019; Ghorbani et al., 2022). Although Davies et al. (2018) admittedly did not intend to propose a new measure of brand personality, their work reflects the most reproducible dimensions of brand personality in the literature and thus should be utilized.

Theories of Self-Concept: Confounding Variables Should Be Treated as Covariates While Explaining Consumers' Behavioral Intentions. Consistent with theories of self-concept, "consumers have demographic and psychographic characteristics" (Kahle et al., 2022, p. 163). Broadly, self-concept entails the psychological processes in which people form demographic and psychographic representations of who they are in relation to others (Gecas, 1982). Per social identity theory and self-categorization theory (Hornsey, 2008; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), people perceive themselves as members of various social ingroups in contrast to people in other social groups (i.e., outgroups). Given how integral social identities are to a person's existence, said identities can risk becoming confounding variables in a comprehensive explanatory model, in which the relationship between variables "is threatened by confounding if the association between the variables can be attributed to a third variable that…affects both" (Hayes, 2022, p. 128). To statistically alleviate such concerns, Hayes (2022) noted the importance of measuring potential confounds and including them in regression models as

covariates. When using hierarchical multiple regression specifically, they should be included in the first block of the model so that confounding variables are held constant (Darlington & Hayes, 2017). In the present example of Breaking Points LLC (2022a) and its news commentary podcast *Breaking Points*, the following potential confounds are noted.

      Potential Confound: Populist Values. In the case of consumers, one process in which people develop a sense of self involves social values, defined as identifying with relatively stable beliefs about society that guide perceptions about themselves and others (Gurel-Atay, 2022; Gurel-Atay & Kahle, 2019; Suh & Kahle, 2018). Because political beliefs have consistent ties to consumer behavior and behavioral intentions (Jost, 2017), one form of consumer social values to investigate is populist values. Populism entails a set of relatively stable political beliefs, in which people perceive systemic flaws in the way society operates that undermines the lives of working class people (i.e., the ingroup) and prioritizes the lives of the elite who hold power (i.e., the outgroup; Muddle, 2004). Such beliefs can potentially be organized into three facets: people-centrism (i.e., the desire for working class people to have the most control over how society operates), anti-establishment (i.e., the perception that the elite are corrupt), and Manichaeanism (i.e., the perception that working class people are good, and the elite are bad; Castanho Silva et al., 2018).

      From a populist perspective, people may believe that the elite constantly fail society because of their selfishness and greed (Akkerman et al., 2014; Castanho Silva et al., 2017; Papaioannou et al., 2023; Schulz et al., 2020). Given the broad distinction between working class people and the elite, populist values can be held regardless of political party affiliation or political orientation (Baaker et al., 2016; Rovira Kaltwasser, 2021; Spruyt et al., 2016). Populism is deemed a potential confound in the present dissertation, because the *Breaking Points* podcast

20

features news commentary from a populist perspective. Furthermore, consumerism has been linked to rises in populist values within representative democracies (Çakirdiken, 2022), and public figures who project populist values also attempt to project brand personality attributes of sincerity, competence, and status (Klaß & Wellbrock, 2019; Rutter et al., 2018).

   Potential Confound: Political Orientation. As mentioned previously, political beliefs have consistent ties to consumer behavior and behavioral intentions (Jost, 2017). Thus, a broader measure of political orientation is necessary. Political orientation is defined as the extent to which people's beliefs about current issues in general, about economic issues, and about social issues exist between left-wing and right-wing. This is based on increasing evidence of nuance in political beliefs among United States residents (e.g., left-wing authoritarianism and right-wing authoritarianism [Manson, 2020], faith and flag conservatives and the progressive left [Pew Research Center, 2021b]). Because *Breaking Points* is a news commentary podcast that features a left-wing host and a right-wing host, political orientation is deemed a potential confounding variable in the present dissertation.

   Potential Confound: Age. Age is defined as the number of years that a person has lived. As mentioned previously, podcasts have increasingly become sources of consuming information about politics among young adults (Bratcher, 2022). Prior research suggests that podcast listeners are predominately aged 18 to 34, and approximately 28% of United States residents aged 12 and older listen to podcasts at least once a week (Edison Research, 2021; Pew Research Center, 2023a). Given the potential skew towards younger people in podcast listening, age is deemed a potential confounding variable.

   Potential Confound: Prior Exposure to Podcasts. Prior exposure to podcasts entails self-reporting whether a person has previously listened to a podcast. People who have never listened

to a podcast may not be interested in subscribing to one, so prior podcast exposure is deemed a potential confound.

Literature Gap 2: Few Studies Have Contrasted Competing Brand Personality Measures

Previous systematic literature reviews indicated that between the 1950s and the 1990s when brand personality first emerged in academic literature, the variable experienced a psychometric phenomenon that occurs in the absence of a clear and consistent theoretical framework: construct proliferation (Carvalho et al., 2021; Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990; Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013; Ghorbani et al., 2022; Saeed et al., 2022). This phenomenon entails the conceptualization of multiple psychological variables that have overlapping content to the point of redundancy. Construct proliferation has plagued disciplines affiliated with psychology and consumerism, including organizational behavior (Shaffer et al., 2016), ergonomics (Heikoop et al., 2016), and marketing (Bergkvist & Langer, 2019). In the case of brand personality, Dobni and Zinkhan (1990) reviewed literature about consumer psychology and found multiple constructs with overlapping content.

A likely reason for the occurrence of construct proliferation in brand personality research involves the definitions used to conceptualize the variable, which reflects a lack of clear and consistent theoretical frameworks across studies. Dobni and Zinkhan (1990) found different themes in researchers' definitions of brand personality. Research that conceptualized the variable to entail the human-like attributes ascribed to brands by consumers included constructs such as brand personality, brand character, personality image, and the social and psychological nature of products (Aaker, 1997; Gardner & Levy, 1955; Hendon & Williams, 1985; Sirgy, 1985). Research that conceptualized the variable to entail the symbols ascribed to brands by consumers included brand meaning and the psychological meaning of products (Durgee & Stuart, 1987;

Friedmann & Lessig, 1987). Research that conceptualized the variable to entail the general image of a brand included constructs such as brand image (Levy, 1958; Murphy, 1987).

Despite the construct proliferation of brand personality, Dobni and Zinkhan (1990) found consistent content that aligns best with the conceptualization entailing the human-like attributes ascribed to brands by consumers. Consistent with the zeitgeist of the Cognitive Revolution, they found throughout the literature that brand personality involved consumers' subjective perceptions about a brand's attributes. Furthermore, Dobni and Zinkhan (1990) found that brand personality perceptions emerge through context (e.g., digital media), through functions of the brand's company (e.g., marketing activities such as nudges in product branding), and through consumer characteristics (e.g., consumer social values such as populism). The relationship between these influences of brand personality can potentially explain consumer behavior and its proxy variables (e.g., behavioral intentions).

To address concerns about the construct proliferation of brand personality, Aaker (1997) developed a factor analytic approach in hope of achieving a standardized measure. Considered a seminal work from which modern brand personality research is inspired, Aaker's (1997) measure was loosely based on the five-factor model of human personality (McCrae & John, 1992). A five-factor version of brand personality was found, which entailed the extent to which consumers perceived brand to exhibit the following five human-like attributes: sincerity, competence, sophistication, excitement, and ruggedness. Comparably to the five-factor model of personality, each of Aaker's (1997) dimensions featured facets with corresponding traits. In Aaker's (1997) measure, the sincerity subscale entailed the measurement of consumers' perceptions about the extent to which a brand exhibited down-to-earth, honest, wholesome, and cheerful facets. The excitement subscale represented consumers' perceptions about whether a brand exhibited daring,

spirited, imaginative, and up to date facets. The competence subscale featured consumers'

perceptions about whether a brand exhibited reliable, intelligent, and successful facets. The

sophistication subscale reflected consumers' perceptions about a brand's upper class and

charming facets. The ruggedness subscale presented items about consumers' perceptions

regarding a brand's outdoorsy and tough facets.

However, as noted years prior by Dobni and Zinkhan (1990), attempts to measure brand

personality have been challenging in the absence of clear and consistent theoretical frameworks.

Although the work of Aaker (1997) was loosely inspired by the five-factor model of personality,

scale development was not formally grounded in any theoretical framework from which a clear

hypothesis could be tested (Lieven, 2017; Kumar, 2018). Instead, Aaker (1997) opted to use

inductive reasoning after conducting a factor analysis, which included some item content beyond

the scope of personality (e.g., age; Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003). Although inductive reasoning is

not inherently problematic (see LeBel et al., 2017 and Popper, 2002), further research was

needed to verify Aaker's (1997) findings but was ultimately not achieved. Researchers

consistently failed to reproduce Aaker's (1997) original five dimensions, instead finding

different dimensions despite basing their scale development efforts on the same five-factor

model of personality. Caprara et al. (2001) found two dimensions in a sample of Italian adults:

emotional stability and agreeableness. Bosnjak et al. (2007) found four dimensions in a sample

of German adults: drive, conscientiousness, emotion, and superficiality. Geuens et al. (2009)

found five dimensions in samples of United States adults and European adults: responsibility,

activity, aggressiveness, simplicity, and emotionality. Grohmann (2009) found two dimensions

related to gender self-concept: masculine and feminine. Mulyanegara et al. (2009) found four

dimensions in a sample of Australian university students: trusted, sociable, exciting, and sincere.

In fact, even Aaker had inconsistent success in reproducing previous work. Although Aaker et al. (2001) reproduced the original five dimensions in subsequent samples of United States residents, only four of those dimensions emerged in samples of Japanese residents (i.e., sincerity, excitement, competence, and sophistication/status). Likewise, only three of those dimensions emerged in samples of Spanish residents (i.e., sincerity, excitement, and sophistication/status). Furthermore, culture-specific factors emerged in samples of Japanese residents (i.e., peacefulness) and in samples of Spanish residents (i.e., passion; Aaker et al., 2001). This contributed to the idea of different brand personality dimensions in different contexts, which was later refuted by Davies et al. (2018) due to success in applying theories of social cognition to find universally occurring dimensions (i.e., sincerity, competence, and sophistication/status).

The potential for universally occurring dimensions of brand personality is further evidenced by researchers who did not base their work on the five-factor model of personality, in which dimensions featured more overlap in studies that applied theories related to social cognition. Citing self-image congruence theory, d'Astous and Lévesque (2003) found five factors related to retail stores in a sample of adults: sophistication/status, solidity, genuineness (i.e., sincerity), enthusiasm, and unpleasantness. Lacking a specific theory but noting a broad sentiment about cultural differences, Sung and Tinkham (2005) found eight dimensions in a sample of United States undergraduate students (i.e., likeableness, trendiness, competence, sophistication/status, traditionalism, ruggedness, white collar, and androgyny) and eight dimensions in a sample of Korean undergraduate students (i.e., likeableness, trendiness, competence, sophistication/status, traditionalism, ruggedness, passive-likeableness, and ascendancy). Ekinci and Hosany (2006) found three dimensions related to destination tourism in

a sample of European adults using self-concept theory: sincerity, excitement, and conviviality. Based on social values theory, Valette-Florence and De Barnier (2013) found five dimensions related to print media: respectability, disingenuousness (i.e., the opposite of sincerity), conviviality, assertiveness, and charm. Implementing consumer-brand relationship theory and a theory of anthropomorphism, Rauschnabel et al. (2016) found six factors related to university brands in samples of German university students and United States university students: prestige, sincerity, appeal, lively, conscientiousness (i.e., competence), and cosmopolitan. Lastly, Davies et al. (2018) reanalyzed multiple datasets from different researchers and consistently found three factors based on signaling theory and stereotype content model theory: sincerity, competence, and status (i.e., sophistication).

In present day, within the context of digital media products (e.g., podcasts), the struggle with a clear and consistent theoretical framework continues. In a systematic literature review, Ghorbani et al. (2022) found that researchers had little agreement on the theoretical framework and the dimensionality of brand personality as it pertains to digital media. Approximately 50 different theoretical frameworks were implemented in the conducting of brand personality research in digital media contexts between the years 2005 and 2021. Most troubling is the predominant use of "brand personality theory," which stemmed from the already troubled five-factor model of personality originally implemented by Aaker (1997) and subsequently implemented by researchers for decades afterward. Although Ghorbani et al. (2022) suggested that new theories should be introduced and that a lack of consensus on dimensions of brand personality is present, it may be wiser to rely on a pre-existing theoretical framework that already produced consistent dimensions throughout the literature. As noted previously, a review of prior research that relied on theories of social cognition found three most frequently occurring

dimensions of brand personality: sincerity, competence, and sophistication/status (e.g., Davies et al., 2018). In fact, those three dimensions were the most frequently recurring dimensions in Ghorbani et al.'s (2022; Table 4) literature review of brand personality in digital media contexts. Thus, based on social cognition theories, focusing solely on sincerity, competence, and status may maximize the quality of brand personality research.

Potential Solution to Literature Gap 2

Testing Competing Measures

Despite a proliferation of brand personality in the literature across several decades, common dimensions and theories have emerged. Specifically, three dimensions appeared most consistently: sincerity, competence, and status (i.e., sophistication). Furthermore, theories cited in the literature were most frequently within the scope of social cognition, which is reflective of the zeitgeist of the Cognitive Revolution from which brand personality as a psychological construct originated. Davies et al. (2018) originally claimed that sincerity, competence, and status will emerge regardless of a brand personality perceptions measure's item content. However, no known research has directly investigated the utility of Aaker's (1997) brand personality perceptions measure based on the five-factor model of human personality versus the utility of Davies et al.'s (2018) implementation of social cognition theories. Therefore, the implementation of social cognition as a theoretical framework for the measurement of brand personality perceptions with a focus on the three commonly appearing dimensions may potentially expand the brand personality literature. Because Davies et al.'s (2018) work was grounded in psychological theory and Aaker's (1997) work was not, the Davies et al. (2018) measure would be expected to better account for explained variance in behavioral intentions to subscribe.

The Present Dissertation

The overall purpose of the present dissertation is to apply knowledge about brand personality to a podcast: *Breaking Points*. Both experiments randomly assigned consumers to either experience or not experience a potential social nudge, measured consumers' perceptions about a podcast's brand personality, and measured their behavioral intentions to subscribe to the podcast. Both experiments treated the following potential confounding variables as covariates in the model: age, populist values, political orientation, and prior exposure to podcasts. Evidence of internal structure was assessed via confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for model fit, via internal consistency coefficients for reliability, and via a power analysis. Evidence of external structure (i.e., predictive validity) was assessed via a hierarchical multiple regression.

Experiment 1

The purpose of Experiment 1 was to determine whether brand personality perceptions (i.e., sincerity, competence, status) and behavioral nudging (i.e., a potential social nudge stimulus that encourages subscribing to *Breaking Points* versus the absence of a potential nudge) explain behavioral intentions (i.e., willingness to subscribe to *Breaking Points*). All participants viewed a clip from the podcast as a point of reference. Those who were randomly assigned to the potential social nudge from Breaking Points LLC (2022a) viewed the following real-life YouTube community post: "Our Spotify Wrapped is in for 2022 and we couldn't be more AMAZED to be in the top 1% most shared [podcasts] globally. Thank you to all our new listeners and dedicated long time audiences that keep tuning in every single morning. Cheers to all of you!"

Research Question 1A: Do Social Nudges (Nudge vs. No Nudge) Explain Consumers' Behavioral Intentions (Willingness to Consume the *Breaking Points* Podcast)?

Research Hypothesis 1A. Social nudges will significantly account for explained variance

in behavioral intentions; consumers who experience the potential social nudge will report higher behavioral intentions to subscribe to the *Breaking Points* podcast, compared to consumers who do not experience the potential nudge. This will occur while holding potential confounds constant (i.e., age, populist values, political orientation, prior exposure to podcasts).

Research Question 1B: Do Brand Personality Perceptions (Sincerity, Competence, and Status) Explain Consumers' Behavioral Intentions?

Research Hypothesis 1B. Sincerity, competence, and status will each significantly account for explained variance in behavioral intentions. This will occur while holding potential confounds constant.

Experiment 2

The purpose of Experiment 2 was to replicate Experiment 1 and to expand upon Experiment 1 in two ways: by using a modified version of the potential social nudge and by randomly assigning participants to one of two brand personality measures. First, those who were randomly assigned to view the potential social nudge experienced the original stimulus from Experiment 1 in addition to a positive endorsement from a current subscriber: "Let me just say this. You guys are doing so well because people (myself included) trust you. Not because we agree with you, not because we know we'll hear exactly what we want but because you guys give honest perspectives on whatever it is you choose to report on from the basic big news stories, to government corruption, to UFOs and crypto stories. Just remember as you guys grow it is your authenticity that brought me and many others here and that authenticity is what has gotten us to stay" (Meserve, 2022). Both stimuli signal socially influential information to potential consumers who are not already subscribed.

Furthermore, participants were randomly assigned to answer questions from one of two measures of brand personality perceptions (i.e., Davies et al. [2018] vs. Aaker [1997]). For consistency, sincerity, competence, and status were of interest to capture across both measures; because Aaker's (1997) ruggedness and excitement factors have been less replicable, they were excluded. The random assignment itself would become a dichotomous predictor, but all participants would receive scores on the three brand personality predictors (i.e., sincerity, competence, and status) since the two measures represent the same underlying construct.

Research Question 2A: Do Social Nudges (Nudge vs. No Nudge) Explain Consumers' Behavioral Intentions (Willingness to Consume the *Breaking Points* Podcast)?

Research Hypothesis 2A. Social nudges will significantly account for explained variance in behavioral intentions; consumers who experience the potential social nudge will report higher behavioral intentions to subscribe to the *Breaking Points* podcast, compared to consumers who do not experience the potential nudge. This will occur while holding potential confounds constant (i.e., age, populist values, political orientation, prior exposure to podcasts).

Research Question 2B: Do Brand Personality Perceptions (Sincerity, Competence, and Status) Explain Consumers' Behavioral Intentions?

Research Hypothesis 2B. Sincerity, competence, and status will each significantly account for explained variance in behavioral intentions. This will occur while holding potential confounds constant.

Research Question 2C: Does a Measure of Brand Personality Perceptions Grounded in Psychological Theory Better Explain Consumers' Behavioral Intentions?

Research Hypothesis 2C. Differences in behavioral intentions will be detected based on which measure of brand personality perceptions that participants received. Those who responded

to the Davies et al. (2018) measure based on theories of social cognition will report significantly

higher behavioral intentions, compared to the Aaker (1997) measure loosely based on the five-

factor model of human personality. This will occur while holding potential confounds constant.

CHAPTER 3

EXPERIMENT 1: METHOD, RESULTS, AND DISCUSSION

But in even the simplest of psychological measurements,–whether of…the flow of

images, the sequence of ideas,–any or all of these and a host of other variables may

influence the outcome. (Hollingworth & Poffenberger, 1923, p. 236)

Experiment 1 Method

Participants

Sample Size and A Priori Power Analysis. A final sample of 250 United States adult

residents was analyzed. G*Power (see Faul et al., 2009) was used to determine the needed

sample size for Experiment 1. G*Power allows researchers to specify a target power, an effect

size convention, and the number of predictor variables in a regression model. To achieve 95%

power based on eight predictors and an effect size convention of .10, a minimum sample size of

236 participants was required. The target power of 95% was chosen because of recent concerns

regarding underpowered studies. The conventional 80% used in psychological research (see

Cohen, 1992) may be deemed a bare minimum, whereas 95% is ideal for a comprehensive model

(Abraham & Russell, 2008; Brysbaert, 2019; Giner-Sorolla et al., 2023). To ensure enough

usable participants, an initial sample of 275 United States adult residents was collected; the final

sample was reduced to 250, based on data cleaning efforts (e.g., removal of extreme cases).

Participant Characteristics. Participants in the final sample ($N = 250$) predominantly

identified as prior podcast listeners ($n = 187$, 74.80%), lower middle class in childhood ($n = 103$,

41.20%) and in adulthood ($n = 107$, 42.80%), cisgender ($n = 233$, 98.70%), men ($n = 122$,

51.70%), and White ($n = 185$, 74.00%); participants' mean age was 38.89 (minimum age = 19,

maximum age = 72). See Table 1 for a breakdown of demographics in Experiment 1.

Table 1

Experiment 1 Demographic and Psychographic Information

Variables	*n*	% of the Sample
Prior Exposure to Podcasts		
Yes	187	74.80%
No	63	25.20%
Perceived Social Class During Childhood		
Working Class	70	28.00%
Lower Middle Class	103	41.20%
Upper Middle Class	68	27.20%
Upper Class	3	1.20%
I Prefer Not to Answer	6	2.40%
Perceived Social Class During Adulthood		
Working Class	65	26.00%
Lower Middle Class	107	42.80%
Upper Middle Class	67	26.80%
Upper Class	4	1.60%
I Prefer Not to Answer	7	2.80%
Gender Identity		
Man	129	51.60%
Nonbinary	3	1.20%
Woman	117	46.80%
I Prefer Not to Answer	1	0.40%
Gender Modality ("Do you identify as transgender?")		
Yes	1	0.40%
No	247	98.80%
I Prefer Not to Answer	1	0.40%
No Response	1	0.40%
Race/Ethnicity: Asian or Asian American		
Yes	24	9.60%
No	226	90.40%
Race/Ethnicity: Black or African American		
Yes	24	9.60%
No	226	90.40%
Race/Ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino/a/x		
Yes	23	9.20%
No	227	90.80%
Race/Ethnicity: Native American or Alaska Native		
Yes	2	0.80%
No	248	99.20%
Race/Ethnicity: Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander		
Yes	1	0.40%
No	249	99.60%
Race/Ethnicity: White or European American		
Yes	185	74.00%
No	65	26.00%
Race/Ethnicity: I Prefer Not to Answer		
Yes	2	0.80%
No	248	99.20%

Note. No one identified as "Arab, Middle Eastern, or North African."

Recruitment. Participants were recruited from Connect, a crowdsourcing platform by CloudResearch in which people can complete tasks (e.g., research studies) in exchange for financial compensation. Previously known as TurkPrime, CloudResearch originally launched services for enhancing researchers' experience using Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) for conducting research (e.g., as a pseudo-frontend). Previous services launched include MTurk Toolkit, Prime Panels, Managed Research, and Sentry; prior research suggests that these services have maximized data quality (Peer et al., 2014; Peer et al., 2017). In 2022, CloudResearch launched its own platform (i.e., Connect) for researchers to conduct research as a competitor to MTurk. To encourage researchers to engage in best practices, participants can anonymously provide ratings and comments about their study experiences on the Connect platform itself (e.g., if the study flow is broken, if the pay offered is unreasonable in relation to the kind of work required in the study). Likewise, researchers are encouraged by CloudResearch to provide sufficient compensation if the originally inputted pay is lower than expected in relation to the estimated study completion time (see Hartman et al., 2023 for more information about how Connect functions). Given the newness of CloudResearch's Connect, only recently have psychological studies been published that featured samples from the platform (e.g., Cardone, 2023; Fernandez, 2023; Moncrieff & Lienard, 2023; Moss et al., 2023; Szabolcsi, 2023). Regardless, no concerns were raised in any of these studies regarding data quality, attention checks, or response rates.

More broadly, some researchers have expressed concerns regarding the quality and representativeness of data from samples recruited from crowdsourced platforms (Chmielewski & Kucker, 2020; MacInnis et al., 2020; Necka et al., 2016). However, with sufficient safeguards implemented in the methodology of a study (e.g., checking for careless or insufficient effort

[C/IE] responding), the recruitment of crowdsourced workers can be worthwhile. Multiple research teams have found several positive aspects regarding the quality of participant data in experimental and survey studies (Behrend et al., 2011; Berinsky et al., 2012; Buhrmester et al., 2011; Fowler et al., 2023; Paolacci et al., 2010; Stewart et al., 2015). Crowdsourced samples can be more representative of the United States population compared to in-person convenience samples, crowdsourced samples can be more diverse than university student samples, the quality of data from crowdsourced samples can be comparable to that of participants recruited by market research companies, and experimental effects and decision-making biases have been replicated using crowdsourced samples. Furthermore, Hauser and Schwarz (2016) found that crowdsourced samples were significantly more attentive than university student samples (e.g., regarding instructions and attention checks). Hunt and Scheetz (2019) found that screening questions within the survey itself contributed to a significant decrease in attention check failures. Specifically relevant to the present dissertation's implementation of a news commentary podcast, Clifford et al. (2015) found that crowdsourced samples did not significantly differ from traditionally recruited national samples on psychological data related to political beliefs.

   Compensation. A total of $2.40 USD was granted to each participant who completed the study, based on an estimated completion time of 18 minutes. As crowdsourcing increases, the ethics of protecting workers on platforms like Connect by CloudResearch becomes increasingly paramount to consider. Crowdsourced workers have historically been plagued with low-paying tasks, raising concerns about the exploitation of participants if not sufficiently regulated (Fowler et al., 2023). Some researchers, such as Harms and DeSimone (2015), advocate for paying participants at or above the federal minimum wage of the country in which participants are being recruited (i.e., $7.25 per hour in the United States; Department of Labor, 2022). Therefore,

35

compensation slightly exceeds the federal minimum wage of the United States and aligns with ethical guidelines encouraged by CloudResearch.

Eligibility to Participate. Participants were only eligible to engage in the study if they resided in the United States and if they were 19 years of age or older at the time of participation. The age requirement accounts for state-specific interpretations of age of majority. Additionally, the study was not intended for anyone who had previously listened to the *Breaking Points* podcast; this was handled post hoc because Connect does not allow researchers to use custom screening questions in-survey to disqualify participants. To encourage honest reporting of participants' eligibility, participants were asked to respond to a truth-telling oath shown in prior research by Jacquemet et al. (2021) to improve honesty in crowdsourcing research settings: "Before we begin, do you swear upon your honor to answer the following questions truthfully (You will be allowed to continue with this survey regardless of your answer to this question)?"

Measures and Materials

See Appendix A, Appendix B, and Appendix C for the institutional review board approval letter, recruiting materials, instructions, survey questions, and stimuli.

Participant Screening Information. Before beginning the study proper, participants were asked to validate their eligibility to participate. One question about honesty was asked to encourage honest responses throughout the rest of the survey. One question about country of residence and one question about age was asked to confirm whether participants were within the target population (i.e., United States residents who are 19 or older). One question was asked about prior exposure to podcasts in general, which was treated as a covariate in the study. Additionally, one more question was asked about prior exposure to the *Breaking Points* podcast. To maximize the internal validity of the manipulated predictor variable (i.e., potential social

nudge), participants had to self-report that they have never listened to *Breaking Points*, since participants would have potentially been exposed to Breaking Points LLC's nudging at some point in time. Fifteen participants who marked that they had previously listened to *Breaking Points* were removed from the dataset after data collection but were still paid in full for their time.

Predictor Variable: Social Nudges (Exposure to Social Nudge vs. No Exposure to Social Nudge). In the present experiment, consistent with behavioral economics (i.e., nudge theory), "social nudge" is operationally defined as a classification of whether participants are randomly assigned to a potential nudge towards subscribing to *Breaking Points*. Prior to being randomly assigned to one of two conditions, all participants read a brief description taken directly from the Breaking Points LLC (2022a) YouTube channel and listened to a clip from the podcast. To minimize concerns about the political contents of the news commentary podcast, a clip was selected that entailed a working class issue that people experience regardless of political orientation: the affordability of houses (Breaking Points LLC, 2022b). The clip was programmed into Qualtrics so that participants could not move forward in the survey until 330 seconds later, which provided enough time to read the description and then scroll to begin playing the clip. The dimensions of the clip were programmed to be 560 width by 315 height.

Experimental Condition: Exposure to Potential Social Nudge. For the experimental condition, half of participants were randomly assigned to the nudge stimulus. After reading a brief description and viewing a podcast clip, participants in the experimental condition read a real YouTube community post shared by Breaking Points (2022a). The experimental condition stimulus used was taken directly from the post. The dimensions of the stimulus were programmed in Qualtrics to be 1198 pixels by 152 pixels. See Figure 1.

Figure 1

Experiment 1 Stimulus (Experimental Condition: Potential Nudge)

> **Breaking Points** 1 month ago (edited)
> Our Spotify Wrapped is in for 2022 and we couldn't be more AMAZED to be in the top 1% most shared globally. Thank you to all our new listeners and dedicated long time audiences that keep tuning in every single morning. Cheers to all of you!

Control Condition: No Exposure to Potential Social Nudge. Half of participants were randomly assigned to the control condition, in which there was no nudge stimulus. Participants only read a brief description and viewed the podcast clip, without any further content.

Comprehension Check. To assess whether they understood the podcast clip they just viewed, all participants were asked one multiple choice question: "What topics were covered in the *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* clip you just viewed? Select ALL that apply." The responses "The American Dream," "Housing market," and "Income" were correct answers. See subsection "Careless or Insufficient Effort Responding" regarding how incorrect responses were addressed during data cleaning.

Predictor Variables: Brand Personality Perceptions (Sincerity, Competence, Status). In the present experiment, consistent with theories of social cognition (i.e., signaling theory, stereotype content model theory), "brand personality perceptions" is operationally defined as the extent to which participants believe that the *Breaking Points* brand signals human-like attributes (i.e., sincerity, competence, status). Items were adapted from Davies et al. (2018; Table III), because they were previously used to explain behavioral intentions. A mean score based on responses to each factor's items was calculated to represent each factor.

All three factors of brand personality perceptions were measured on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). The use of a 5-point scale is based on the source materials from which Davies et al. (2018) originally conducted their research (Davies et

al., 2004; Rojas-Méndez et al., 2013). The original source materials only featured verbal anchors at the 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) and the 5 (*Strongly Agree*). Based on best practices in relation to clarity for participants (see DeVellis, 2017 and Vagias, 2006), verbal anchors were added to the following response options: 2 (*Disagree*), 3 (*Neither Agree nor Disagree*), and 4 (*Agree*). Aligned with recommendations from Davies et al. (2018), the three subscales were treated as non-orthogonal.

  Sincerity. The five-item brand personality attribute of sincerity reflects the extent to which participants believed that the *Breaking Points* podcast brand signals tendencies such as trustworthiness. Prior research from Davies et al. (2018) found an average reliability coefficient of .86. In the present study, a hierarchical omega of .91 [95% CI = .87, .93] was calculated using a maximum likelihood with robust standard errors (MLR) adjusted estimator.

  Competence. The five-item brand personality attribute of competence reflects the extent to which participants perceived that the *Breaking Points* podcast brand signals tendencies such as efficiency. Prior research from Davies et al. (2018) found an average reliability coefficient of .83. In the present study, a hierarchical omega of .81 [95% CI = .75, .85] was calculated using a MLR adjusted estimator.

  Status. The four-item brand personality attribute of status reflects the extent to which participants perceived that the *Breaking Points* podcast brand signals tendencies such as sophistication. Prior research from Davies et al. (2018) found an average reliability coefficient of .76. In the present study, a hierarchical omega of .81 [95% CI = .76, .85] was calculated using a MLR adjusted estimator.

  Criterion Variable: Behavioral Intentions (Likelihood of Subscribing to *Breaking Points*). In the present experiment, "behavioral intentions" is operationally defined as the extent

to which participants were likely to subscribe to the *Breaking Points* podcast. Consistent with

Juster (1966), items were ordinally measured on an 11-point scale from 1 (*No chance, almost no*

chance) to 11 (*Certain, practically certain*), in which a verbal anchor corresponded to each

response option. Four questions were asked, as originally structured by Juster (1966), which

were then adapted to fit specifically with consuming the *Breaking Points* podcast. First, a general

question was asked about the likelihood of subscribing to the podcast. Next, three questions were

asked about the likelihood of being subscribed to the podcast at three time periods: within 30

days, within 60 days, and within 90 days. A mean score based on responses to all items of the

measure was calculated to represent behavioral intentions. In the present study, behavioral

intentions featured a categorical omega of .99 [95% CI = .99, 1.00] using a weighted least square

mean and variance (WLSMV) adjusted estimator.

   Potential Confounding Variables. Consistent with theories of self-concept (i.e., social

identity theory, self-categorization theory), various demographic and psychographic

characteristics could potentially emerge as confounds. As such, the following were measured and

treated as covariates in the model.

   Populist Values. In the present experiment, "populist values" is defined as the extent to

which participants socially identified with aspects of populism: people-centrism, anti-elitism, and

Manichaeanism. A unidimensional, six-item short form ordinal measure of populist values from

Castanho Silva et al. (2018) was measured on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*)

to 7 (*Strongly Agree*). The use of a 7-point scale is based on the original source material

(Castanho Silva et al., 2018), which only featured verbal anchors at the 1 (*Strongly Disagree*)

and the 7 (*Strongly Agree*). Based on best practices in relation to clarity for participants (see

DeVellis, 2017 and Vagias, 2006), verbal anchors were added to the following response options:

2 (*Disagree*), 3 (*Somewhat Disagree*), 4 (*Neither Agree nor Disagree*), 5 (*Somewhat Agree*), and 6 (*Agree*). Prior research from Castanho Silva et al. (2018) found evidence of structural validity in the short form, based on multiple indices (e.g., a comparative fit index of .96). A mean score based on responses to all items of the measure was calculated to represent populist values. In the present study, a categorical omega of .73 was calculated using a WLSMV adjusted estimator [95% CI = .06, .82]. The limitations of this measure are noted in the results and discussion section.

      Political Orientation. A three-item ordinal measure of political orientation was adapted from Tyber et al. (2015), in which questions about views on social issues, economic issues, and politics overall were asked. All three items were on a seven-point scale with the following verbal anchors for each ordered category: 1 (*Left-Wing*), 2 (*Left-Leaning*), 3 (*Liberal*), 4 (*Moderate*), 5 (*Conservative*), 6 (*Right-Leaning*), 7 (*Right-Wing*). A mean score based on responses to all items of the measure was calculated to represent political orientation. In the present study, a categorical omega of .95 [95% CI = .93, .96] was calculated using a WLSMV adjusted estimator.

      The present adaptation of the measure contrasts with the original measure used by Tyber et al. (2015). In the original version, the first two items were on a seven-point Likert scale ranging between "Very Liberal" and "Very Conservative." The third item, asking instead about agreement with the two major United States political parties, ranged on a seven-point Likert scale between "Much More with Democrats" and "Much More with Republicans." Additionally, compared to when Tyber et al. (2015) completed their research, there is increasing evidence of nuance in political beliefs (e.g., left-wing authoritarianism and right-wing authoritarianism [Manson, 2020], faith and flag conservatives and the progressive left [Pew Research Center, 2021b]). Thus, the measure was adjusted to include anchors from left-wing to right-wing.

Age. Aligned with recommendations from Hughes et al. (2022), age was a ratio variable defined as the number of years a participant has been alive.

Prior Exposure to Podcasts. Given the present dissertation is related to a podcast, prior exposure to podcasts was included as a covariate. The variable is nominal in the present study, in which possible answers are "yes" and "no."

Non-Study Variables. For descriptive purposes, demographic information deemed vital for any psychological research study was collected (see Hughes et al., 2022). See again Table 1 for a breakdown of participants' demographics.

Gender. In line with recommendations from the American Psychological Association (APA, 2020) and from Hughes et al. (2022), participants were asked two questions about gender. Participants could select from a list of gender social group options (e.g., nonbinary). Then, participants could self-report whether they identified as transgender. Gender is a nominal variable in the present study.

Racial and Ethnic Identity. In line with recommendations from the American Psychological Association (APA, 2020) and from Hughes et al. (2022), participants were asked one question to identify with one or more social groups based on race (i.e., physical differences perceived to be socially significant) and on ethnicity (i.e., cultural characteristics perceived to be socially significant). Racial and ethnic identity is a nominal variable in the present study.

Social Class. In line with recommendations from the American Psychological Association (APA, 2020) and from Hughes et al. (2022), two questions were asked about social class as an alternative to socioeconomic status. Participants self-identified in relation to their childhood circumstances and in relation to their present circumstances (e.g., working class). Social class is a nominal variable in the present study.

Sampling Procedures

The present experiment was approved with exempt status by the Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) Institutional Review Board (IRB) on February 7, 2023 under Protocol 23027. Sampling procedures occurred online on February 16, 2023. Prospective participants, having already created an account on Connect by CloudResearch, saw the study among a list of available studies. United States residents who were at least 19 years old had access and could read a brief description about the study. Upon selecting the study, a more detailed description of the study provided prospective participants with information to determine whether to enroll in the study. Those who opted to start the study were directed to an external link, in which the survey was hosted on Qualtrics, a study management software. Prospective participants then reviewed an informed consent form.

Upon agreeing to participate via informed consent, participants responded to a truth-telling oath and questions regarding country of residence, age, prior podcast use, and awareness about the *Breaking Points* podcast. Afterwards, participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions. Half of participants read a summary about the *Breaking Points* podcast and were exposed to a potential social nudge taken verbatim from Breaking Points LLC (2022a); then, they viewed a clip from the podcast. The other half of participants only read a summary and viewed a clip from the podcast. A comprehension check was provided to all participants to confirm they viewed the clip. Then, all participants answered questions about the following: perceptions regarding the brand personality of *Breaking Points*, behavioral intentions to subscribe to the *Breaking Points* podcast, and demographic and psychographic information. After completing the study, participants were automatically redirected to Connect by CloudResearch to confirm completion and to rate their experience with the study on a scale from

1 to 5 stars. Of 275 participants, 208 provided a rating; the average rating of their experience

with Experiment 1 was 4.9 stars. Upon receiving approval for their participation within 24 hours

of completion, participants received their financial compensation via the Connect platform.

Participants took an average 15.59 minutes to complete the study.

Analytic Strategy

SPSS (Version 28.0.1.1 and Version 29.0.1.0) and R (Version 4.2.2 and Version 4.3.1)

were used to conduct analyses. RStudio (Version 2022.12.0 Build 353 and Version 2023.06.1

Build 524) was used as an integrated development environment (i.e., a frontend) to operate R.

Primary Analysis for Hypothesis Testing.

Hierarchical Multiple Regression. To address the present experiment's hypotheses, a

hierarchical multiple regression was conducted using SPSS, in which behavioral intentions to

subscribe to *Breaking Points* was the criterion variable. To hold potential confounding variables

constant, the following predictor variables represented Block 1 in the regression model: age,

prior podcast exposure (yes = 1, no = 0), populist values, and political orientation. Block 2

featured the addition of the experimental predictor variable (exposure to a potential social nudge

= 1, no exposure to a potential social nudge = 0). Block 3 featured the addition of the three

dimensions of brand personality perceptions as predictor variables: sincerity, competence, and

status. The order of blocks aligns with Nathans et al. (2012), who said, "…the purpose of theory-

based hierarchical regression analysis is to enter variables into regression equations in a

predetermined order that is relevant to the theory underlying development of the regression

model…The researcher is able to control the variance contributions of several 'control' variables

before entering the variables of 'primary importance' to the theory with such methods" (p. 10).

The following indices were calculated using SPSS: regression coefficients, standard error, unstandardized beta, standardized beta, p-values, coefficient of determination (R^2), R^2 change, F-ratio, F change, degrees of freedom between and within, and confidence intervals (see Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013 and Darlington & Hayes, 2017). Various packages in R (i.e., lm.beta, yhat, Olsrr, and boot) were utilized to assess the following indices of predictor importance: structure coefficients, relative weights, and rescaled relative weights (see Darlington & Hayes, 2017).

Experiment 1 Results and Discussion

See Appendix F for a link to the data, materials, and measures of Experiment 1.

Data Screening and Cleaning

The initial sample featured 275 United States adult residents aged 19 and older, who were recruited via Connect by CloudResearch. The final sample consisted of 250 United States adult residents. Below describes the process in which the final sample was retained.

Missing Data. Missing data were replaced using multiple imputation as part of the MICE package in R. Multiple imputation is favorable over other techniques (e.g., mean substitution), given its robustness to violations of normality and type errors (Darlington & Hayes, 2017; Graham, 2009; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Of the study variables, the following was observed: no missing data were observed among age, populist values, political orientation, prior podcast exposure, brand personality perceptions (sincerity, competence, and status), behavioral intentions overall, and behavioral intentions after 30 days. Specifically, six participants did not respond to the question about behavioral intentions after 60 days. Of those participants, one participant also did not respond to the question about behavioral intentions after 90 days. To resolve those cases of missing data, multiple imputation was conducted via the MICE package of R. By default, the

package is programmed to run five iterations, which then produces five imputations. The most frequently occurring imputation was used to replace all missing values.

Participant Screening. Regarding screening information, 15 people were removed from the dataset due to self-reporting that they had listened to *Breaking Points* prior to participating in the study. Despite not qualifying for inclusion in the dataset, these participants completed the study in full, so they were paid in full for their time. On the truth oath question, everyone marked "yes" when asked whether they would answer the survey questions honestly.

Extreme Cases. Because the primary analysis for hypothesis testing relied on ordinary least squares (OLS) regression, the following types of extreme cases were assessed using the Olsrr package in R: leverage points (i.e., extreme scores on the set of predictor variables), distance points (i.e., extreme scores on the criterion variable), and influential points (i.e., extreme scores on individual predictor variables). In line with recommendations by Darlington and Hayes (2017), a leverage plot detected high leverage cases using the following cutoff: $\frac{(2)(k+1)}{N}$. N represents sample size, and k represents the number of predictors included in the regression model. Regarding distance points, a distance plot detected high cases using the following cutoff: $> |3.00|$. A Cook's distance plot detected highly influential cases on the criterion variable using the following cutoff: $\frac{4}{N}$. DFbeta plots detected highly influential cases on the set of predictor variables using the following cutoff: $\frac{2}{\sqrt{N}}$. Only extreme cases that were high in all three (i.e., leverage, distance, and influence) were targeted for exclusion from the dataset prior to conducting the primary analysis. Of the remaining 260 participants, 10 participants were removed from the dataset due to demonstrating all three types of extreme cases. This ultimately resulted in the final sample of 250 United States adult residents aged 19 and older.

Careless or Insufficient Effort Responding. Because the primary analysis for hypothesis testing utilizes survey data, two types of careless or insufficient effort (C/IE) responding screeners were assessed using SPSS: response time and attention check. C/IE responding occurs when participants do not accurately or thoughtfully respond to all questions in a survey (Curran, 2016). First, regarding response time (which is automatically recorded by Qualtrics), Huang et al. (2012) suggested a cut score of two seconds per item. In the case of the 38-item survey used for Experiment 1, 76 seconds or less was deemed an excessively quick response time. Second, regarding the attention check, Thomas and Clifford (2017) recommended the use of a comprehension check in relation to understanding the experimental materials viewed by the participant. In the case of the present experiment, participants responded to a question with objectively correct answers (i.e., "What topics were covered in the *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* podcast clip you viewed? Select ALL that apply" in which "The American Dream," "Housing market," and "Income" are the correct answers). Because Curran (2016) suggested that multiple screeners of C/IE responding should be utilized throughout a survey, any participants who failed both screeners in the survey were targeted for exclusion from the dataset prior to conducting the primary analysis.

Only one person completely failed the attention check question, in which the participant selected all possible answers (i.e., including the incorrect answer: "Gas prices"), and the other did not answer whatsoever. Nonetheless, because they did not demonstrate an excessively quick response time, they were retained in the dataset; this is based on recommendations from Curran (2016) and from a member of the present dissertation committee. 99.60% of participants (*n* = 249) successfully identified the primary topic of the clip (i.e., the housing market). 77.20% of participants (*n* = 193) successfully identified the secondary topic of income. 62.40% of

47

participants (n = 156) successfully identified the tertiary topic of the American Dream.

Diagnostic Analyses

      Tests of Collinearity. Collinearity statistics were calculated using SPSS for variables in each block of the regression model (see Darlington & Hayes, 2017). Specifically, tolerance and variance inflation factors (VIF) were reviewed. In Block 1 (i.e., the potential confounding variables), variables' tolerance ranged between .95 and 1.00; VIFs ranged between 1.00 and 1.05. In Block 2 (i.e., the potential confounding variables and the experimental nudge manipulation), variables' tolerance ranged between .95 and 1.00; VIFs ranged between 1.00 and 1.05. In Block 3 (i.e., the potential confounding variables, experimental nudge manipulation, and the brand personality attributes), variables' tolerance ranged between .49 and .96; VIFs ranged between 1.05 and 2.05. Of particular interest is the brand personality attribute of competence. Its VIF was 2.05, which can be interpreted as follows: the standard error of competence's beta coefficient is 2.05 times larger than it would be if competence was uncorrelated with other variables in the regression model. None of the variables in any block of the regression model exceeded the commonly cited value of 10, although some researchers caution that such values may be arbitrary when failing to account for other factors (e.g., sample size; O'Brien, 2007). Furthermore, as noted by Darlington and Hayes (2017), collinearity "affects only the power of tests on regression coefficients – not their validity" and "does not reduce the power of a test on the effect of the set of regressors as a whole" (p. 118-119). The full list of tolerance values and VIFs are provided via Table S2 in the supplemental analyses of Appendix G.

      Tests of Statistical Assumptions. Tests of statistical assumptions were conducted using various packages in R (i.e., Olsrr, fBasics, lmtest, and sandwich). Because the primary analysis for hypothesis testing relies on OLS regression, the following assumptions were assessed using

the final regression model's variables: linearity, normality, independence, and homoscedasticity (Darlington & Hayes, 2017; Hayes, 2022). Regarding the assumption of linearity, a residuals vs. fitted values plot and a residual histogram were created. The residuals followed a relatively flat line in the plot and a relatively normal curve in the histogram. Regarding the assumption of normality, a normal Q-Q plot was created. Again, the residuals remained relatively close to the line. Regarding the assumption of independence, autocorrelation function plots were created. Plots for all variables' residuals suggested independence.

Regarding the assumption of homoscedasticity, a scale-location plot was created. Furthermore, two formal tests were conducted: a Breusch Pagan Test and a Score Test. The scale-location plot's residuals visually clustered to the right side of the plot, although they do not necessarily follow any particular pattern. However, the Breusch Pagan Test was significant in the overall model, suggesting an assumption violation, $\chi^2(8) = 18.46$, $p = .02$. Specifically, the brand personality dimension of sincerity was flagged, $\chi^2(1) = 14.06$, $p = .001$. Likewise, a Score Test also suggested a violation in the overall model, $\chi^2(8) = 15.19$, $p = .03$. To address the violation of this assumption, supplemental analyses are provided via Table S3 in Appendix G, in which significance tests in each block of the regression model were corrected using robust standard error estimates (i.e., heteroscedasticity-consistent standard error estimates; see Darlington & Hayes, 2017). The variables originally deemed significant predictors in the third block of the regression model pre-correction remained significant post-correction.

Reliability Coefficients. Coefficient omega and bootstrapped confidence intervals were conducted using the MBESS package in R, the lavaan package in R, and the semTools package in R. Although coefficient alpha (e.g., Cronbach's alpha; Cronbach, 1951) is a commonly used reliability coefficient, it is more appropriate for measures that clearly feature equidistance

between response options. For measures in which equidistance cannot be reasonably assumed, using coefficient alpha can risk violations of statistical conclusions validity (Flora, 2020). In contrast, coefficient omega entails a more robust factor analytic approach (Gadermann et al., 2012; McDonald, 1999). For continuous items like those of the present experiment's measures, omega allows for treating items as non-homogeneous (which contrasts with other coefficients that assume perfectly independent items). Furthermore, confidence intervals for hierarchical omega can be calculated using bootstrapping techniques (Kelley & Pornprasertmanit, 2016). Although there is no standard for what is deemed a minimally acceptable omega coefficient, some researchers have recommended .75 (Reise, 2012; Reise et al., 2013; Watkins, 2017).

Specifically, categorical omega was assessed for the following continuous variables featuring one dimension and ordered categories as response options: behavioral intentions to subscribe to *Breaking Points*, populist values, and political orientation. Additionally, hierarchical omega was assessed for brand personality perceptions, given its conceptualization as a multidimensional construct. In the present study, the populist values measure was below the informal .75 convention and featured a relatively wide range between the lower limit and upper limit of the confidence intervals. The limitations of this finding are noted in the results and discussion section.

Confirmatory Factor Analyses. To assess for evidence of structural validity, a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were conducted using the MBESS package, the lavaan package, and the semTools package in R. Based on Brown (2015), best practices suggest the importance of reviewing multiple fit indices to gauge the overall model fit of each variable. Such indices are model chi-square (χ^2), comparative fit index (CFI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). First, model chi-

square should be non-significant at $p > .05$, although it can be sensitive to large samples. Second, CFI should be $\geq .90$. Lastly, RMSEA and SRMR should be $< .08$ (Awang, 2012; Byrne, 2006; Fan et al., 1999; Kline, 2016; Schumacker & Lomax, 2010; Tucker & Lewis, 1973).

Behavioral intentions, brand personality perceptions (i.e., sincerity, competence, status), political orientation, and populist values were assessed. The behavioral intentions measure was assessed based on a one-factor model with ordinally scaled items and a weighted least square mean and variance adjusted (WLSMV) estimator. The model revealed acceptable model fit, $\chi^2(2) = 9.66$, $p = .01$, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .12, SRMR = .01. The CFI and SRMR indices suggest the items appropriately fit into a one-dimension model, but the chi-square and RMSEA do not. The three dimensions of brand personality perceptions were assessed based on a bifactor measurement model (see Reise, 2012) with a maximum likelihood with robust standard errors (MLR) estimator (see Flora, 2020); non-orthogonal properties were specified, based on recommendations from Davies et al. (2018). The model revealed good model fit, $\chi^2(57) = 104.65$, $p < .001$, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .04. Excluding the chi-square, all noted indices suggest the items appropriately fit into a three-dimension model. The political orientations measure was assessed based on a one-factor model with ordinally scaled items and a WLSMV estimator. The model suggested good model fit, although the CFA ended normally after only one iteration, $\chi^2(0) = .00$, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00, SRMR = .00. Fourth, the populist values measure was assessed based on a one-factor model with ordinally scaled items and a WLSMV estimator. The measure revealed poor model fit, $\chi^2(9) = 177.85$, $p < .001$, CFI = .69, RMSEA = .27, SRMR = .15. The limitations of the latter finding are noted in the results and discussion.

Zero-Order Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations. See Table 2 for an overview of reliability coefficients, correlations, means, and standard deviations. Higher ages were associated with leaning politically right. Leaning politically left was associated with stronger populist values. Stronger beliefs that *Breaking Points* exhibits sincerity were associated with stronger beliefs that *Breaking Points* exhibits competence and status; such beliefs were also associated with an increased likelihood of subscribing to the *Breaking Points* podcast.

Table 2

Experiment 1 Correlations, Reliability, Means, and Standard Deviations

Variables	Age	Populist Values	Political Orientation	BPP: Sincerity	BPP: Competence	BPP: Status	Behavioral Intentions
Age	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Populist Values	-.10	---	---	---	---	---	---
Political Orientation [a]	.18**	-.16*	---	---	---	---	---
BPP: Sincerity	.10	-.06	.12	---	---	---	---
BPP: Competence	-.04	.01	.08	.64***	---	---	---
BPP: Status	-.13*	-.07	-.01	.43***	.52***	---	---
Behavioral Intentions	-.07	.02	.07	.60***	.48***	.44***	---
ω	N/A	.73	.95	.91	.81	.81	.99
M	38.89	4.85[b]	3.39[b]	3.87[c]	3.88[c]	2.99[c]	3.13[d]
SD	12.04	.73	1.67	.73	.61	.74	2.87

Note. BPP = brand personality perceptions. ω = omega reliability coefficient.
*** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$.
[a] Higher scores reflect politically right leanings. [b] On a scale from 1 to 7. [c] On a scale from 1 to 5. [d] On a scale from 1 to 11.

Primary Analysis for Hypothesis Testing

Hierarchical Multiple Regression. A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted using SPSS to test Research Question 1A (i.e., do social nudges explain consumers' behavioral intentions to consume the *Breaking Points* podcast) and Research Question 1B (i.e., do brand personality perceptions explain consumers' behavioral intentions).

Block 1: Potential Confounding Variables. To control for potential confounding variables, the following variables were entered into Block 1 as covariates: age, prior podcast exposure, populist values, and political orientation. The covariates non-significantly accounted for 2.40% of explained variance in behavioral intentions to subscribe to *Breaking Points*, $F(4, 245) = 1.53$, $p = .20$. Despite having nonsignificant beta coefficients, the covariates were retained in subsequent blocks. To quote Darlington and Hayes (2017), "…when sample sizes are moderate or large, little power is lost by adding a few extra covariates that turn out to be independent of other variables…the non-significance of a covariate's regression weight is not a good reason for deleting it from the model. If you felt controlling for a variable is necessary for the sake of accurate inference about the phenomenon being modeled, that doesn't change just because its *p*-value is not small enough to reject the null hypothesis that its regression weight is zero" (p. 121). As mentioned in the literature review, prior theory (e.g., self-concept) and research (e.g., Bratcher, 2022) justifies the inclusion of age, prior podcast exposure, populist values, and political orientation as potential confounding variables.

Block 2: Potential Confounding Variables and Experimental Manipulation. In Block 2, the experimental manipulation (i.e., potential nudge vs. no potential nudge) was entered. With the manipulation entered alongside the covariates, 2.60% of explained variance was non-significantly accounted for in behavioral intentions, $F(5, 244) = 1.28$, $p = .27$. Notably, after controlling for the covariates, the manipulation did not produce any significant R^2 change (.00), $\Delta F(1, 244) = .32$, $p = .57$.

Block 3: Potential Confounding Variables, Experimental Manipulation, and Brand Personality Perceptions. In Block 3, the three dimensions of brand personality perceptions were entered (i.e., sincerity, competence, and status). With all variables included in the final model,

41.00% of explained variance was significantly accounted for in behavioral intentions, $F(8, 241)$ = 20.96, $p < .001$. After controlling for variables in Blocks 1 and 2, the three dimensions of brand personality perceptions significantly contributed to a R^2 change of .39, $\Delta F(3, 241) = 52.40$, $p < .001$. Based on a Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests (see Holm, 1979 and Boustani, 2022), stronger beliefs that *Breaking Points* exhibits sincerity and status were associated with an increased likelihood of subscribing to *Breaking Points*. See Table 3 for an overview of regression indices for all three models, including confidence intervals.

Table 3

Experiment 1 Hierarchical Regression Results for Explaining Behavioral Intentions

Variables	R^2	ΔR^2	t	B	95% CI LL	95% CI UL	SE B	β
Block 1:	.024	.024						
Age			-1.28	-.02	-.05	.01	.02	-.08
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]			-1.70	-.71	-1.53	.11	.42	-.11
Populist Values			.33	.15	-.41	.58	.25	.02
Political Orientation			1.39	.11	-.07	.37	.11	.09
Block 2:	.026	.001						
Age			-1.23	-.02	-.05	.01	.02	-.08
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]			-1.70	-.71	-1.53	.11	.42	-.11
Populist Values			.34	.09	-.41	.58	.25	.02
Political Orientation			1.37	.15	-.07	.37	.11	.09
Manipulation: Social Nudge [b]			-.57	-.21	-.92	.51	.36	-.04
Block 3:	.410***	.385***						
Age			-1.78	-.02	-.05	.00	.01	-.09
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]			-.71	-.24	-.91	.42	.34	-.04
Populist Values			1.00	.20	-.19	.59	.20	.05
Political Orientation			.73	.06	-.11	.24	.09	.04
Manipulation: Social Nudge [b]			-.55	-.16	-.72	.40	.29	-.03
BPP: Sincerity*** [c]			7.14	1.88	1.37	2.41	.26	.48
BPP: Competence			.99	.33	-.32	.99	.33	.07
BPP: Status** [d]			2.89	.69	.22	1.16	.24	.18

Note. BPP = brand personality perceptions. CI = confidence intervals. LL = lower limit. UL = upper limit.
*** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$.
[a] 0 = no, 1 = yes. [b] 0 = no exposure to potential social nudge (control group); 1 = exposure to potential social nudge (experimental group). [c] $p' < .001$ after Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests. [d] $p' = .03$ after Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

Predictor Importance. According to Tonidandel and LeBreton (2011), "Relative importance analyses will permit a greater understanding of the particular role played by variables in a multiple regression equation. Importantly, these analyses can reveal the underlying impact of

a particular predictor more accurately than standardized regression coefficients or simple

correlations" (p. 7). Therefore, for all variables in the final block (even those with non-

significant beta coefficients), indices of predictor importance were calculated. Sincerity,

competence, and status were the top three most important predictors of behavioral intentions,

based on calculations of structure coefficients and relative weights. Structure coefficients

revealed that participants' perceptions about *Breaking Points'* sincerity were correlated .93 with

estimated behavioral intentions ($\hat{y}$), in which 86.20% of variance was shared between the two.

Participants' perceptions about *Breaking Points'* competence were correlated .75 with estimated

behavioral intentions, in which 55.50% of variance was shared between the two. Participants'

perceptions about *Breaking Points'* status were correlated .68 with estimated behavioral

intentions, in which 46.00% of variance was shared between the two. Furthermore, rescaled

relative weights revealed that of the 41.00% explained variance in behavioral intentions,

sincerity, competence, and status accounted for 53.03%, 22.01%, and 20.28%, respectively. See

Table 4.

Table 4

Experiment 1 Indices of Predictor Importance for Explaining Behavioral Intentions (Block 3)

Variables	*B*	β	Unique	Common	r_s	RW [95% CI LL, UL]	Rescaled RW
Age	-.02	-.09	.01	-.00	-.11	.01 [-.01, .04]	1.72%
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]	-.24	-.04	.00	.01	-.17	.01 [-.01, .04]	1.52%
Populist Values	.20	.05	.00	-.00	.02	.00 [-.01, .02]	0.36%
Political Orientation	.06	.04	.00	.00	.11	.00 [-.01, .03]	0.80%
Manipulation: Social Nudge [b]	-.16	-.03	.00	.00	-.07	.00 [-.01, .02]	0.28%
BPP: Sincerity	1.88	.48	.13	.23	.93	.22* [.17, .29]	53.03%
BPP: Competence	.33	.07	.00	.23	.75	.09* [.05, .13]	22.01%
BPP: Status	.69	.18	.02	.17	.68	.08* [.04, .15]	20.28%

Note. BPP = brand personality perceptions. Unique = unique variance in variable that explains $\hat{y}$. Common = shared variance in variable that explains $\hat{y}$. r_s = structure coefficients. RW = relative weights. CI = confidence intervals. LL = lower limit. UL = upper limit.
* $p < .05$.
[a] 0 = no, 1 = yes. [b] 0 = no exposure to potential social nudge; 1 = exposure to potential social nudge.

Brief Summary of Experiment 1 Findings

Research Hypothesis 1A was Unsupported: Social Nudges Did Not Explain Behavioral Intentions to Subscribe to *Breaking Points*. To recap, two research questions were investigated. First, regarding Research Question 1A, do social nudges explain consumers' behavioral intentions to consume the *Breaking Points* podcast? The following hypothesis was formed and then tested using hierarchical multiple regression: "Social nudges will significantly account for explained variance in behavioral intentions; consumers who experience the potential social nudge will report higher behavioral intentions to subscribe to the Breaking Points podcast, compared to consumers who do not experience the potential nudge. This will occur while holding potential confounds constant (i.e., age, populist values, political orientation, prior exposure to podcasts)." Based on the findings of Experiment 1, the hypothesis was not supported. The experimental manipulation did not significantly explain differences in participants' likelihood of subscribing to *Breaking Points*. In other words, seeing the social nudge stimulus about the podcast being in the top 1% most shared globally on Spotify did not make a difference in people's willingness to subscribe. In fact, when introduced to the regression model in Block 2, it did not produce any noticeable change in R^2. Likewise, it remained non-significant in Block 3 after the three dimensions of brand personality perceptions were introduced.

Together, these findings suggest that the social nudge stimulus used in the experimental condition was not salient to participants. As researchers have noted, a nudge must be noticeable enough for people to respond accordingly (Lindenberg & Papies, 2019; Noggle, 2018; Thaler & Sunstein, 2021). Recall again the stimulus from Breaking Points LLC (2022a) used in Experiment 1: "Our Spotify Wrapped is in for 2022 and we couldn't be more AMAZED to be in

the top 1% most shared globally. Thank you to all our new listeners and dedicated long time audiences that keep tuning in every single morning. Cheers to all of you!" Although the "top 1% most shared globally [on Spotify]" statement was intended to showcase that many people are already listening to the podcast (i.e., a social nudge), perhaps the statement was too abstract. In contrast to YouTube and its publicly available subscriber count for any given channel, it is unclear precisely how many people are listening to and sharing any given podcast on Spotify.

Alternatively, because the social nudge stimulus did not contribute to behavioral change, the stimulus does not align with the functional definition of a nudge.Thaler and Sunstein (2008) defined nudges as "any aspect of the choice architecture that alters people's behavior in a predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives" (p. 6). The stimulus used in Experiment 1 did not forbid alternatives in the decision-making process. However, it did not significantly contribute explained variance in behavioral intentions to subscribe to *Breaking Points*. Thus, a different stimulus was necessary to test.

Differences in the Designs of Experiment 1 and Experiment 2. In Experiment 2, the potential social nudge stimulus was once again tested as part of replication efforts. However, whereas Experiment 1 featured an attempt at a quantitative social nudge (i.e., "top 1% most shared globally"), Experiment 2 combined the previous experiment's stimulus with an attempt at a qualitative social nudge (i.e., a comment left on the Breaking Points LLC YouTube channel by a current subscriber). Because the comment made more direct references to brand personality attributes, it was hypothesized to produce a more salient response regarding participants' behavioral intentions to subscribe.

Research Hypothesis 1B was Supported: Brand Personality Perceptions Explained Behavioral Intentions to Subscribe to *Breaking Points*. Regarding Research Question 1B, do brand personality perceptions explain consumers' behavioral intentions to consume the *Breaking Points* podcast? The following hypothesis was formed and tested using hierarchical multiple regression: "Sincerity, competence, and status will each significantly account for explained variance in behavioral intentions. This will occur while holding potential confounds constant." Based on the findings of Experiment 1, the hypothesis was supported. Before the three dimensions of brand personality were introduced into the regression model, the model was non-significant. Upon their introduction into Block 3, the model became significant and contributed to significant change in R^2. Sincerity, competence, and status all significantly explained differences in behavioral intentions to subscribe to *Breaking Points*, based on the regression model itself as well as indices of predictor importance. In other words, consumers were more willing to subscribe to *Breaking Points* if they perceived the podcast's brand to exhibit sincerity, competence, and status.

Differences in the Designs of Experiment 1 and Experiment 2. Together, these findings showcase a successful application of prior brand personality knowledge to a previously unexplored consumer context (i.e., behavioral intentions to consume a podcast). Potential confounding variables were successfully controlled, providing further validity evidence of the relationship between variables. Indeed, these findings align with the broader literature that consistently reveals the extent to which brand personality perceptions can explain behavioral intentions (e.g., the meta-analysis of Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013). As part of replication efforts, this question is asked and tested as part of Experiment 2 to see whether these findings can once again be found in a podcasting context. This was extended further by testing competing

measures of brand personality perceptions. Half of participants in Experiment 2 were asked to respond to the Davies et al. (2018) measure grounded in psychological theory (i.e., signaling theory and stereotype content model theory), and the other half were asked to respond to the Aaker (1997) measure not grounded in psychological theory (i.e., based on the five-factor model of human personality).

Addressing the Measure of Populist Values. As mentioned previously, the short form measure of populist values from Castanho Silva et al. (2018) featured poor reliability and poor model fit in Experiment 1. It should be noted that the long form version from which the short form originates emerged as three factors in the authors' original work: people-centrism (i.e., the desire for working class people to have the most control over how society operates), anti-establishment (i.e., the perception that the elite are corrupt), and Manichaeanism (i.e., the perception that working class people are good and the elite are bad; Castanho Silva et al., 2018). The authors used item response theory information curves to manually select the top performing items from each factor and implement them into a unidimensional measure. Although the original authors found that the six items showcased good model fit in a CFA, the CFA in the present study found that the six items showcased poor model fit. Likewise, the items about Manichaeanism revealed low interitem correlations (see Table S4 of Appendix G). Removal of these items did not resolve issues with model fit, nor did it resolve issues with reliability.

For supplemental consideration, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed on the dataset of Experiment 1, to see whether the six-item short form measure intended to be one factor was misidentified. Using a principal axis factoring extraction method with a Promax rotation method, items significantly loaded onto three factors corresponding to their placement in the long form dimensions from which they originate. However, the EFA only loaded two items

onto each factor; typically, three or more items are necessary to form a subscale (see DeVellis, 2017). Because each factor would have only held two items each, the use of three factors in the short form measure was unviable in Experiment 1 (see Table S5 of Appendix G).

Differences in the Designs of Experiment 1 and Experiment 2. These findings suggest that the short form unidimensional measure may not be well suited to investigate people's populist values; although merely a covariate and not a variable of focus, a poorly performing measure risks undermining statistical conclusions validity for the entirety of the present dissertation. As part of replication efforts, populist values are once again measured in Experiment 2 as potential confounding variables. However, based on recommendations from the present dissertation committee, the short form measure was replaced with the long form measure that features three factors. Each factor was entered into Block 1 of the regression model in Experiment 2, alongside all other potential confounding variables. This allowed for continuity between experiments, rather than switching to a completely new measure of populist values from other researchers.

CHAPTER 4

EXPERIMENT 2: METHOD, RESULTS, AND DISCUSSION

In order to take into account these manifold conditions and in order to detect, underneath

all the complex variables, the direction of the processes uppermost in interest at the

moment, an experimental technique is required which is more refined and precise than

any other branch of science. (Hollingworth & Poffenberger, 1923, p. 236)

Experiment 2 Method

Participants

Sample Size and A Priori Power Analysis. To ensure enough usable participants, an

initial sample of 275 United States adult residents was collected. Based on Experiment 1's a

priori power analysis via G*Power (see Faul et al., 2009), the minimum number of participants

deemed necessary for the final sample was 236; thus, the first 236 usable participants (based on

data cleaning efforts) comprised the final sample. For replication purposes, the sample size was

kept consistent between Experiment 1 and Experiment 2. A target power of 95% was once again

chosen because of recent concerns in psychological research regarding underpowered studies

(Abraham & Russell, 2008; Brysbaert, 2019; Giner-Sorolla et al., 2023).

Participant Characteristics. Participants in the final sample ($N = 236$) predominantly

identified as prior podcast listeners ($n = 191$, 80.90%), lower middle class in childhood ($n = 100$,

35.60%) and in adulthood ($n = 97$, 41.10%), cisgender ($n = 231$, 98.30%), men ($n = 118$,

50.00%), and White ($n = 186$, 78.80%). Participants' mean age was 40.42 (minimum age = 20,

maximum age = 77). See Table 5 for a breakdown of demographics in Experiment 2.

Table 5

Experiment 2 Demographic and Psychographic Information

Variables	*n*	% of the Sample
Prior Exposure to Podcasts		
Yes	191	80.90%
No	45	19.10%
Perceived Social Class During Childhood		
Working Class	84	35.60%
Lower Middle Class	100	42.40%
Upper Middle Class	48	20.30%
Upper Class	2	0.80%
I Prefer Not to Answer	2	0.80%
Perceived Social Class During Adulthood		
Working Class	76	32.20%
Lower Middle Class	97	41.10%
Upper Middle Class	61	25.80%
Upper Class	0	0.00%
I Prefer Not to Answer	2	0.80%
Gender Identity		
Agender	2	0.80%
Gender Queer	2	0.80%
Man	118	50.00%
Nonbinary	3	1.30%
Woman	108	45.80%
I Prefer Not to Answer	3	1.30%
Gender Modality ("Do you identify as transgender?")		
Yes	3	1.30%
No	231	97.30%
I Prefer Not to Answer	1	0.40%
No Response	1	0.40%
Race/Ethnicity: Arab, Middle Eastern, or North African		
Yes	2	0.80%
No	234	99.20%
Race/Ethnicity: Asian or Asian American		
Yes	19	8.10%
No	217	91.90%
Race/Ethnicity: Black or African American		
Yes	20	8.50%
No	216	91.50%
Race/Ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino/a/x		
Yes	20	8.50%
No	216	91.50%
Race/Ethnicity: Native American or Alaska Native		
Yes	4	1.70%
No	232	98.30%
Race/Ethnicity: Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander		
Yes	1	0.40%
No	235	99.60%
Race/Ethnicity: White or European American		
Yes	186	78.80%
No	50	21.20%
Race/Ethnicity: I Prefer Not to Answer		
Yes	1	0.80%
No	235	99.20%

Recruitment. Participants were recruited from Connect, a crowdsourcing platform operated by CloudResearch (see Hartman et al., 2023) in which people can complete tasks (e.g., research studies) in exchange for financial compensation.

Compensation. A total of $2.40 USD was granted to each participant who completed the study, based on an estimated completion time of 19 minutes. Because the short form populist values measure (Castanho Silva et al., 2018) was replaced with the long form populist values measure by the same researchers, estimated completion time was increased from 18 minutes to 19 minutes. Compensation still slightly exceeded the federal minimum wage of the United States and aligned with ethical guidelines encouraged by CloudResearch.

Eligibility to Participate. Participants were only eligible to engage in the study if they resided in the United States and if they were 19 years of age or older at the time of participation. The age requirement accounts for state-specific interpretations of age of majority. Additionally, prior exposure to the *Breaking Points* podcast was again handled post hoc because Connect does not allow researchers to use custom screening questions in-survey to disqualify participants. To encourage honest reporting of participants' eligibility, participants were asked to respond to a truth-telling oath shown in prior research by Jacquemet et al. (2021) to improve honesty in crowdsourcing research settings. Furthermore, participants must not have previously participated in Experiment 1; this criterion was managed using the Connect platform.

Measures and Materials

See Appendix A, Appendix D, and Appendix E for the institutional review board approval letter, recruiting materials, instructions, survey questions, and stimuli.

Participant Screening Information. Before accessing the study, participants were asked to validate their eligibility to participate. One question about honesty was asked to encourage

honest survey responses. One question about country of residence and one question about age was asked to confirm whether participants were within the target population (i.e., United States residents who are 19 or older). One question was asked about prior exposure to podcasts in general, which was treated as a covariate in the study. Additionally, one more question was asked about prior exposure to the *Breaking Points* podcast. To maximize the internal validity of the manipulated predictor variable (i.e., potential social nudges), participants had to self-report that they have never listened to *Breaking Points*, since participants would have otherwise been exposed to Breaking Points LLC's nudging. Twenty-four participants who marked that they had at one point listened to *Breaking Points* were removed from the dataset after data collection but were still paid for their time in full.

Predictor Variable: Social Nudges (Exposure to Social Nudge vs. No Exposure to Social Nudge). In the present experiment, "social nudge" is operationally defined as a classification of whether participants are randomly assigned to a potential nudge towards subscribing to *Breaking Points*. Prior to being randomly assigned to one of two conditions, all participants read a brief description taken directly from the Breaking Points LLC (2022a) YouTube channel and listened to a clip from the podcast. To minimize concerns about the political contents of the news commentary podcast, a clip was selected that entailed a working class issue that people experience regardless of political orientation: the affordability of houses (Breaking Points LLC, 2022b). The clip was programmed into Qualtrics so that participants could not move forward in the survey until 330 seconds later, which provided enough time to read the description and then scroll to begin playing the clip. The dimensions of the clip were programmed to be 560 width by 315 height.

Experimental Condition: Exposure to Potential Social Nudge. For the experimental condition, half of participants were randomly assigned to the nudge stimuli. After reading a brief description and viewing a podcast clip, participants in the experimental condition read a real YouTube community post shared by Breaking Points LLC (2022a) and a comment on that post by Meserve (2022). The experimental condition stimuli were taken directly from the post and comment. The dimensions of the nudge were programmed in Qualtrics to be 1198 pixels by 152 pixels, and the dimensions of the comment were programmed to be 1244 pixels by 204 pixels. See Figure 2.

Figure 2

Experiment 2 Stimulus (Experimental Condition: Potential Nudge)

Breaking Points 1 month ago (edited)
Our Spotify Wrapped is in for 2022 and we couldn't be more AMAZED to be in the top 1% most shared globally. Thank you to all our new listeners and dedicated long time audiences that keep tuning in every single morning. Cheers to all of you!

Ej Meserve 1 month ago
Let me just say this. You guys are doing so well because people (myself included) trust you. Not because we agree with you, not because we know we'll hear exactly what we want but because you guys give honest perspectives on whatever it is you choose to report on from the basic big news stories, to government corruption, to UFOs and crypto stories. Just remember as you guys grow it is your authenticity that brought me and many others here and that authenticity is what has gotten us to stay.

Control Condition: No Exposure to Potential Social Nudge. Half of participants were randomly assigned to the control condition, in which there were no potential nudge stimuli. Participants only read a brief description and viewed the podcast clip, without any further content.

Comprehension Check. To assess whether they understood the podcast clip they just viewed, all participants were asked one multiple choice question: "What topics were covered in the *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* clip you just viewed? Select ALL that apply." The responses "The American Dream," "Housing market," and "Income" were correct answers. See

subsection "Careless or Insufficient Effort Responding" regarding how incorrect responses were addressed during data cleaning.

Predictor Variable: Competing Brand Personality Measures (Davies et al. [2018] vs. Aaker [1997]). In the present experiment, "competing measures of brand personality" is defined as a classification of whether participants were randomly assigned to answer brand personality questions adapted from Davies et al. (2018) or from Aaker (1997). The Davies et al. (2018) measure is based on theories of social cognition, and the Aaker (1997) measure is based on the five-factor model of human personality. As a nominal, dichotomous variable, this predictor pitted two measures against each other to determine whether the measure grounded in psychological theory (i.e., Davies et al., 2018) better accounts for explained variance in behavioral intentions compared to the measure not grounded in theory (i.e., Aaker, 1997).

Experimental Condition: The Davies et al. (2018) Measure Grounded in Psychological Theory. In the final sample, 116 participants were randomly assigned to respond to 14 items from Table III of Davies et al. (2018), which were based on signaling theory and stereotype content model theory. Three dimensions were represented: sincerity (e.g., warm, trustworthy), competence (e.g., efficient, enterprising), and status (e.g., elegant, sophisticated). A mean score based on responses to each factor's items were calculated to represent each factor. All three dimensions were measured on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). The use of a 5-point scale was based on the source materials from which Davies et al. (2018) originally conducted their research (Davies et al., 2004; Rojas-Méndez et al., 2013). The original source materials only featured verbal anchors at the 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) and the 5 (*Strongly Agree*). Based on best practices in relation to clarity for participants (see DeVellis, 2017 and Vagias, 2006), verbal anchors were added to the following response options: 2

(*Disagree*), 3 (*Neither Agree nor Disagree*), and 4 (*Agree*). Aligned with recommendations from Davies et al. (2018), the three subscales were treated as non-orthogonal.

Control Condition: The Aaker (1997) Measure Not Grounded in Psychological Theory. In the final sample, 120 participants were randomly assigned to respond to 29 questions from the Aaker (1997) measure of brand personality, which was loosely based on the five-factor model of human personality but was not ultimately grounded in psychological theory. Three dimensions from Aaker (1997) were represented: sincerity (e.g., down-to-earth, honest), competence (e.g., reliable, hard-working), and sophistication/status (e.g., upper class, charming). A mean score based on responses to each factor's items will be calculated to represent each factor. All three factors of brand personality were measured on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*Not at All Descriptive*) to 5 (*Extremely Descriptive*). The use of a 5-point scale was based on the original source material (Aaker, 1997). The original source materials only featured verbal anchors at the 1 (*Not at All Descriptive*) and the 5 (*Extremely Descriptive*). Based on best practices in relation to clarity for participants (see DeVellis, 2017 and Vagias, 2006), verbal anchors were added to the following response options: 2 (*Undescriptive*), 3 (*Neutral*), and 4 (*Descriptive*). Aligned with recommendations from Davies et al. (2018), the three subscales were treated as non-orthogonal.

Predictor Variables: Brand Personality Perceptions (Sincerity, Competence, Status). In the present experiment, "brand personality perceptions" is operationally defined as the extent to which participants believe that the *Breaking Points* brand signals human-like attributes (i.e., sincerity, competence, status). A mean score based on responses to each factor's items were calculated to represent each factor. Despite participants responding to one of two measures of brand personality perceptions as part of the competing measures variable (i.e., the Davies et al. [2018] items versus the Aaker [1997] items), all participants had a mean score representing the

same underlying construct.

Sincerity. The brand personality attribute of sincerity reflects the extent to which participants believe that the *Breaking Points* brand signals tendencies such as friendliness and cheerfulness. In prior research, the Davies et al. (2018) sincerity items featured an average reliability coefficient of .86; in the present study, a hierarchical omega of .88 [95% CI = .77, .93] was calculated using a maximum likelihood with robust standard errors (MLR) adjusted estimator. In prior research, the Aaker (1997) items featured a reliability coefficient of .93; in the present study, a hierarchical omega of .78 [95% CI = .56, .88] was calculated using a MLR adjusted estimator.

Competence. The brand personality attribute of competence reflects the extent to which participants perceive that the *Breaking Points* brand signals tendencies such as confidence. In prior research, the Davies et al. (2018) items of competence revealed an average reliability coefficient of .83; in the present study, a hierarchical omega of .82 [95% CI = .75, .87] was calculated using a MLR adjusted estimator. In prior research, the Aaker (1997) items revealed a reliability coefficient of .93; in the present study, a hierarchical omega of .83 [95% CI = .72, .88] was calculated using a MLR adjusted estimator.

Status. The brand personality attribute of status reflects the extent to which participants perceive that the *Breaking Points* brand signals tendencies such as glamor. In prior research, the Davies et al. (2018) items showcased an average reliability coefficient of .76; in the present study, a hierarchical omega of .89 [95% CI = .83, .92] was calculated using a MLR adjusted estimator. In prior research, the Aaker (1997) items showcased a reliability coefficient of .91. In the present study, a hierarchical omega of .75 [95% CI = .62, .82] was calculated using a MLR adjusted estimator.

Criterion Variable: Behavioral Intentions (Likelihood of Subscribing to *Breaking Points*). In the present experiment, "behavioral intentions" is operationally defined as the extent to which participants were likely to subscribe to the *Breaking Points* podcast. Consistent with Juster (1966), items were measured on an 11-point scale from 1 (*No chance, almost no chance*) to 11 (*Certain, practically certain*), in which a verbal anchor corresponded to each response option. Four questions were asked, as originally structured by Juster (1966), which were then adapted to fit specifically with consuming the *Breaking Points* podcast. First, a general question was asked about the likelihood of subscribing to the podcast. Next, three questions were asked about the likelihood of being subscribed to the podcast at three time periods: within 30 days, within 60 days, and within 90 days. A mean score based on responses to all items of the measure was calculated to represent behavioral intentions. In the present study, behavioral intentions featured a categorical omega of .98 [95% CI = .97, .99] using a weighted least square mean and variance (WLSMV) adjusted estimator.

Potential Confounding Variables. Various demographic and psychographic characteristics could potentially emerge as confounds. As such, the following were measured and treated as covariates in the model.

Populist Values. In the present experiment, "populist values" is defined as the extent to which participants socially identified with aspects of populism: people-centrism, anti-elitism, and Manichaeanism. A nine-item, multidimensional long form ordinal measure of populist values from Castanho Silva et al. (2018) was measured on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 7 (*Strongly Agree*). The use of a 7-point scale is based on the original source material (Castanho Silva et al., 2018), which only featured verbal anchors at the 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) and the 7 (*Strongly Agree*). Based on best practices in relation to clarity for

participants (see DeVellis, 2017 and Vagias, 2006), verbal anchors were added to the following response options: 2 (*Disagree*), 3 (*Somewhat Disagree*), 4 (*Neither Agree nor Disagree*), 5 (*Somewhat Agree*), and 6 (*Agree*). Prior research from Castanho Silva et al. (2018) found evidence of structural validity in the long form, based on multiple indices (e.g., a RMSEA of .07). A mean score based on responses to all items of the measure was calculated to represent populist values. In the present study, a hierarchical omega of .67 [95% CI = .54, .77] was calculated for the people-centrism subscale using a MLR adjusted estimator. A hierarchical omega of .75 [95% CI = .70, .80] was calculated for the anti-establishment subscale using a MLR adjusted estimator. A hierarchical omega was unable to be calculated for the Manichaeanism subscale. The latter is potentially due to participants perceiving ambiguity in the intended directionality of the subscale's items. The subscale was therefore excluded from the primary analysis for hypothesis testing. The limitations of these findings are noted in the results and discussion section.

Political Orientation. A three-item ordinal measure of political orientation was adapted from Tyber et al. (2015), in which questions about views on social issues, economic issues, and politics overall were asked. All three items were on a seven-point scale with the following verbal anchors for each ordered category: 1 (*Left-Wing*), 2 (*Left-Leaning*), 3 (*Liberal*), 4 (*Moderate*), 5 (*Conservative*), 6 (*Right-Leaning*), 7 (*Right-Wing*). A mean score based on responses to all items of the measure was calculated to represent political orientation. In the present study, a categorical omega of .94 [95% CI = .92, .96] was calculated using a WLSMV adjusted estimator.

Age. Aligned with recommendations from Hughes et al. (2022), age was a ratio variable defined as the number of years a participant has been alive.

Prior Exposure to Podcasts. Given the present dissertation is related to a podcast, prior exposure to podcasts was included as a covariate. The variable is nominal in the present study, in which possible answers are "yes" and "no."

Non-Study Variables. For descriptive purposes, demographic information deemed vital for any psychological research study was collected (see Hughes et al., 2022). See again Table 5 for a breakdown of participants' demographics.

Gender. In line with recommendations from the American Psychological Association (APA, 2020) and from Hughes et al. (2022), participants were asked two questions about gender. Participants could select from a list of gender social group options (e.g., nonbinary). Then, participants could self-report whether they identified as transgender. Gender is a nominal variable in the present study.

Racial and Ethnic Identity. In line with recommendations from the American Psychological Association (APA, 2020) and from Hughes et al. (2022), participants were asked one question to identify with one or more social groups based on race (i.e., physical differences perceived to be socially significant) and on ethnicity (i.e., cultural characteristics perceived to be socially significant). Racial and ethnic identity is a nominal variable in the present study.

Social Class. In line with recommendations from the American Psychological Association (APA, 2020) and from Hughes et al. (2022), two questions were asked about social class as an alternative to socioeconomic status. Participants self-identified in relation to their childhood circumstances and in relation to their present circumstances (e.g., working class). Social class is a nominal variable in the present study.

The present experiment was approved with exempt status by the Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) Institutional Review Board (IRB) on February 7, 2023 under Protocol 23027. Sampling procedures occurred on February 23, 2023. Prospective participants, having already created an account on Connect by CloudResearch, saw the study among a list of available studies. United States residents who were at least 19 years old had access and could read a brief description about the study. Upon selecting the study, a more detailed description of the study provided prospective participants with information to determine whether to enroll in the study. Those who opted to start the study were directed to an external link, in which the survey was hosted on Qualtrics, a study management software. Prospective participants then reviewed an informed consent form.

Upon agreeing to participate via informed consent, participants responded to a truth-telling oath and questions regarding country of residence, age, podcast use, and awareness about the *Breaking Points* podcast. Afterwards, participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions. Half of participants read a summary about the *Breaking Points* podcast and were exposed to a potential social nudge taken verbatim from Breaking Points LLC (2022a) and from Meserve (2022); then, they viewed a clip from the podcast. The other half of participants only read a summary and viewed a clip from the podcast. A comprehension check was provided to all participants to confirm they viewed the clip. Then, all participants answered questions about the following: perceptions regarding the brand personality of *Breaking Points*, behavioral intentions to subscribe to the *Breaking Points* podcast, and demographic and psychographic information. For brand personality perceptions, participants were randomly assigned to answer one of two brand personality measures that assess the same underlying construct: the Davies et al. (2018)

measure grounded in psychological theory and the Aaker (1997) measure not grounded in psychological theory. The random assignment to a brand personality measure was treated as a dichotomous predictor variable. After completing the study, participants were automatically redirected to Connect by CloudResearch to confirm completion and to rate their experience with the study on a scale from 1 to 5 stars. Of 275 participants, 189 provided a rating; the average rating of their experience with Experiment 2 was 4.9 stars. Upon receiving approval for their participation within 24 hours of completion, participants received their financial compensation via the Connect platform. Participants took an average of 15.94 minutes to complete the study.

Analytic Strategy

SPSS (Version 28.0.1.1 and Version 29.0.1.0) and R (Version 4.2.2) were used to conduct analyses. RStudio (Version 2022.12.0, Build 353) was used as an integrated development environment (i.e., a frontend) to operate R.

Primary Analysis for Hypothesis Testing.

Hierarchical Multiple Regression. To address the present experiment's hypotheses, a hierarchical multiple regression was conducted using SPSS, in which behavioral intentions to subscribe to *Breaking Points* was the criterion variable. To hold potential confounding variables constant, the following predictor variables represented Block 1 in the regression model: age, prior podcast exposure (yes = 1, no = 0), populist values (people-centrism, anti-establishment, and Manichaeanism), and political orientation. Block 2 featured the addition of an experimental predictor variable (exposure to a potential social nudge = 1, no exposure to a potential social nudge = 0). Block 3 featured the addition of another experimental predictor variable (exposure to the Davies et al. [2018] measure of brand personality perceptions = 1, exposure to the Aaker [1997] measure of brand personality perceptions = 0). Block 4 featured the addition of the three

dimensions of brand personality perceptions as predictor variables: sincerity, competence, and status. The order of blocks aligns with Nathans et al. (2012), who said, "…the purpose of theory-based hierarchical regression analysis is to enter variables into regression equations in a predetermined order that is relevant to the theory underlying development of the regression model…The researcher is able to control the variance contributions of several 'control' variables before entering the variables of 'primary importance' to the theory with such methods" (p. 10).

The following indices were calculated using SPSS: regression coefficients, standard error, unstandardized beta, standardized beta, p-values, coefficient of determination (R^2), R^2 change, F-ratio, F change, degrees of freedom between and within, and confidence intervals (see Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013 and Darlington & Hayes, 2017). Various packages in R (i.e., lm.beta, yhat, Olsrr, and boot) were utilized to assess the following indices of predictor importance: structure coefficients, relative weights, and rescaled relative weights (see Darlington & Hayes, 2017).

Experiment 2 Results and Discussion

See Appendix F for a link to the data, materials, and measures of Experiment 2.

Data Screening and Cleaning

The initial sample featured 275 United States residents aged 19 and older, who were recruited via Connect by CloudResearch. The final sample consisted of 236 United States residents. Below describes the process in which the final sample was retained.

Missing Data. Missing data were replaced using multiple imputation as part of the MICE package in R. Of the study variables, the following was observed. In total, there were 27 missing data points. No missing data were observed among age, behavioral intentions overall, and behavioral intentions after 30 days. In contrast, four participants did not respond to the question

about behavioral intentions after 60 days, and one participant did not respond to the question about behavioral intentions after 90 days. One participant did not respond to questions 2, 4, 6, and 8 of the populist values measure; another participant did not respond to questions 3, 6, and 7 of the measure. Two participants did not respond to the second political orientation question, and one participant did not respond to question 3 of the measure. One person did not answer the entirety of the brand personality perceptions sincerity subscale, while a second person only missed one of those questions. To resolve cases of missing data, multiple imputation was conducted. By default, the package is programmed to run five iterations, which then produces five imputations. The most frequently occurring imputation was used to replace all missing values. Any participants whose imputations did not produce a consistent imputation received the mean of imputations calculated.

Participant Screening. Regarding screening information, 24 people were removed from the dataset due to self-reporting that they had listened to *Breaking Points* prior to participating in the study. Despite not qualifying for inclusion in the dataset, these participants completed the study in full, so they were paid in full for their time. One person answered "no" to the truth-telling oath question, suggesting they would not provide honest answers to the survey questions. That person was removed from the dataset.

Extreme Cases. Because the primary analysis for hypothesis testing relied on ordinary least squares (OLS) regression, the following types of extreme cases were assessed using the Olsrr package in R: leverage points (i.e., extreme scores on the set of predictor variables), distance points (i.e., extreme scores on the criterion variable), and influential points (i.e., extreme scores on individual predictor variables). In line with recommendations by Darlington and Hayes (2017), a leverage plot detected high leverage cases using the following cutoff: $\frac{(2)(k+1)}{N}$.

75

Regarding distance points, a distance plot detected high cases using the following cutoff: >

|3.00|. A Cook's distance plot detected highly influential cases on the criterion variable using the

following cutoff: $\frac{4}{N}$. DFbeta plots detected highly influential cases on the set of predictor

variables using the following cutoff: $\frac{2}{\sqrt{N}}$. Only extreme cases that were high in all three (i.e.,

leverage, distance, and influence) were targeted for exclusion from the dataset prior to

conducting the primary analysis. Of the remaining 248 participants, 12 participants were

removed from the dataset due to demonstrating all three types of extreme cases. This ultimately

resulted in the final sample of 236 United States adults aged 19 and older.

Careless or Insufficient Effort Responding. Because the primary analysis for

hypothesis testing utilizes survey data, two types of careless or insufficient effort (C/IE)

responding screeners were assessed using SPSS: response time and attention check. C/IE

responding occurs when participants do not accurately or thoughtfully respond to all questions in

a survey (Curran, 2016). First, regarding response time (which is automatically recorded by

Qualtrics), Huang et al. (2012) suggested a cut score of two seconds per item. Participants

experienced a different number of survey questions, depending on which brand personality

measure they were randomly assigned. For those who received a 42-question survey due to being

randomly assigned to the Davies et al. (2018) measure, 82 seconds or less was deemed an

excessively quick response time. For those who received a 53-question survey due to being

randomly assigned to the Aaker (1997) measure, 106 seconds or less was deemed an excessively

quick response time.

Second, regarding the attention check, Thomas and Clifford (2017) recommended the use

of a comprehension check in relation to understanding the experimental materials viewed by the

participant. In the case of the present experiment, participants responded to a question with

objectively correct answers (i.e., "What topics were covered in the *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* podcast clip you viewed? Select ALL that apply" in which "The American Dream," "Housing market," and "Income" are the correct answers). Because Curran (2016) suggested that multiple screeners of C/IE responding should be utilized throughout a survey, any participants who failed both screeners in the survey were targeted for exclusion from the dataset prior to conducting the primary analysis.

Only two people completely failed the attention check question, in which the participant selected all possible answers (i.e., including the incorrect answer: "Gas prices"). Nonetheless, because they did not demonstrate an excessively quick response time, they were retained in the dataset (i.e., based on recommendations from Curran [2016] and from a member of the present dissertation committee). 100.00% of participants ($n = 236$) successfully identified the primary topic of the clip (i.e., the housing market). 80.10% of participants ($n = 189$) successfully identified the secondary topic of income. 65.70% of participants ($n = 155$) successfully identified the tertiary topic of the American Dream.

Diagnostic Analyses

Tests of Collinearity. Collinearity statistics were calculated using SPSS for variables in each block of the regression model (see Darlington & Hayes, 2017). Specifically, tolerance and variance inflation factors (VIF) were reviewed. In Block 1 (i.e., the potential confounding variables), variables' tolerance ranged between .92 and .97; VIFs ranged between 1.03 and 1.09. In Block 2 (i.e., the potential confounding variables and the experimental nudge manipulation), variables' tolerance ranged between .91 and .98; VIFs ranged between 1.02 and 1.10. In Block 3 (i.e., the potential confounding variables, the experimental nudge manipulation, and the experimental competing measures manipulation), variables' tolerance ranged between .91 and

.97; VIFs ranged between 1.03 and 1.10. In Block 4 (i.e., the potential confounding variables, the experimental nudge manipulation, the experimental competing measures manipulation, and the brand personality attributes), variable's tolerance ranged between .50 and .95; VIFs ranged between 1.06 and 2.02. Similarly to Experiment 1, the brand personality attribute of competence is noteworthy. Its VIF was 2.02, which can be interpreted as follows: the standard error of competence's beta coefficient is 2.02 times larger than it would be if competence was uncorrelated with other variables in the regression model. None of the variables in any block of the regression model exceeded the commonly cited value of 10, although some researchers caution that such values may be arbitrary when failing to account for other factors (e.g., sample size; O'Brien, 2007). The full list of tolerance values and VIFs are provided via Table S7 in the supplemental analyses of Appendix G.

Tests of Statistical Assumptions. Tests of statistical assumptions were conducted using the Olsrr package and the fBasics package in R. Because the primary analysis for hypothesis testing relies on OLS regression, the following assumptions were assessed: linearity, normality, homoscedasticity, and independence (Darlington & Hayes, 2017; Hayes, 2022). Regarding the assumption of linearity, a residuals vs. fitted values plot and a residual histogram were created. The residuals followed a relatively flat line on the plot, and they followed a relatively normal curve on the histogram. Regarding the assumption of normality, a normal Q-Q plot was created. Again, the residuals remained relatively close to the line. Regarding homoscedasticity, a scale-location plot was created. Furthermore, two formal tests were conducted: a Breusch Pagan Test and a Score Test. The scale-location plot's residuals visually clustered to the right side of the plot, although they did not necessarily follow any particular pattern. The Breusch Pagan Test was non-significant in the overall model, $\chi^2(11) = 6.85$, $p = .81$. Likewise, a Score Test suggested no

violation of homoscedasticity, $\chi^2(11) = 10.29$, $p = .50$. Regarding independence, autocorrelation function plots were created. The plots suggested a violation within the residuals of behavioral intentions, the Manichaeanism dimension of populist values, and the competence dimension of brand personality perceptions. Plots for all other variables' residuals suggested independence.

Reliability Coefficients. Coefficient omega and bootstrapped confidence intervals were conducted using the MBESS package in R, the lavaan package in R, and the semTools package in R. Specifically, categorical omega was assessed for the following continuous variables featuring one dimension and ordered categories as response options: behavioral intentions to subscribe to *Breaking Points* and political orientation. Additionally, hierarchical omega was assessed for brand personality perceptions and for populist values. In the present study, the populist values measure's people-centrism subscale was below the informal .75 convention and featured a relatively wide range between the lower limit and upper limit of the confidence intervals. Furthermore, the populist values measure's Manichaeanism subscale failed to calculate a reliability coefficient. The latter is potentially due to participants perceiving ambiguity in the intended directionality of the subscale's items. The subscale was therefore excluded from the primary analysis for hypothesis testing. The limitations of these findings are noted in the results and discussion section.

Confirmatory Factor Analyses. To assess for evidence of structural validity, a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were conducted using the MBESS package, the lavaan package, and the semTools package in R. Again, multiple indices can be reviewed based on prior recommendations. Model chi-square should be non-significant at $p > .05$, although it can be sensitive to large samples. Second, CFI should be $\geq .90$. Lastly, RMSEA and SRMR should be $<$ .08 (Awang, 2012; Brown, 2015; Byrne, 2006; Fan et al., 1999; Kline, 2016; Schumacker &

Lomax, 2010; Tucker & Lewis, 1973).

Behavioral intentions, brand personality perceptions (i.e., sincerity, competence, status), political orientation, and populist values (people-centrism, anti-establishment, and Manichaeanism) were assessed. The behavioral intentions measure was assessed based on a one-factor model with ordinally scaled items and a weighted least square mean and variance adjusted (WLSMV) estimator (see Flora, 2020). The model revealed good model fit, $\chi^2(2) = 5.79$, $p = .06$, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .09, SMR = .01. Its chi-square, CFI, and SMR indices suggest the items appropriately fit into a one-dimension model, but the RMSEA does not. The political orientation measure was assessed based on a one-factor model with ordinally scaled items and a WLSMV estimator. The measure suggested good model fit, although the CFA ended normally after only one iteration, $\chi^2(0) = .00$, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00, SRMR = .00.

Second, the three dimensions of brand personality perceptions were assessed. The dataset was split to assess the Davies et al. (2018) measure of brand personality and the Aaker (1997) measure of brand personality. Both measures were assessed based on a bifactor measurement model (see Reise, 2012) with a maximum likelihood with robust standard errors (MLR) estimator (see Flora, 2020); non-orthogonal properties were specified, per recommendations from Davies et al. (2018). The Davies et al. (2018) measure of brand personality revealed good model fit, $\chi^2(57) = 90.60$, $p = .003$, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .05. Excluding the chi-square, all noted indices suggest the items appropriately fit into a three-dimension model. In contrast, the Aaker (1997) measure of brand personality revealed acceptable model fit, $\chi^2(267) = 90.60$, $p < .001$, CFI = .86, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .07.

The three dimensions of populist values were assessed based on a bifactor model (see Reise, 2012) with a MLR estimator (see Flora, 2020) and orthogonal properties, per

recommendations from Castanho Silva et al. (2018). The measure revealed good model fit, $\chi^2(18) = 34.32$, $p = .01$, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .06. Only the model chi-square called into question the use of three factors. However, because of the questionable reliability of the Manichaeanism subscale, a second model was tested that excluded the Manichaeanism subscale. The measure just featuring people-centrism and anti-establishment attitudes revealed good model fit, $\chi^2(3) = 9.40$, $p = .02$, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .10, SRMR = .07. Only the model chi-square and the RMSEA called into question the use of three factors. Given the similar performance of both models, the exclusion of the Manichaeanism subscale is further justified in the present dataset.

      Zero-Order Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations. See Table 6 for an overview of reliability coefficients, correlations, means, and standard deviations. Higher ages were associated with leaning politically right. Lower ages were associated with stronger anti-establishment values. Leaning politically left was associated with stronger people-centrism values; leaning politically right was associated with stronger beliefs that *Breaking Points* exhibits competence and an increased likelihood of subscribing to the Breaking *Points* podcast. Stronger people-centrism values were associated with stronger anti-establishment values and stronger beliefs that *Breaking Points* exhibits all three brand personality attributes. Stronger beliefs that *Breaking Points* exhibits sincerity were associated with stronger beliefs that *Breaking Points* exhibits competence and status; such beliefs were also associated with an increased likelihood of subscribing to the *Breaking Points* podcast.

Table 6

Experiment 2 Correlations, Reliability, Means, and Standard Deviations

Variables	Age	PO	PV: People-Centrism	PV: Anti-Establishment	BPP: Sincerity	BPP: Competence	BPP: Status	Behavioral Intentions
Age	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
PO[a]	.13*	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
PV: People-Centrism	-.02	-.21***	---	---	---	---	---	---
PV: Anti-Establishment	-.15*	-.11	.19**	---	---	---	---	---
BPP: Sincerity	.05	.12	.17*	-.10	---	---	---	---
BPP: Competence	.04	.16*	.24***	.01	.61***	---	---	---
BPP: Status	-.12	.10	.19**	.00	.39***	.53***	---	---
Behavioral Intentions	-.09	.17**	.12	-.05	.55***	.43***	.46***	---
ω	N/A	.94	.67	.75	.88/.78[b]	.82/.83[b]	.89/.75[b]	.98
M	40.42	3.35[c]	6.10[c]	5.23[c]	3.58[d]	3.77[d]	3.01[d]	4.12[e]
SD	12.17	1.62	.88	1.18	.73	.63	.77	2.70

Note. BPP = Brand personality perceptions. PV = Populist values. ω = Omega reliability coefficient.
*** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$.
[a] PO = Political orientation. Higher scores reflect politically right leanings. [b] The first number represents the Davies et al. (2018) measure, and the second number represents the Aaker (1997) measure. [c] On a scale from 1 to 7. [d] On a scale from 1 to 5. [e] On a scale from 1 to 11.

Primary Analysis for Hypothesis Testing

Hierarchical Multiple Regression. A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted using SPSS to test Research Question 2A (i.e., do social nudges explain consumers' behavioral intentions to consume the *Breaking Points* podcast), Research Question 2B (i.e., do brand personality perceptions explain consumers' behavioral intentions), and Research Question 2C (i.e., which measure of brand personality perceptions better explains consumers' behavioral intentions). See Table 7.

Block 1: Potential Confounding Variables. To control for potential confounding variables, the following variables were entered into Block 1 as covariates: age, prior podcast exposure, populist values (i.e., people-centrism, anti-establishment), and political orientation. The covariates significantly accounted for 7.50% of explained variance in behavioral intentions

to subscribe to *Breaking Points*, $F(5, 230) = 3.75$, $p = .003$. Based on a Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests (see Holm, 1979 and Boustani, 2022), leaning politically right and stronger people-centrism values were associated with an increased likelihood of subscribing to *Breaking Points*. Despite age and prior podcast exposure having nonsignificant beta coefficients, the covariates were retained in subsequent blocks. To quote Darlington and Hayes (2017), "…when sample sizes are moderate or large, little power is lost by adding a few extra covariates that turn out to be independent of other variables…the non-significance of a covariate's regression weight is not a good reason for deleting it from the model. If you felt controlling for a variable is necessary for the sake of accurate inference about the phenomenon being modeled, that doesn't change just because its *p*-value is not small enough to reject the null hypothesis that its regression weight is zero" (p. 121). As mentioned in the literature review, prior theory and research justifies the inclusion of age, prior podcast exposure, populist values, and political orientation as potential confounding variables.

  Block 2: Potential Confounding Variables and Social Nudge Manipulation. In Block 2, the experimental manipulation (i.e., potential nudge vs. no potential nudge) was entered. With the manipulation entered alongside the covariates, 8.80% of explained variance was significantly accounted for in behavioral intentions, $F(6, 229) = 3.60$, $p = .002$. Based on a Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests, leaning politically right and stronger people-centrism values were associated with an increased likelihood of subscribing to *Breaking Points*. However, after controlling for the covariates, the manipulation did not produce a significant R^2 change (.01), $\Delta F(1, 229) = 3.02$, $p = .08$.

Block 3: Potential Confounding Variables, Social Nudge Manipulation, and

Competing Measures Manipulation. In Block 3, the experimental competing measures

manipulation (i.e., Davies et al. [2018] brand personality measure vs. Aaker [1997] brand

personality measure) was entered. With the manipulation entered alongside the covariates and

manipulation, 9.00% of explained variance was significantly accounted for in behavioral

intentions, $F(7, 228) = 3.23$, $p = .003$. Based on a Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests,

leaning politically right and stronger people-centrism values were associated with an increased

likelihood of subscribing to *Breaking Points*. However, after controlling for the variables in

previous blocks, the manipulation did not produce a significant R^2 change (.00), $\Delta F(1, 228) =$

.68, $p = .41$.

Block 4: Potential Confounding Variables, Social Nudge Manipulation, Competing

Measures Manipulation, and Brand Personality Perceptions. In Block 4, the three dimensions

of brand personality perceptions were entered (i.e., sincerity, competence, and status). With all

variables included in the final model, 39.40% of explained variance was significantly accounted

for in behavioral intentions, $F(10, 225) = 14.64$, $p < .001$. Based on a Holm-Bonferroni

correction for multiple tests, stronger beliefs that *Breaking Points* exhibits sincerity and status

were associated with an increased likelihood of subscribing to *Breaking Points*. After controlling

for variables in previous blocks, the three dimensions of brand personality perceptions

significantly contributed to a R^2 change of .30, $\Delta F(3, 225) = 37.65$, $p < .001$. Notably, the

political orientation and people-centrism covariates were no longer significant predictors in the

final model. See Table 7 for an overview of regression indices for all four models, including

confidence intervals for unstandardized beta.

Table 7

Experiment 2 Hierarchical Regression Results for Explaining Behavioral Intentions

Variables	R^2	ΔR^2	t	B	95% CI LL	95% CI UL	SE B	β
Block 1:	.075**	.075						
Age			-1.79	-.03	-.05	.00	.01	-.12
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]			-.94	-.42	-1.29	.45	.44	-.06
Political Orientation** [b]			3.11	.34	.13	.56	.11	.21
PV: People-Centrism** [b]			2.72	.55	.15	.95	.20	.18
Populist Values: Anti-Establishment			-1.20	-.18	-.48	.12	.15	-.08
Block 2:	.088**	.012						
Age			-1.85	-.03	-.06	.00	.01	-.12
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]			-.96	-.42	-1.29	.45	.44	-.06
Political Orientation** [b]			3.23	.36	.14	.57	.11	.21
PV: People-Centrism** [c]			2.82	.57	.17	.97	.20	.19
Populist Values: Anti-Establishment			-.99	-.15	-.45	.15	.15	-.07
Manipulation: Social Nudge [d]			1.74	.60	-.08	1.28	.34	.11
Block 3:	.090**	.003						
Age			-1.84	-.03	-.05	.00	.01	-.12
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]			-.87	-.38	-1.26	.49	.44	-.06
Political Orientation** [b]			3.18	.35	.13	.57	.11	.21
PV: People-Centrism** [b]			2.81	.57	.17	.97	.20	.19
PV: Anti-Establishment			-1.04	-.16	-.45	.14	.15	-.07
Manipulation: Social Nudge [d]			1.62	.56	-.12	1.25	.35	.10
Manipulation: BPP Measure [e]			.82	.29	-.40	.97	.35	.05
Block 4:	.394***	.304***						
Age			-1.86	-.02	-.05	.00	.01	-.10
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]			-.62	-.23	-.95	.49	.37	-.03
Political Orientation			1.91	.18	-.01	.36	.09	.11
PV: People-Centrism			.34	.06	-.29	.40	.18	.02
PV: Anti-Establishment			.02	.00	-.25	.25	.13	.00
Manipulation: Social Nudge [d]			.97	.28	-.29	.85	.29	.05
Manipulation: BPP Measure [e]			-1.84	-.59	-1.22	.04	.32	-.11
BPP: Sincerity*** [f]			6.52	1.73	1.21	2.25	.26	.47
BPP: Competence			.32	.10	-.52	.73	.32	.02
BPP: Status*** [c]			3.38	.77	.32	1.22	.23	.22

Note. PV = populist values. BPP = brand personality perceptions. CI = confidence intervals. LL = lower limit. UL = upper limit.
*** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$
[a] 0 = no, 1 = yes. [b] $p' < .05$ after Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests. [c] $p' < .01$ after Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests. [d] 0 = no exposure to potential social nudge (control group); 1 = exposure to potential social nudge (experimental group). [e] 0 = Aaker (1997) measure based on five-factor model of human personality; 1 = Davies et al. (2018) measure based on social cognition theories [f] $p' < .001$ after Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

Predictor Importance. According to Tonidandel and LeBreton (2011), "Relative

importance analyses will permit a greater understanding of the particular role played by variables

in a multiple regression equation. Importantly, these analyses can reveal the underlying impact of

a particular predictor more accurately than standardized regression coefficients or simple

correlations" (p. 7). Therefore, for all variables in the final block (even those with non-significant beta coefficients), indices of predictor importance were calculated. Sincerity, competence, and status were the top three predictors of behavioral intentions, based on calculations of structure coefficients and relative weights. Structure coefficients revealed that participants' perceptions about *Breaking Points*' sincerity were correlated .87 with estimated behavioral intentions, in which 75.50% of variance was shared between the two. Participants' perceptions about *Breaking Points*' competence were correlated .68 with estimated behavioral intentions, in which 46.80% of variance was shared between the two. Participants' perceptions about *Breaking Points*' status were correlated .72 with estimated behavioral intentions, in which 52.50% of variance was shared between the two. Furthermore, rescaled relative weights revealed that of the 39.40% explained variance in behavioral intentions, sincerity, competence, and status significantly accounted for 45.93%, 16.16%, and 24.99%, respectively. See Table 8.

Table 8

Experiment 2 Indices of Predictor Importance for Explaining Behavioral Intentions (Block 4)

Variables	B	β	Unique	Common	r_s	RW [95% CI LL, UL]	Rescaled RW
Age	-.02	-.10	.01	-.00	-.14	.01 [-.00, .04]	2.30%
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]	-.23	-.03	.00	.01	-.14	.01 [-.01, .05]	0.85%
Political Orientation	.18	.11	.01	.02	.27	.02 [-.00, .06]	4.33%
PV: People-Centrism	.06	.02	.00	.01	.19	.01 [-.01, .03]	1.49%
PV: Anti-Establishment	.00	.00	.00	.00	-.08	.00 [-.010, .02]	0.40%
Manipulation: Social Nudge [b]	.28	.05	.00	.01	.15	.01 [-.01, .04]	1.23%
Manipulation: BPP Measure [c]	-.59	-.11	.01	-.00	.13	.01 [-.01, .02]	2.31%
BPP: Sincerity	1.73	.47	.11	.18	.87	.18* [.13, .25]	45.93%
BPP: Competence	.10	.02	.00	.18	.68	.06* [.03, .11]	16.16%
BPP: Status	.77	.22	.03	.18	.72	.10* [.05, .17]	24.99%

Note. PV = populist values. BPP = brand personality perceptions. r_s = structure coefficients. RW = relative weights. CI = confidence intervals. LL = lower limit. UL = upper limit.
* $p < .05$.
[a] 0 = no, 1 = yes. [b] 0 = no exposure to potential social nudge; 1 = exposure to potential social nudge. [c] 0 = Aaker (1997) measure based on five-factor model of human personality; 1 = Davies et al. (2018) measure based on social cognition theories.

Brief Summary of Experiment 2 Findings

Research Hypothesis 2A was Unsupported: Social Nudges Did Not Explain Behavioral Intentions to Subscribe to *Breaking Points*. To recap, three research questions were investigated in Experiment 2. First, regarding Research Question 2A, do social nudges explain consumers' behavioral intentions to consume the *Breaking Points* podcast? The following hypothesis was formed and then tested using hierarchical multiple regression: "Social nudges will significantly account for explained variance in behavioral intentions; consumers who experience the potential social nudge will report higher behavioral intentions to subscribe to the *Breaking Points* podcast, compared to consumers who do not experience the potential nudge. This will occur while holding potential confounds constant (i.e., age, populist values, political orientation, prior exposure to podcasts)." Based on the findings of Experiment 2, the hypothesis was not supported. The experimental manipulation did not significantly explain differences in participants' likelihood of subscribing to *Breaking Points*. In other words, seeing the social nudge stimuli about the podcast being in the top 1% most shared globally on Spotify alongside the current subscriber's comment did not make a difference in people's willingness to subscribe. These findings suggest that the behavioral nudge stimuli used in the experimental condition were once again not salient to participants, even with the addition of the comment that made more direct reference to brand personality attributes. Therefore, the nudge stimuli in both experiments did not meet the functional definition of a nudge. The implications of these findings are reflected upon in the general discussion.

Research Hypothesis 2B was Supported: Brand Personality Perceptions Explained Behavioral Intentions to Subscribe to *Breaking Points*. Regarding Research Question 2B, do brand personality perceptions explain consumers' behavioral intentions to consume the *Breaking*

Points podcast? The following hypothesis was formed and tested using hierarchical multiple regression: "Sincerity, competence, and status will each significantly account for explained variance in behavioral intentions. This will occur while holding potential confounds constant." Based on the findings of Experiment 2, the hypothesis was supported. Although the covariates of political orientation and people-centrism were initially significant predictors in the first three blocks of the regression model, their influence disappeared after the inclusion of the three brand personality dimensions. Furthermore, although each regression model was statistically significant, only the three brand personality dimensions contributed to a significant R^2 change. Sincerity, competence, and status all significantly explained differences in behavioral intentions to subscribe to *Breaking Points*, based on the regression model itself as well as indices of predictor importance. In other words, consumers were more willing to subscribe to *Breaking Points* if they perceived the podcast's brand to exhibit sincerity, competence, and status. The successful application of and replication of prior brand personality knowledge to the context of a podcast in two studies is reflected upon in the general discussion.

Research Hypothesis 2C was Unsupported: The Davies et al. (2018) Measure of Brand Personality Perceptions Grounded in Psychological Theory Did Not Better Explain Behavioral Intentions to Subscribe to *Breaking Points*. Regarding Research Question 2C, does a brand personality perceptions measure grounded in psychological theory better explain consumers' behavioral intentions? The following hypothesis was formed and tested using hierarchical multiple regression: "Differences in behavioral intentions will be detected based on which measure of brand personality perceptions that participants received. Those who responded to the Davies et al. (2018) measure based on theories of social cognition will report significantly higher behavioral intentions, compared to the Aaker (1997) measure loosely based on the five-

factor model of human personality. This will occur while holding potential confounds constant."
Based on the findings of Experiment 2, the hypothesis was not supported. The experimental manipulation of competing theories did not significantly explain differences in participants' likelihood of subscribing to *Breaking Points*. In other words, responding to the Davies et al. (2018) measure of brand personality perceptions did not make a difference in people's willingness to subscribe. The implications of these findings are reflected upon in the general discussion.

Addressing the Populist Values Measure. The overall populist values measure was again a notable limitation of the present dissertation, in which it risks undermining evidence of statistical conclusions validity. In Experiment 2, the long form measure with three dimensions was used to attempt resolving the limitation of the short form while also maintaining continuity in item content between studies. Although the data seemingly fit a three-dimension bifactor model per a CFA, the items about Manichaeanism once again performed poorly (e.g., a reliability coefficient could not be calculated). Structural validity was comparable even with the removal of the Manichaeanism subscale. The Manichaeanism subscale was therefore excluded from subsequent analyses. These limitations are reflected upon in the general discussion's section about statistical conclusions validity.

CHAPTER 5

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The commodities of the market are there because the consumer has certain needs, values, habits or desires which those commodities may satisfy. (Hollingworth & Poffenberger, 1923, p. 280)

Outline of the General Discussion

Based on recommendations from Cone and Foster (2006), the general discussion is organized thematically as follows. First, a summary of the present dissertation was provided. Second, the main overall findings across both experiments of the present dissertation are interpreted and placed in context of prior psychological research. Three findings are framed in relation to their alignment with hypotheses presented in the literature review chapter. The extent to which prior research supports the present dissertation's findings is also considered. Third, the overall implications of the present dissertation's findings are considered. Implications are considered with respect to theory, to research methodology, and to applied practice. Fourth, the overall limitations of both experiments are discussed. Concerns about four types of validity evidence are reflected upon: internal validity, external validity, construct validity, and statistical conclusions validity. Finally, concluding thoughts are given.

Summary of the Present Dissertation

To recap, the present dissertation's two experiments pursued a novel application of knowledge about the psychological processes of brand personality perceptions to the previously unexplored context of podcasts. Because prior research has consistently demonstrated the ability of brand personality perceptions to explain United States adults' behavioral intentions to consume a product, it was expected to do the same with a podcast product specifically (i.e.,

behavioral intentions to subscribe to the podcast). Because podcasts are experienced in online settings, recruiting adult consumers from the United States using an online crowdsourcing platform (i.e., Connect by CloudResearch) was a relevant sampling approach to implement. Other novel applications were considered, such as the extent to which potential social nudges could explain behavioral intentions to consume a podcast.

In brief, the results of the overall hierarchical regression models are summarized as follows. In both experiments, potential confounding variables (i.e., age, prior podcast exposure, populist values, and political orientation) were introduced as covariates in the first block of a hierarchical regression model. In Experiment 1, none of the covariates significantly explained behavioral intentions to subscribe to a podcast despite their relevance to podcasts (e.g., even though a majority of participants reporting they have previously listened to a podcast, it was not a significant predictor in either study). In Experiment 2, political orientation and the people-centrism subscale of populist values were initially significant predictors until the final block when the subscales of brand personality perceptions were introduced. This suggests a successful controlling of potential confounding variables. In both experiments, the experimental nudge condition did not significantly explain behavioral intentions to subscribe to a podcast, even with the testing of two potential nudge stimuli. In Experiment 2, the experimental brand personality perceptions condition did not significantly explain behavioral intentions to subscribe to a podcast. Lastly, in both experiments, the brand personality attributes of sincerity, competence, and status significantly explained behavioral intentions to subscribe to a podcast; only the final block that introduced brand personality perceptions produced significant change in explained variance.

General Findings and Future Directions

In Both Experiments, Brand Personality Perceptions Explained Behavioral Intentions to

Subscribe to **Breaking Points**

      Summary and Fit with Hypotheses. Overall, the results provided evidence of support

for the hypothesis that consumers' brand personality perceptions explain their behavioral

intentions. In both experiments, brand personality perceptions (i.e., sincerity, competence, and

status) were hypothesized to explain differences in United States adult consumers' willingness to

subscribe to the *Breaking Points* podcast. Consistently, after holding covariates constant, the

three dimensions of brand personality perceptions were the only significant predictors of

behavioral intentions in the final regression model. In both experiments, the regression models

did not experience significant changes in R^2 until the three dimensions were introduced. This

reflects a successful attempt at controlling for potential confounding variables relevant to

podcasts in general (e.g., age, prior podcast exposure) and relevant to the *Breaking Points*

podcast in particular (e.g., political orientation, populist values). Interestingly, in both

experiments, the final regression model showcased predictor variables that significantly

accounted for an average 40% of explained variance in behavioral intentions to subscribe. This

reflects a successful attempt at replicating the predictive nature of brand personality perceptions.

      Convergence with Past Literature and Possible Explanations. These findings are

mostly consistent with the broader literature on how brand personality perceptions can explain

behavioral intentions to consume products, reflecting a successful extension into the context of

consuming a podcast. In a study by Zhang (2017), sincerity and competence were significant

predictors of behavioral intentions. The present dissertation also joins studies cited in various

literature reviews (e.g., Ghorbani et al., 2022; Saeed et al., 2022) regarding the ability of brand

personality perceptions to explain behavioral intentions. For example, Wang and Yang (2011) found that sincerity, competence, and status explained behavioral intentions to purchase a car. Tong and Li (2013) found that brand personality perceptions explained behavioral intentions to purchase sportswear. In newer digital media contexts, Jin and Sung (2010) found that sincerity and competence (signaled by company-designed avatars on the *Second Life* platform) predicted behavioral intentions to purchase products. Lee et al. (2020) found that consumers on Facebook who previously pushed "like" on a brand's Facebook page were likely to purchase from said brand when they displayed various brand personality attributes. Overall, the above findings align with supplementally conducted meta-analytic correlations, in which beliefs about *Breaking Points*' sincerity (meta-analytic $r = .57$, $p < .001$) and competence (meta-analytic $r = .45$, $p < .001$) significantly predicted behavioral intentions to subscribe to *Breaking Points* (see Appendix G).

Furthermore, the present dissertation's modest regression results align with the modest regression results of Davies et al. (2018). In the present dissertation's multiple studies, the three dimensions of brand personality significantly accounted for an average 40% of explained variance in behavioral intentions to consume after holding covariates constant. In a study by Davies et al. (2018; see Tables III and IV), the three dimensions significantly accounted for approximately 23% of explained variance in behavioral intentions to consume. Again, the present dissertation's findings provide preliminary evidence of the potential in applying brand personality knowledge to the digital media context of a podcast. Nonetheless, this highlights the need to explore additional variables that maximize explained variance in behavioral intentions beyond the average 40% found in both experiments of the present dissertation.

The following explanation can be given for these convergent findings. First, as Davies et al. (2018) claimed, brand personality perceptions emerge regardless of context if they are sufficiently based on theories of social cognition (i.e., signaling theory and stereotype content model theory). Thus, because social cognition theories were applied, the attributes of sincerity, competence, and status still emerged despite being studied in a novel digital media context (i.e., a podcast). Second, brand personality perceptions, regardless of context, can explain behavioral intentions to consume products. This is partially reflected in the meta-analysis of Eisend and Stokburger-Sauer (2013), in which moderate to strong positive correlations were found between dimensions of brand personality and behavioral intentions; beliefs about a brand's sincerity (meta-analytic $r = .54$, $p < .01$) and competence (meta-analytic $r = .51$, $p < .01$) significantly predicted behavioral intentions.

Divergence from Past Literature and Possible Explanations. A notable deviation can be observed between the present dissertation which found that status/sophistication significantly predicted behavioral intentions and three studies which did not. The study by Jin and Sung (2010), the study by Zhang (2017), and the meta-analysis of Eisend and Stokburger-Sauer (2013) did not find evidence that status/sophistication predicted behavioral intentions. The study by Jin and Sung (2010) only included sincerity, competence, and excitement as brand personality attributes (with the latter being an attribute found by Aaker [1997] but not found by Davies et al. [2018]). Sincerity and status were the only significant brand personality attributes in the present dissertation's regression model, and competence was also revealed to be a significant predictor based on indices of predictor importance such as structure coefficients and relative weights. This gives further credence to the necessity of basing brand personality in theories of social cognition, given that signaling theory and stereotype content model theory do not support the inclusion of

94

excitement as a brand personality attribute. At the time of revising this discussion chapter in November 2023, no known brand personality research has utilized indices of predictor importance, so no comparisons to extant literature can be made at this time. Future research that utilizes the subscales of brand personality perceptions should include calculations of structure coefficients and relative weights as well as more traditional regression indices (e.g., beta), because traditional indices do not adequately represent predictor variables to their fullest extent (Tonidandel & LeBreton, 2011).

In the case of Zhang (2017), sincerity and competence were both partially mediated by brand attitude (i.e., "unfavorable/favorable," "negative/positive," "dislike/like," and "bad/good"). In contrast, status was fully mediated by brand attitude. Although mediation analyses were not conducted in the present dissertation, and although brand attitude was not measured in the present dissertation, all three brand personality perceptions dimensions measured (including status) were significant predictors of behavioral intentions. Perhaps this is due to the use of two different product types by Zhang (2017): hedonic (i.e., chocolate) and utilitarian (i.e., toothpaste). In contrast, the present dissertation only featured one product type (i.e., a podcast). Although it is not inherently problematic to include multiple product types in a study featuring brand personality, researchers may need to consider the potential impact this may have in data analysis.

Furthermore, whereas Eisend and Stokburger-Sauer (2013) found that status did not significantly explain behavioral intentions (meta-analytic $r = .45$, $p > .05$), the present dissertation did (meta-analytic $r = .44$, $p < .001$; see Table S10 in the supplemental analyses of Appendix G). Although the possibility of Eisend and Stokburger-Sauer (2013) lacking statistical power was previously posited in the literature review of the present dissertation, an even smaller

number of correlations were assessed in supplemental analyses of the present dissertation's datasets but still resulted in significant meta-analytic correlations. An explanation for this may be similar to the case of Zhang (2017). Perhaps Eisend and Stokburger-Sauer (2013) would have achieved a different finding if they conducted separate meta-analyses focusing on brand personality perceptions and behavioral intentions in specific contexts (e.g., by medium, by product type), rather than unifying them in all possible contexts.

In Both Experiments, Potential Social Nudges Failed to Explain Behavioral Intentions to Subscribe to Breaking Points

Summary and Fit with Hypotheses. In both experiments, behavioral nudging was hypothesized to explain differences in United States adults' willingness to subscribe to the *Breaking Points* podcast but ultimately did not. Specifically, consumers exposed to the social nudge stimuli (i.e., the brand's YouTube community post about being in the top 1% most shared podcast globally) were hypothesized to report higher behavioral intentions to subscribe, compared to those who were not exposed to the social nudge stimuli. However, after holding covariates constant, behavioral nudging was not a significant predictor of behavioral intentions in the final regression model. This occurred across both experiments, even with the additional social nudge stimulus (i.e., a consumer's reply to the brand's YouTube community post).

Divergence from Past Literature and Possible Explanations. These results are seemingly contradictory, compared to the broader literature. For example, Christeena and Preetha (2019), Macy et al. (2019), and Salganik et al. (2006) all found that social nudges explained behavioral intentions. In contrast, the present dissertation's social nudges did not. However, a closer look at the literature reveals that implementations of behavioral economics (e.g., nudge theory) have provided more evidence of nudges predicting actual behaviors and

96

purchase intentions (Prasetyo, 2020). The present dissertation featured intentions to subscribe to a podcast (with no purchase necessary), and Christeena and Preetha (2019) studied behavioral intentions to purchase goods online (i.e., a nudge contributed 57.30% of explained variance in intentions). In contrast, Macy et al. (2019) studied the behavior of endorsing a political position (i.e., if people were shown beforehand that others with similar political beliefs had previously endorsed said political position). Salganik et al. (2006) studied the behavior of downloading songs (i.e., if people were shown beforehand the number of previous downloads of said song).

One possible explanation for this divergence from past literature is that the experimental nudging stimuli tested in the present dissertation did not meet the functional definition of a nudge. Concisely put, based on prior literature, a nudge is a nudge only if it works in producing behavioral change. Specifically, Thaler and Sunstein (2008) defined nudges as "any aspect of the choice architecture that alters people's behavior in a predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives" (p. 6). Likewise, Lin et al. (2017) defined nudges as "psychologically informed tools designed to promote behavioral change in order to improve health and well-being" (p. 293). Indeed, because neither stimuli significantly explained behavioral intentions to subscribe to a podcast, no nudge was present.

An alternative, albeit weaker, explanation would be that behavioral nudging stimuli may better explain brand personality perceptions instead of behavioral intentions. Supplemental independent samples t-tests suggested that the behavioral nudging stimulus in Experiment 2 contributed to significant differences between the two experimental groups. Those randomly assigned to view the potential social nudge stimulus (i.e., *Breaking Points*' YouTube community post alongside a subscriber's comment) perceived *Breaking Points* as significantly more sincere and competent, compared to those randomly assigned to the control group (i.e., no potential

social nudge). However, significant differences disappeared after a Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests (see Table S8 in Appendix G).

A third explanation for divergence from past literature may be that the use of behavioral economics as a theoretical framework (i.e., nudge theory) to explain behavioral intentions was imprecise. Whereas prior social nudge research reviewed in the literature review featured loose connections to behavioral intentions, prior brand personality research featured more direct evidence of a connection to behavioral intentions. Indeed, behavioral intentions should be studied solely through the lens of social cognition. As noted by Wyer (2022), behavioral intentions may be better conceptualized as a unit of knowledge for consumers' schemas, thus warranting the use of social cognition as a theoretical framework. Therefore, in the present dissertation, it can be argued that brand personality perceptions (i.e., sincerity, competence, status) and behavioral intentions to subscribe to a podcast are units of knowledge used to form consumers' podcast schema. Social nudges are external stimuli, not units of knowledge.

Convergence with Past Literature and Possible Explanations. The findings of the present dissertation do, however, share a commonality with Roozen et al.'s (2021) findings. Roozen et al. (2021) found that potential nudges did not influence behavioral intentions to purchase distinct types of shirts (i.e., regular vs. sustainable). However, nudges did influence consumers' choice of which type of shirt they would buy (i.e., regular vs. sustainable). This aligns further with past literature divergence, which suggested more evidence of nudges predicting actual behavior instead of behavioral intentions. Ultimately, for studies in which behavioral intentions is the criterion/dependent variable, nudge stimuli may only meet the functional definition of a nudge under certain conditions.

In Experiment 2, the Davies et al. (2018) Measure Grounded in Psychological Theory Did Not

Better Explain Behavioral Intentions to Subscribe to **Breaking Points**

Summary and Fit with Hypotheses. Based on the findings of Experiment 2, the Davies

et al. (2018) measure did not explain differences in behavioral intentions to subscribe to

Breaking Points compared to the Aaker (1997) measure. In Experiment 2, participants were

randomly assigned to one of two brand personality measures, one grounded in psychological

theory (i.e., signaling theory and stereotype content model) and another that was not (i.e., the

five-factor model of human personality). As mentioned previously, the Davies et al. (2018)

measure is more theoretically grounded than the Aaker (1997) measure, because the latter was

based on a non-theoretical model. Based on prior work from Davies et al. (2018), it was

hypothesized that the two social cognition-based theories would better account for differences in

behavioral intentions compared to the five-factor model of human personality.

Convergence with Past Literature and Possible Explanations. The findings of the

second experiment are not necessarily a contradiction. Davies et al. (2018) believed that "certain

theoretically derived and empirically supported dimensions should be seen as relevant to brand

personality, irrespective of context and the choice of measurement items" (p. 116). This implies

that, comparably to Davies et al.'s (2018) items, Aaker's (1997) measure of brand personality

perceptions can be viewed through a social cognition theoretical framework even though Aaker's

(1997) scale development originally occurred through inductive reasoning via the five-factor

model of human personality. In fact, Aaker's (1997) journal article did include twinges of social

cognition-related literature; "It is argued that the symbolic use of brands is possible because

consumers often imbue brands with human personality traits (termed animism)" (p. 347).

Instead, competing brand personality measures may better explain participants' brand personality scores instead of behavioral intentions. Supplemental independent samples t-tests suggested that the randomly assigned measure of brand personality perceptions in Experiment 2 contributed to significant differences between the two experimental groups. Those randomly assigned to respond to the Davies et al. (2018) measure grounded in psychological theory rated *Breaking Points* as significantly more sincere and competent, compared to those randomly assigned to respond to the Aaker (1997) measure that was not grounded in psychological theory (see Table S9 in Appendix G). This could be due to the item content used in each measure. The items Davies et al. (2018) used to represent sincerity (e.g., trustworthy, honest, caring) may be more relevant to the *Breaking Points* podcast, instead of the items Aaker (1997) used (e.g., family-oriented, small-town, wholesome). Likewise, this may also be the case for the Davies et al. (2018) competence items (e.g., enterprising, confident, efficient) versus the Aaker (1997) competence items (e.g., corporate, technical, secure).

General Implications and Future Directions

Theoretical Implications and Research Implications

Based on the overall findings of the present dissertation, their convergence with and divergence from past literature, and a subsequent review of related literature, the following theoretical and research implications can be established.

The Need to Capture More Explained Variance in Behavioral Intentions to Subscribe to a Podcast. Although brand personality perceptions significantly accounted for 39% to 41% of explained variance in behavioral intentions to consume a podcast, this effect size is admittedly modest and therefore warrants more research to investigate other possible explanatory variables. Given the success of social cognitive variables in the present dissertation,

100

other social cognitive variables that represent units of knowledge within consumers' schemas may further explain behavioral intentions to subscribe to a podcast. At the time of revising this discussion chapter in November 2023, there is still no known research regarding brand personality in the context of podcasts aside from the present dissertation; however, social cognition-related literature may provide clues about other cognitive and affective variables that can explain behavioral intentions to subscribe to a podcast. For example, uses and gratifications theory is a communication science approach that is used to explain why people consume mass media (Bandura, 1991; Katz et al., 1973-1974). In modern times, it is often implemented to explain Internet use in conjunction with theories of social cognition (LaRose et al., 2001) and, more specifically, podcast use (e.g., Craig et al., 2023). As previously noted in the present dissertation's literature review, people have various motivations for consuming podcasts (Tobin & Guadagno, 2022).

Because uses and gratifications theory already has ties to social cognition (Bandura, 1991), it may potentially be able to coexist with signaling theory and stereotype content model theory. Thus, cognitive and affective variables related to uses and gratifications may help better explain behavioral intentions to subscribe to a podcast alongside brand personality perceptions. Although researchers have studied distinct types of podcasts, common factors of podcast uses and gratifications have been found. Consistently, three have emerged: entertainment/education, storytelling/escapism, and social engagement (Boling & Hull, 2018; Cho et al., 2023; Chung & Kim, 2015; Craig et al., 2023; McClung & Johnson, 2010; Perks et al., 2019). Future research should include these three factors of podcast uses and gratifications alongside the three factors of brand personality perceptions to investigate how much explained variance they collectively contribute to behavioral intentions to subscribe to a podcast.

Likewise, the theory of planned behavior may also be able to coexist with the aforementioned social cognition theories (i.e., signaling theory, stereotype content model theory, uses and gratifications theory). The theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) is a psychological approach to understanding the process in which cognition and affect contribute to behavioral intentions (e.g., intentions to subscribe to a podcast), which in turn contributes to actual behavior (e.g., podcast use). From this perspective, three social cognition variables are typically studied to explain behavioral intentions: attitude (i.e., the extent to which consumers perceive the behavior to be a positive experience), subjective norm (i.e., the extent to which consumers perceive that others would support them performing a behavior), and perceived behavioral control (i.e., the extent to which a behavior can easily be performed). Recent literature provides partial evidence of this theory being successfully applied to podcasts, in which attitudes and subjective norms explained behavioral intentions to consume a podcast (Moss et al., 2010; Moss et al., 2015; Mou & Lin, 2015). Furthermore, according to Ajzen (1991), additional social cognition variables can be added if there is sufficient theoretical and empirical evidence (e.g., brand personality perceptions). Notably, uses and gratifications theory could easily be integrated into the attitude component of the theory of planned behavior, given the common framing of attitudes as motivational.

In summary, future research should investigate multiple social cognition-related variables as predictor variables to maximize explained variance in behavioral intentions to subscribe to a podcast. Per signaling theory and stereotype content model theory, research should consider consumers' perceptions about a brand's sincerity, competence, and status. Per uses and gratifications theory, consumers' entertainment/education needs, storytelling/escapism needs,

and social engagement needs should be investigated. Per the theory of planned behavior, consumers' attitudes toward podcasts and subjective norms about podcasts should be researched.

The Complexity of Competence in Explaining Behavioral Intentions to Subscribe to a Podcast. Based on indices from hierarchical multiple regression analyses and predictor importance analyses, all three attributes of brand personality perceptions significantly accounted for explained variance in behavioral intentions to subscribe to *Breaking Points*; however, the beta coefficient for competence was nonsignificant in both experiments. Various findings can potentially provide an explanation. First, in both experiments, sincerity and competence are strongly correlated with each other (i.e., increased perceptions that *Breaking Points* exhibits sincerity is associated with increased perceptions that *Breaking Points* exhibits competence). Second, competence's variance inflation factor (VIF) was approximately two in both experiments (i.e., the standard error of competence's beta coefficient is approximately two times larger than it would be if competence was uncorrelated with other variables in the regression model). Third, in both experiments, competence did not contribute any unique variance to estimated behavioral intentions but did demonstrate shared variance in estimated behavioral intentions. Fourth, although it featured a small and non-significant beta coefficient, competence featured a large and statistically significant structure coefficient.

Together, these findings may suggest that the three brand personality attributes moderately explain behavioral intentions to subscribe to a podcast as part of a set of predictors, not just as separate predictor variables (see Darlington & Hayes, 2017). This aligns with prior social cognition literature and prior psychometric literature. As stated by Davies et al. (2018), "…if these dimensions are not independent, as implied by the [stereotype content model], it would be inappropriate to use orthogonal rotation to explore and factor data pools to identify

them, as such an approach assumes that each dimension is independent of and uncorrelated with others" (p. 119). Additionally, as stated by Tonidandel and LeBreton (2011), "…indices commonly produced by multiple regression analyses fail to appropriately partition variance to the various predictors when they are correlated" (p. 1). Indeed, in both experiments of the present dissertation, all three brand personality attributes were moderately to strongly correlated with one another. In diagnostic analyses (e.g., hierarchical omega, confirmatory factor analysis), they were treated as non-orthogonal to account for this. Likewise, relative importance analyses (e.g., structure coefficients, unique variance, common variance) helped provide insight into competence that the regression analyses did not provide.

Alternatively, competence may be a brand personality attribute that consumers perceive systematically as part of central processing, whereas sincerity and status are attributes that consumers can perceive more peripherally. This aligns with prior social cognition literature about dual process theories. One example is the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) of persuasion (see Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). In the newer context of digital media, this dual process approach was recently applied to content creators' marketing efforts to influence behavioral intentions. Using the ELM as their framework, Farivar et al. (2023) were able to account for approximately 61% of explained variance in consumers' behavioral intentions to purchase a product advertised by an Instagram content creator. Specifically, the researchers found that peripheral factors comparable to sincerity (e.g., self-presence) and status (e.g., perceived attractiveness of the content creator) significantly explained behavioral intentions. Likewise, the researchers found that central factors comparable to competence (e.g., perceived originality) were significant predictors of behavioral intentions. Thus, future research may benefit from integrating the ELM into studies of brand personality in a podcast context.

The Nudge Stimuli in the Present Dissertation versus the Functional Definition of a

Nudge. As mentioned in each experiment's brief summary of findings, the lack of significant

differences in behavioral intentions between the two conditions of the nudge manipulation

warrants debate on whether the "nudge" was even a nudge in the first place. Although the

present dissertation's attempt at a nudge was arguably narrow in scope (i.e., in the context of

social influence), other researchers functionally define it more broadly. Thaler and Sunstein

(2008) defined nudges as "any aspect of the choice architecture that alters people's behavior in a

predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic

incentives" (p. 6). Lin et al. (2017) defined nudges as "psychologically informed tools designed

to promote behavioral change in order to improve health and well-being" (p. 293). Thus, the lack

of significant findings would suggest that the experimental manipulation does not meet the

functional definition of a nudge.

Recall again the experimental stimulus used in Experiment 1 and Experiment 2 (i.e.,

Breaking Points' YouTube community post. "Our Spotify Wrapped is in for 2022 and we

couldn't be more AMAZED to be in the top 1% most shared [podcasts] globally. Thank you to

all our new listeners and dedicated long time audiences that keep tuning in every single morning.

Cheers to all of you!" (Breaking Points LLC, 2022a). Based on Thaler and Sunstein's (2008)

definition, the stimulus did not forbid any alternative choices (i.e., not subscribing to the

podcast). However, it did not produce behavioral change (i.e., behavioral intentions to

subscribe). Based on Lin et al.'s (2017) definition, the stimulus was implied to improve well-

being by providing consumers the opportunity to fulfill their values by consuming a podcast that

exhibits like-minded values. However, once again, it did not produce behavioral change (i.e.,

behavioral intentions to subscribe).

Also recall the additional experimental stimulus added in Experiment 2 (i.e., a consumer's comment on *Breaking Points*' YouTube community post). "Let me just say this. You guys are doing so well because people (including myself) trust you. Not because we agree with you, not because we know we'll hear exactly what we want to hear but because you guys give honest perspectives on whatever it is you choose to report on…" (Meserve, 2022). Again, based on the definitions of Thaler and Sunstein (2008) as well as Lin et al. (2017), the additional stimulus did not forbid any alternative choices. Likewise, it implied the opportunity to improve other consumers' well-being by consuming a podcast with like-minded values. Nonetheless, no behavioral change occurred.

The most concise interpretation of these findings is that the experimental stimuli of this specific dissertation did not function as nudges and thus should not be tested any further. It may be unwise to make any generalizations beyond this (e.g., the effectiveness of nudges in general, the effectiveness of nudges in podcast contexts). Thus, future research should investigate other stimuli to determine whether they meet the functional definitions of nudges in a podcast context. For example, advertisements are potential nudges for digital content creators (e.g., podcasters) to test with potential and current consumers. Content creators often post advertisements for their own products (e.g., a paid premium subscription for access to additional content). The *Breaking Points* website features three premium subscription options: monthly ($10 USD per month), yearly ($100 USD per month), and lifetime ($1,500 USD per lifetime). A previous iteration of the website had a red badge on the yearly subscription option that may potentially function as a nudge: "Save $20!" (Breaking Points, 2021). This highlights the fact that potential consumers would save money by choosing the yearly subscription (which would amount to $100 USD per year) instead of the monthly subscription (which would amount to $120 USD per year). The

savings from the monthly subscription option would benefit the financial well-being of potential consumers, yet they are not forced to select said option.

Furthermore, content creators often partner with companies to advertise products from said companies. Advertisements like these have the potential to become nudges, but they may also have the potential to become their counterpart: sludges. An interesting study of podcast consumers by Snyder and Cistulli (2023) exposed participants to one of two advertisement types regarding a paid subscription to a meat delivery service: humorous (in which the podcast hosts did not take the advertisement seriously) and non-humorous (in which the podcast hosts gave a neutral reading of the advertisement). Their experiment found that people held significantly more negative perceptions about the podcast when exposed to an advertisement in which the podcast hosts did not take the advertisement seriously. Additionally, participants had significantly weaker behavioral intentions to purchase the meat delivery subscription when exposed to the unserious advertisement. This did, indeed, produce behavioral change as stated in the functional definition of a nudge. However, the findings indicate that the unserious advertisement did not maximize the well-being of consumers, and the behavioral change was in the direction of decreasing behavioral intentions. Aligned with Snyder and Cistulli's (2023) framing of their findings, the unserious advertisement was insulting to consumers and discouraged behavioral intentions; therefore, this fits the functional definition of a sludge: "excessive or unjustified frictions, such as paperwork burdens, that cost time or money; that may make life difficult to navigate; that may be frustrating, stigmatizing or humiliating; and that might end up depriving people of access to important goods, opportunities and services" (Sunstein, 2022, p. 654). Comparably to how future research should test potential stimuli for nudging effects, future

research should also investigate potential stimuli for sludging effects that risk negative perceptions and decreased behavioral intentions in a podcast context.

Applied and Practical Implications

In addition to theoretical and research implications that benefit academia, it is worth considering to what extent the present dissertation's findings benefit businesses and consumers.

The Utility of the Present Dissertation's Findings for Businesses. As mentioned previously, Statista (Götting, 2023) found that approximately 82 million United States adults consumed podcasts in 2021. This aligns with data suggesting the podcast advertising industry has become notably lucrative. Two consulting firms projected the industry to grow to $4 billion USD by 2025 (Interactive Advertising Bureau & PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2023). Therefore, businesses would benefit from utilizing psychological science to maximize opportunities to reach prospective consumers.

Regarding Age, Prior Podcast Exposure, Populist Values, and Political Orientation. Based on the results of the present dissertation, some useful insights can be gleaned regarding the covariates. First, Breaking Points LLC has the potential to reach all kinds of prospective subscribers regardless of their demographic and psychographic characteristics. Despite a relatively wide range of ages in both experiments (i.e., age 19 to age 77), age did not statistically impact the likelihood of subscribing to *Breaking Points*. Additionally, even though most participants (i.e., up to approximately 80%) reported having listened to a podcast before, it did not make a statistically significant difference in the likelihood of subscribing to *Breaking Points*. In the context-specific case of *Breaking Points* and its classification as a news podcast that approaches world events from a populist and working-class perspective, neither populist values nor political orientation statistically impacted the likelihood of subscribing in the first

experiment. In Experiment 2, this remained true after brand personality attributes were included in the statistical analysis.

A major caveat should be noted here. Although Breaking Points LLC has the potential to reach a broader audience, this may not be the case for other businesses that operate podcasts. Politics and government are fairly mainstream topics of interest within the top ranked podcasts in the United States, as indicated by the Pew Research Center (2023a). However, businesses should consider whether demographic and psychographic characteristics may influence prospective consumers' willingness to subscribe in the case of less predominant topics (e.g., health, science and technology, religion; Pew Research Center, 2023b). That way, businesses can more precisely reach prospective consumers while minimizing the number of resources (e.g., money, time) necessary.

Regarding Nudges. Second, regarding the potential to nudge prospective consumers to subscribe to one's podcast, the present dissertation's stimuli (i.e., *Breaking Points*' YouTube community post and a subscriber's comment on the community post) do not qualify as nudges because they did not influence behavioral intentions to subscribe. This does not mean that nudges are ineffective at increasing podcast subscriptions; likewise, this does not mean that YouTube community posts and subscriber comments can never become nudges. The present dissertation simply revealed that the two stimuli used are not nudges and should not be treated as such.

Nonetheless, businesses that operate podcasts such as Breaking Points LLC should investigate other opportunities to nudge prospective consumers. For example, on February 10, 2023 (i.e., after the present dissertation process was well underway), Saagar Enjeti (i.e., one of the co-hosts of *Breaking Points*) posted a screenshot on Twitter (a.k.a. X) that showed *Breaking*

Points was third place on Spotify's list of top podcasts in the United States (Enjeti, 2023). It is possible that people would be nudged to subscribe when the information presented is more tangible like that of Enjeti's (2023) post. Being the third top podcast in the United States may be deemed more concrete than being in the top 1% most shared podcasts globally. Thus, Breaking Points LLC may benefit from implementing other stimuli, potentially like Enjeti's (2023) post, to test for nudging. Such tests are cost-efficient, given that some survey software (e.g., Qualtrics) offers free solutions to test a brief set of stimuli and questions with up to 500 participants.

   Regarding Brand Personality Perceptions. Third, brand personality perceptions (i.e., beliefs about a brand's sincerity, competence, and status) were shown to statistically influence prospective consumers' willingness to subscribe to a podcast. Specifically, people's perceptions that *Breaking Points* exhibits sincerity (e.g., trustworthy, warm) and status (e.g., sophisticated, elegant) were the most prominent predictors of intentions to subscribe. People's perceptions that *Breaking Points* exhibits competence (e.g., efficient, future-oriented) also accounted for intentions to subscribe, although its influence may potentially be better considered as a long-term endeavor. Sincerity and status perceptions can be framed as automatic thought processes that occur in the immediate. Watching or listening to one podcast clip may be sufficient for prospective consumers to gauge a podcast brand's sincerity and status. Businesses that operate podcasts (e.g., Breaking Points LLC) should therefore be able to easily test individual clips from a show to assess for opinions about sincerity and status.

   In contrast, although competence also statistically explains behavioral intentions to subscribe, such influences are only revealed after doing a deeper dive into competence's connection to sincerity and status. It is possible that prospective consumers do not fully establish their beliefs about a podcast brand's competence after only viewing or listening to a podcast clip

once. Reflecting upon such tendencies (e.g., efficient, future-oriented, enterprising, confident, competitive) may require listening over an extended period and considering the bigger picture. For example, Breaking Points LLC delivers multiple types of content beyond the one featured in the present dissertation (i.e., a discussion segment). Other types include monologues from each host, focus groups (e.g., with voters), and interviews (e.g., with presidential candidates). Therefore, businesses that operate podcasts (e.g., Breaking Points LLC) should consider showing prospective subscribers some samples of content types before asking about their beliefs regarding the podcast brand's competence. Likewise, it may be useful for the business to conduct longitudinal research to observe people's opinions about the podcast brand's personality attributes over time.

The Utility of the Present Dissertation's Findings for Consumers and for the Greater Good. Consideration should also be given to the findings' benefits and risks for consumers as well as society at large. As mentioned previously, podcasts that have a strong following allow consumers the opportunity to seek likeminded individuals (Bratcher, 2022; Tobin & Guadagno, 2022). This aligns with research about how consumers are motivated to use podcasts to fulfill various psychological needs, such as social engagement (Craig et al., 2023). Indeed, podcasts have great potential to become social spaces that allow for meaningful debates regarding world issues and for emotional catharsis during times of tragedy (e.g., acts of racism; Florini, 2015; Florini, 2017). The audience is able to coexist in these social spaces alongside the podcast hosts, even if the hosts never truly know the identities of their audience members (à la parasocial relationships; Vickery & Ventrano, 2021; Pina et al., 2019).

In the case of Breaking Points LLC, subscribers are able to engage with the hosts of *Breaking Points* in various ways (e.g., comments left on a free podcast clip posted to YouTube,

"Ask Me Anythings" that provide paid premium subscribers with additional access to the hosts).

The hosts occasionally mention these interactions in subsequent episodes, which creates further continuity in the social space they share with their audience. Likewise, on the current iteration of their website, Breaking Points LLC (2023) notes that they intentionally use paid premium subscribers' "hard earned money" to maximize the quality of the social space (e.g., introducing new types of content for all subscribers to consume, such as recordings of focus groups in which voters talk about their opinions on current events). This has the potential to be meaningful to subscribers, who want to consume content on independent media platforms that is not sufficiently present in mass media (Bratcher, 2022; Pew Research Center, 2023a; Pew Research Center, 2023b). Even to potential subscribers like those who participated in the present dissertation, their perceptions that *Breaking Points* exhibited sincerity, competence, and status/sophistication contributed to their willingness to subscribe to *Breaking Points*. Despite the potential benefits of podcast consumption and brand-consumer relationships, consumers should carefully critique the experiences they have when interacting with podcast brands. For example, although independent media may present itself as anti-establishment and attempt to dismantle the empire of mass media, it still exists within the media market (R. Berry, 2016). Independent and mass media alike are competing to maximize their audiences along with their profits. These aspects of capitalism may conflict to some extent with the podcasting ideals of "self-expression, authenticity, democratization, and media diversity" (Sullivan, 2018, p. 35).

More broadly, cognitive biases such as the Barnum effect may emerge (a.k.a. the Forer effect or the fallacy of personal validation; see Forer, 1949 and Meehl, 1956). The Barnum effect has often been considered in the context of misused personality tests and horoscopes (e.g., Fichten & Sunerton, 1983), although it also holds relevance in a consumer context (e.g.,

Mitchell, 1995) and in social spaces (e.g., Snyder & Newburg, 1981). Businesses signal a variety of information to prospective consumers, which may sometimes take the form of broad statements so generic yet positive that people can mistake the statements as personally catered to the themselves. An example would be customization services such as Spotify's recommended playlists; Spotify's use of the statement "picked for you" implies that the playlist was specifically designed for the consumer, even though the playlist is recommended to many other consumers (Solomon, 2014; The Decision Lab, n.d.).

To an extent, Breaking Points LLC (like many other businesses) seemingly utilizes Barnum statements to create buy-in (i.e., a reason to subscribe) for consumers. On the current iteration of its website, Breaking Points LLC (2023) features multiple statements that attempt to give consumers a personal connection to the overall mission of the business. For example, the main heading of the website says, "Help us build the future of independent media." Likewise, the website states, "Krystal and Saagar need your help to further expand the *Breaking Points* universe and deliver the best 2024 coverage bar none." It also says, "CNN, Fox News, and MSNBC are ripping us apart and making millions of dollars doing it. We don't have soulless billionaires or corporations backing our high end TV production, but we do have YOU. We took a big risk going independent and we need your help to…do it even better." All these statements are positive endorsements of the consumer in which they are told of their potential to make an impact in disrupting the power of mass media. Nonetheless, these are broad and generic statements that anyone could easily apply to themselves.

The present dissertation does not take a position on Breaking Points LLC's intentions with its marketing efforts (or the marketing efforts of other podcast brands). At the least, participants in the two experiments were more willing to subscribe to *Breaking Points* when they

perceived the brand to exhibit sincerity, competence, and status. Future research may benefit from assessing possible Barnum statements that the brand features on its website. It would be interesting to observe to what extent the Barnum effect could potentially influence consumers' brand personality perceptions and their behavioral intentions to subscribe to a podcast.

General Limitations and Future Directions

The following limitations of the present dissertation's two experiments are noted regarding four types of validity: internal, construct, statistical conclusions, and external.

Design and Internal Validity Limitations

Certain aspects of the present dissertation's research methodology warrant critiques. Regarding behavioral nudging, the potential social nudge stimuli did not meet the functional definition of a nudge. In retrospect, a pilot study would have been useful to assess the viability of the nudge stimuli used in the present dissertation. In other words, one could test the extent to which people recognize that any given stimulus is a social nudge. In future replications of the present dissertation, testing one's social nudge stimuli prior to the main study may be worthwhile. If pilot participants predominantly do not recognize the stimulus as a nudge, then another stimulus could be piloted. Likewise, it might even help to ask participants what they consider a social nudge (see Whitley & Kite, 2013 for a discussion about pilot studies).

More broadly, the other stimuli used in the present dissertation warrants further review. For example, all participants were asked to view a clip from the podcast about the average income needed to afford a house in the United States. The clip was merely one of many examples from *Breaking Points*, which covers a wide range of topics (e.g., political figures, popular culture, working class issues). Would participants perceive the podcast's brand personality differently depending on what type of topic was covered, and would their behavioral

114

intentions to consume the podcast differ? Likewise, *Breaking Points* has since expanded to include content from different hosts. Would brand personality perceptions and behavioral intentions differ depending on what people hosted the podcast clip (e.g., Kyrstal Ball and Saagar Enjeti on *Breaking Points* vs. Ryan Grim and Jashinsky on *Counter Points*)? It should also be noted that *Breaking Points* underwent a revamp of its visual branding in 2023, after the present dissertation's research studies concluded. The studio in which the podcast is filmed was renovated, and the logo of the podcast changed. Would consumers react to the podcast differently, based on the new visuals?

Furthermore, perhaps the combination of stimuli used in the present dissertation impacted the ability to compare differences in participants' scores. Judd et al. (2012) reported on the extent to which the number of stimuli in a study, the number of participants in a study, and an interaction of the number of stimuli and participants can contribute to random variance. In the case of the present dissertation, each study featured a final sample of 236 participants. In Experiment 1, participants experienced up to three stimuli (i.e., the summary about *Breaking Points*, the video, and the potential social nudge). In Experiment 2, participants experienced up to four stimuli (i.e., the summary about Breaking Points, the video, the potential social nudge from *Breaking Points*, and the potential social nudge from a current subscriber). Future replications of the present dissertation should consider adding stimuli count, participant count, and an interaction of the two as separate covariates.

Measurement and Construct Validity Limitations

Construct validity should also be reflected upon. As mentioned previously, the measure of Davies et al. (2018) was based on one of their studies in which datasets were reanalyzed (see their Table III). The measure was selected because its items were used to explain behavioral

intentions. However, although the same factors emerged in all their studies, the item content varied between studies. As stated before, Davies et al. (2018) stopped short of recommending a specific measure. In the present dissertation, their items loaded onto three factors and suggested good model fit; this was the case across both experiments. However, aligned with DeVellis (2017), future research should entail a more formal scale development and validation process for the items used by Davies et al. (2018).

Analyses and Statistical Conclusions Validity Limitations

Although the present dissertation featured covariates to account for potential confounds, certain limitations should be noted regarding their inclusion. As mentioned previously, the populist values covariate remained a consistent limitation across both studies. Although not the focus of the dissertation, issues with the psychometrics of covariates can still undermine statistical conclusions validity. In Experiment 1, the short form measure by Castanho Silva et al. (2018) was originally intended to be unidimensional. However, the data poorly fit a one-factor model (per a confirmatory factor analysis [CFA]), and its reliability coefficient was below informal standards for coefficient omega. Likewise, the items about Manichaeanism revealed low interitem correlations (see Table S4 in Appendix G). Removal of the items did not resolve issues with model fit, nor did it resolve issues with reliability. A separate exploratory factor analysis was performed, revealing the items loaded onto three factors (i.e., the same factors retained in the long form version). Nonetheless, because each factor would have only held two items each, the use of three factors was unviable in Experiment 1 (see Table S5 in Appendix G). In Experiment 2, the long form measure with three dimensions was used to resolve the limitation of the short form while also maintaining continuity in item content between studies. Although the data seemingly fit a three-dimension bifactor model per a CFA, the items about

Manichaeanism once again performed poorly (e.g., a reliability coefficient could not be calculated). Structural validity was comparable even with the removal of the Manichaeanism subscale.

The lackluster psychometrics of the unidimensional populist values measure in Experiment 1, therefore, may provide insight into why populist values did not emerge as a significant covariate. The error variance of the unidimensional measure may have produced too much noise for an effect to be detected, particularly given the mixing of item content. In contrast, the people-centrism subscale of the multidimensional populist values measure did emerge as a significant covariate in Experiment 2 alongside political orientation until the subscales of brand personality perceptions were introduced in the final block. In fact, the two covariates had good model fit and were correlated (i.e., increases in people-centrism values were associated with leaning politically left). A closer look at indices of predictor importance also reveals that the people-centrism measure did not contribute any unique variance in estimated behavioral intentions. Thus, in line with Darlington and Hayes' (2017) perspective on inference in regression, it is possible that the two variables as a set (i.e., per shared variance) are mildly useful in predicting behavioral intentions to subscribe, rather than as separate variables. Future research may benefit from a deeper dive into this possibility.

Furthermore, a closer look at the Manichaeanism subscale's item content reveals unclear directionality. Consider the following two Manichaeanism items, with the first one intended by Castanho Silva et al. (2018) to be reverse scored after data collection: "The people I disagree with politically are not evil," and "The people I disagree with politically are just misinformed." Castanho Silva et al. (2018) unintentionally structured these items as double negatives, in which participants may have been confused about how to interpret the items (i.e., issues with face

validity). Did participants believe the items reflected a "good versus evil" mentality, as originally intended? Similar issues with directionality were noted by Erisen et al. (2021), who also used the long form measure. Like in the present dissertation, Erisen et al. (2021) found good model fit per a CFA but notably low reliability. Thus, if future researchers replicate the present dissertation and include populist values as a covariate, it would be beneficial to consider whether brand personality perceptions maintain their ability to explain behavioral intentions if a more reliable measure of populist values was held constant.

Lastly, although included as a demographic question for descriptive data, social class was ultimately not selected to serve as a covariate in the present dissertation for two reasons. First, four covariates were already included to represent confounding variables deemed theoretically relevant to the topic of brand personality perceptions in the context of a news commentary podcast (i.e., age, prior podcast exposure, populist values, political orientation). Researchers have warned about implementing "garbage-can regressions" that include excessive numbers of covariates, especially without sufficient theoretical and empirical justification (Achen, 2005; Spector & Brannick, 2011; Wysocki et al., 2022). Such practices can risk undermining statistical conclusions validity (Rohrer, 2018). To quote Quetelet (1849, p. 195), "Statistics are of value only according to their exactness. Without this essential quality they become useless, and even dangerous, since they conduce to error." Second, social class is considered a proxy for socioeconomic status (Hughes et al., 2022). Spector and Brannick (2011) cautioned about the use of psychographic proxy variables as covariates. Future attempts at replication of the present dissertation should consider the inclusion of income as a more direct but still relevant covariate, albeit with consideration about the sensitivity of such a question (see Hughes et al., 2022).

Generalizability and External Validity Limitations

Finally, limitations should be noted regarding the ability to provide evidence of external validity. The present dissertation intentionally focused on one podcast, due to the complete lack of brand personality research in podcasting contexts. Self-replication was necessary in the absence of prior research. Presently, there is evidence that brand personality perceptions explain people's willingness to subscribe to *Breaking Points*. This should ideally serve as a starting point for future research to achieve generalizability, in which the following questions could be investigated. Would brand personality perceptions explain behavioral intentions to subscribe to *Breaking Points* if participants were recruited in other settings (e.g., other crowdsourcing platforms, university participant pools)? Would brand personality perceptions explain intentions to subscribe to other top-rated podcasts in the United States comparable to *Breaking Points*, such as *The Kyle Kulinski Show* (see Pew Research Center, 2023b)? Would brand personality perceptions explain behavioral intentions to subscribe to other types of podcasts (e.g., true crime podcasts; see Boling & Hull, 2018) or podcasts in general? Likewise, the present dissertation itself should be replicated. Ideally, this should be independently conducted by other researchers.

Conclusion

In closing, prior theory and research provides ample evidence regarding the relationship between brand personality perceptions and behavioral intentions. As facilitated by theories of social cognition, brand personality attributes of sincerity, competence, and status explain behavioral intentions to consume goods/services. The present dissertation further expands the literature into a previously unexplored digital media context, showcasing that consumers' perceptions about a podcast's brand personality explain behavioral intentions to subscribe to a podcast. This occurred regardless of the item content within the brand personality questions.

Hopefully, the findings of the present dissertation encourage future psychological research about brand personality and behavioral intentions in other digital media contexts, including other podcasts and podcasts in general. Likewise, future research will hopefully include other social cognition-related variables alongside brand personality perceptions to help better explain consumers' willingness to subscribe to podcasts. Lastly, although the present dissertation revealed that the experimental nudge stimuli did not serve as nudges to change participants' behavioral intentions, future research should investigate other stimuli that could. Overall, given the vastly changing media ecosystem and its potential impact on consumers and businesses, this dissertation will hopefully help usher in a new era of psychological research on brand personality perceptions and social nudges in rarely explored digital media contexts, such as podcasts.

REFERENCES

Aaker, J. L. (1997). Dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of Marketing Research, 34*(3), 347–356. https://doi.org/10.2307/3151897

Aaker, J. L., Benet-Martínez, V., & Garolera, J. (2001). Consumption symbols as carriers of culture: A study of Japanese and Spanish brand personality constructs. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 81*(3), 492–508. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.81.3.492

Aaker, J. L., Vohs, K. D., & Mogilner, C. (2010). Nonprofits are seen as warm and for-profits as competent: Firm stereotypes matter. *Journal of Consumer Research, 37*(2), 224–237. https://doi.org/10.1086/651566

Abraham, W. T., & Russell, D. W. (2008). Statistical power analysis in psychological research. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 2*(1), 283–301. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2007.00052.x

Achen, C. H. (2005). Let's put garbage-can regressions and garbage-can probits where they belong. *Conflict Management and Peace Science, 22*(4), 327–329. https://doi.org/10.1080/07388940500339167

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 50*(2), 179–211. https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T

Ajzen, I. (2008). Consumer attitudes and behavior. In C. P. Haugtvedt, P. M. Herr, & F. R. Kardes (Eds.), *Handbook of consumer psychology* (pp. 525–548). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203809570

Akkerman, A., Mudde, C., & Zaslove, A. (2014). How populist are the people? Measuring populist attitudes in voters. *Comparative Political Studies*, *47*(9), 1324–1353. https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414013512600

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/0000165-000

Asch, S. E. (1956). Studies of independence and conformity: I. A minority of one against a unanimous majority. *Psychological Monographs: General and Applied, 70*(9), 1–70. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0093718

Austin, J. R., Siguaw, J. A., & Mattila, A. S. (2003). A re-examination of the generalizability of the Aaker brand personality measurement framework. *Journal of Strategic Management, 11*(2), 77–92. https://doi.org/10.1080/0965254032000104469

Awang, Z. (2012). *A handbook on SEM*. Universiti Technologi MARA Press.

Azoulay, A., & Kapferer, J.-N. (2003). Do brand personality scales really measure brand personality? *Brand Management, 11*(2), 143–155. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2540162

Bakker, B. N., Rooduijn, M., & Schumacher, G. (2016). The psychological roots of populist voting: Evidence from the United States, the Netherlands and Germany. *European Journal of Political Research, 55*(2), 302–320. https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12121

Ball, K., & Enjeti, S. (2020). *The populist's guide to 2020: A new right and new left are rising*. Strong Arm Press.

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Prentice Hall.

Bandura, A. (1991). Social cognitive theory of mass communication. In J. Bryant & D. Zillmann (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research* (pp. 61–90). Lawrence Erlbaum.

Behrend, T. S., Sharek, D. J., Meade, A. W., & Wiebe, E. N. (2011). The viability of crowdsourcing for survey research. *Behavior Research Methods, 43*, 800–813. https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-011-0081-0

Bergkvist, L., & Langner, T. (2019). Construct heterogeneity and proliferation in advertising research. *International Journal of Advertising, 38*(8), 1286–1302. https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2019.1622345

Berinsky, A., Huber, G. A., & Lenz, G. (2012). Evaluating online labor markets for experimental research: Amazon.com's Mechanical Turk. *Political Analysis, 20*(3), 351–368. https://doi.org/10.1093/pan/mpr057

Berkowitz, J. (2021, June 12). *Why 'Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar' became the no. 1 political podcast in a week*. Fast Company. https://www.fastcompany.com/90646413/why-breaking-points-with-krystal-and-saagar-became-the-number-one-political-podcast-in-a-week

Berry, R. (2016). Part of the establishment: Reflecting on 10 years of podcasting as an audio medium. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies, 22*(6), 661–671. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354856516632105

Bettman, J. R. (1986). Consumer psychology. *Annual Review of Psychology, 37*(1), 257–289. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.ps.37.020186.001353

Boling, K. S., & Hull, K. (2018). *Undisclosed* information – *Serial is My Favorite Murder*: Examining motivations in the true crime podcast audience. *Journal of Radio & Audio Media, 25*(8), 92–108. https://doi.org/10.1080/19376529.2017.1370714

Bond, R., & Smith, P. B. (1996). Culture and conformity: A meta-analysis of studies using

    Asch's (1952b, 1956) line judgment task. *Psychological Bulletin, 119*(1), 111–137.

    https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.119.1.111

Bosnjak, M., Bochmann, V., & Hufschmidt, T. (2007). Dimensions of brand personality

    attributions: A person-centric approach in the German cultural context. *Social Behavior*

    and Personality: An International Journal, 35(3), 303–316.

    https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2007.35.3.303

Boustani, S. (2022, August 28). Holm-Bonferroni correction in Excel [Computer software]. OSF.

    https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/YV5ZR

Bratcher, T. R. (2022). Toward a deeper discussion: A survey analysis of podcasts and

    personalized politics. *Atlantic Journal of Communication, 30*(2), 188–199.

    https://doi.org/10.1080/15456870.2020.1862846

Breaking Points LLC. (2021). *Breaking Points Premium*. Supercast.

    https://web.archive.org/web/20211203005340/https://breakingpoints.supercast.com/

Breaking Points LLC. (2022a). Our Spotify Wrapped is in for 2022 and we couldn't be more

    amazed to be in the top 1% most shared globally [Online forum post]. YouTube.

    https://www.youtube.com/post/UgkxC582aGgdixnsv3BSOhdBhjFgyTwM79oi

Breaking Points LLC. (2022b). *Report: Americans need six figure income to afford a home*

    [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/vpkBS0fviPw

Breaking Points LLC. (2023). *Breaking Points Premium: Help us build the future of independent*

    media. Supercast. https://breakingpoints.supercast.com/

Brenan, M. (2022, October 18). *American's trust in media remains near record low*. Gallup. https://news.gallup.com/poll/403166/americans-trust-media-remains-near-record-low.aspx

Brennan, M., & Esslemont, D. (1994). The accuracy of the Juster scale for predicting purchase rates of branded, fast-moving consumer goods. *Marketing Bulletin, 5*, 47–52.

Brown, T. A. (2015). *Confirmatory factor analysis for applied research* (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.

Brysbaert, M. (2019). How many participants do we have to include in properly powered experiments? A tutorial of power analysis with reference tables. *Journal of Cognition, 2*(1), 1–38. https://doi.org/10.5334/joc.72

Buhrmester, M., Kwang, T., Gosling, S. D. (2011). Amazon's Mechanical Turk: A new source of inexpensive, yet high-quality, data? *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 6*(1), 3–5. https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691610393980

Byrne, B. M. (2006). *Structural equation modeling with EQS and EQS/Windows: Basic concepts, applications, and programming* (2nd ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203726532

Çakirdiken, E. (2022). Populism and the consumer society: The effects of consumerism on political culture. *Teorija in Praksa, 59*(1), 60–76. https://doi.org/10.51936/tip.59.1.60-76

Caprara, G. V., Barbaranelli, C., & Guido, G. (2001). Brand personality: How to make the metaphor fit? *Journal of Economic Psychology, 22*(3), 377–395. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0167-4870(01)00039-3

Cardone, M. A. (2023). *Is the relationship between adverse childhood experiences and adult belief in paranormality moderated by locus of control* [Doctoral dissertation, Long Island

University]. Digital Commons @ LIU.

https://digitalcommons.liu.edu/post_fultext_dis/53

Carpentier, M., van Hoye, G., & Weijters, B. (2019). Attracting applicants through the

organization's social media page: Signaling employer brand personality. *Journal of*

Vocational Behavior, 115, Article 103326. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2019.103326

Carvalho, D., Demo, G., & Scussel, F. (2021). The future of brand personality: Systematic

review and research agenda. *Revista Psicologia: Organizações e Trabalho, 21*(3), 1585–

1593. https://doi.org/10.5935/rpot/2021.3.20962

Castanho Silva, B., Andreadis, I., Anduiza, E., Blanuša, N., Corti, Y. M., Delfino, G., Rico, G.,

Ruth, S. P., Spruyt, B., Steenbergen, M., & Littvay, L. (2018). Public opinion surveys: A

new scale. In K. Hawkins, R. Carlin, L. Littvay, & C. Rovira Kaltwasser (Eds.), *The*

ideational approach to populism: Theory, method, & analysis (pp. 150–178). Routledge.

https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315196923

Castanho Silva, B., Jungkunz, S., Helbling, M., & Littvay, L. (2020). An empirical comparison

of seven populist attitudes scales. *Political Research Quarterly*, *73*(2), 409–

424. https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912919833176

Castanho Silva, B., Vegetti, F., & Littvay, L. (2017). The elite is up to something: Exploring the

relation between populism and belief in conspiracy theories. *Swiss Political Science*

Review, *23*(4), 423–443. https://doi.org/10.1111/spsr.12270

Chmielewski, M., & Kucker, S. C. (2020). An MTurk crisis? Shifts in data quality and the

impact on study results. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, *11*(4), 464–473.

https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550619875149

Cho, Y. Y., Park, A., & Choi, J. (2023). Motives for using news podcasts and political

   participation intention in South Korea: The mediating effect of political discussion.

   Media International Australia, *187*(1), 39–56.

   https://doi.org/10.1177/1329878X231154052

Christeena, A. B., & Preetha, S. (2019). Effects of nudge and purchase intention in online

   purchasing of electronic products. *Indian Journal of Public Health Research &*

   Development, 10(1), 282–287.

Chung, M.-Y., & Kim, H.-S. (2019). College students' motivations for using podcasts. *Journal*

   of Media Literacy Education, 7(3), 13–28.

Clifford, S., Jewell, R. M., & Waggoner, P. D. (2015). Are samples drawn from Mechanical

   Turk valid for research on political ideology. *Research & Politics, 2*(4). 1–9.

   https://doi.org/10.1177/2053168015622072

Cohen, J. (1992). A power primer. *Quantitative Methods in Psychology, 112*(1), 155–159.

   https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.112.1.155

Cone, J. D., & Foster, S. L. (2006). *Dissertations and theses from start to finish: Psychology and*

   related fields (2nd ed.). American Psychological Association.

Connelly, B. L., Certo, S. T., Ireland, R. D., & Reutzel, C. R. (2011). Signaling theory: A review

   and assessment. *Journal of Management, 37*(1), 39–67.

   https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0149206310388419

Coppock, A. (2019). Generalizing from survey experiments conducted on Mechanical Turk: A

   replication approach. *Political Science Research and Methods, 7*(3), 613–628.

   https://doi.org/10.1017/psrm.2018.10

Craig, C. M., Brooks, M. E., & Bichard, S. (2023). Podcasting on purpose: Exploring motivations for podcast use among young adults. *International Journal of Listening, 37*(1), 39–48. https://doi.org/10.1080/10904018.2021.1913063

Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *Psychometrika, 16*, 297–334. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02310555

Cuddy, A. J., Fiske, S. T., & Glick, P. (2008). Warmth and competence as universal dimensions of social perception: The stereotype content model and the BIAS map. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 40, 61–149. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(07)00002-0

Curran, P. G. (2016). Methods for the detection of carelessly invalid responses in survey data. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *66*, 4–19. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2015.07.006

d'Astous, A., & Lévesque, M. (2003). A scale for measuring store personality. *Psychology & Marketing, 20*(5), 455–469. https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.10081

Darlington, R. B., & Hayes, A. F. (2017). *Regression analysis and linear models: Concepts, applications, and implementation*. Guilford Press.

Davies, G., Chun, R., da Silva, R.V., & Roper, S. (2004). A corporate character scale to assess employee and customer views of organization reputation. *Corporate Reputation Review, 7*(2), 125–146. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.crr.1540216

Davies, G., Rojas-Méndez, J. I., Whelan, S., Mete, M., & Loo, T. (2018). Brand personality: Theory and dimensionality. *Journal of Product & Brand Management, 27*(2), 115–127. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-06-2017-1499

DeVellis, R. F. (2017). *Scale development: Theory and applications* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Dobni, D., & Zinkhan, G. M. (1990). In search of brand image: A foundation analysis. *Advances in Consumer Research, 17*, 110–119.

Durgee, J. F., & Stuart, R. W. (1987). Advertising symbols and brand names that best represent key product brands. *Journal of Consumer Marketing, 4*(3), 15–24. https://doi.org/10.1108/eb008200

Dutta, R., Jarvenpaa, S., & Tomak, K. (2004). Behavioral economics of digital content. *Proceedings of the European Conference on Information Systems, 33*. https://aisel.aisnet.org/ecis2004/33

Edison Research. (2021, March 11). *The Infinite Dial 2021*. https://www.edisonresearch.com/the-infinite-dial-2021-2/

Eisend, M., & Stokburger-Sauer, N. E. (2013). Brand personality: A meta-analytic review of antecedents and consequences. *Marketing Letters, 24*(3), 205–216. https://www.jstor.org/stable/24571106

Ekinci, Y., & Hosany, S. (2006). Destination personality: An application of brand personality to tourism destinations. *Journal of Travel Research, 45*(2), 127–139. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287506291603

Enjeti, S. [@esaagar] (2023, February 10). *Number 3 podcast in the USA* [Image attached] [Tweet]. Twitter. https://twitter.com/esaagar/status/1624167526958522384?s=20

Erisen, C., Guidi, M., Martini, S., Toprakkiran, S., Isernia, P., & Littvay, L. (2021). Psychological correlates of populist attitudes. *Advances in Political Psychology, 42*(S1), 149–171. https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12768

Fan, X., Thompson, B., & Wang, L. (1999). Effects of sample size, estimation method, and model specification on structural equation modeling indexes. *Structural Equation Modeling, 6*(1), 56–83. https://doi.org/10.1080/10705519909540119

Farivar, S., Wang, F., & Yuan, Y. (2023). Influencer marketing: A perspective of the elaboration likelihood model of persuasion. *Journal of Electronic Commerce Research, 24*(2), 127–145. http://www.jecr.org/node/683

Faul, F., Erdfelder, E., Buchner, A., & Lang, A.-G. (2009). Statistical power analyses using G*Power 3.1: Tests for correlation and regression analyses. *Behavior Research Methods*, *41*, 1149–1160. https://doi.org/10.3758/BRM.41.4.1149

Fazzino, T. L., Rose, G. L., Pollack, S. M., & Helzer, J. E. (2015). Recruiting U.S. and Canadian college students via social media for participation in a web-based brief intervention study. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs, 76*(1), 127–132. https://doi.org/10.15288/jsad.2015.76.127

Fernandez, T. R. (2023). *Hacking moral code: Can cognitive stimulation impact moral semantic processing?* [Master's thesis, Harvard University]. Digital Access to Scholarship at Harvard. https://nrs.harvard.edu/URN-3:HUL.INSTREPOS:37374987

Fiske, S. T., Cuddy, A. J. C., & Glick, P. (2007). Universal dimensions of social cognition: Warmth and competence. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 11*(2), 77–83. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2006.11.005

Fiske, S. T., Cuddy, A. J. C., Glick, P., & Xu, J. (2002). A model of (often mixed) stereotype content: Competence and warmth respectively follow from perceived status and competition. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82(6), 878–902. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.82.6.878

Fichten, C. S., & Sunerton, B. (1983). Popular horoscopes and the "Barnum effect." *The Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied, 114*(1), 123–134. https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.1983.9915405

Flora, D. B. (2020). Your coefficient alpha is probably wrong, but which coefficient omega is right? A tutorial on using R to obtain better reliability estimates. *Advances in Methods and Practices in Psychological Science, 3*(4), 484–501. https://doi.org/10.1177/2515245920951747

Florini, S. (2015). The podcast "Chitlin' Circuit": Black podcasters, alternative media, and audio enclaves. *Journal of Radio & Audio Media, 22*(2), 209–219. https://doi.org/10.1080/19376529.2015.1083373

Florini, S. (2017). This Week in Blackness, the George Zimmerman acquittal, and the production of a networked collective identity. *New Media & Society*, *19*(3), 439–454. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444815606779

Forer, B. R. (1949). The fallacy of personal validation: A classroom demonstration of gullibility. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 44*(1), 118–123. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0059240

Fowler, C., Jiao, J., & Pitts, M. (2023). Frustration and ennui among Amazon MTurk workers. *Behavior Research Methods, 55*, 3009–3025. https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-022-01955-9

Friedmann, R., & Lessig, V. P. (1987). Psychological meaning of products and product positioning. *Journal of Product Innovation Management, 4*(4), 265–273. https://doi.org/10.1016/0737-6782(87)90030-0

Gadermann, A. M., Guhn, M., & Zumbo, B. D. (2012). Estimating ordinal reliability for Likert-type and ordinal item response data: A conceptual, empirical, and practical guide. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation, 17*(3), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.7275/n560-j767

Gardner, B. G., & Levy, S. J. (1955). The product and the brand. *Harvard Business Review, March-April*, 33-39.

Gecas, V. (1982). The self-concept. *Annual Review of Sociology, 8*, 1–33. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.08.080182.000245

Geuens, M., Weijters, B., & De Wulf, K. (2009). A new measure of brand personality. *International Journal of Research in Marketing, 26*(2), 97–107. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2008.12.002

Ghorbani, M., Karampela, M., & Tonner, A. (2022). Consumers' brand personality perceptions in a digital world: A systematic literature review and research agenda. *International Journal of Consumer Studies, 46*(5), 1960–1991. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12791

Gigerenzer, G. (2010). Personal reflections on theory and psychology. *Theory & Psychology, 20*(6), 733–743. https://doi.org/10.1177/095935431037818

Giner-Sorolla, R., Montoya, A. K., Reifman, A., Carpenter, T., Lewis, N. A. Jr., Aberson, C. L., Bostyn, D. H., Conrique, B. G., Ng, B. W., Schoemann, A. M., & Soderberg, C. (2023). *Power to detect what? Considerations for planning and evaluating sample size*. PsyArXiv. https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/rv3kw

Götting, M. C. (2023, January 19). *U.S. podcasting industry: Statistics & facts*. Statista. https://www.statista.com/topics/3170/podcasting/

Graham, J. W. (2009). Missing data analysis: Making it work in the real world. *Annual Review of Psychology, 60*, 549–576. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.58.110405.085530

Greenwood, J. D. (1999). Understanding the "cognitive revolution" in psychology. *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences, 35*(1), 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1520-6696(199924)35:1<1::AID-JHBS1>3.0.CO;2-4

Grohmann, B. (2009). Gender dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of Marketing Research, 46*(1), 105–119. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkr.46.1.105

Gurel-Atay, E. (2022). Consumer values. In L. R. Kahle, T. M. Lowery, & J. Huber (Eds.), *APA handbook of consumer psychology* (pp. 592–623). American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/0000262-010

Gurel-Atay, E., & Kahle, L. (2019). *Consumer social values*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315283739

Harms, P. D., & Desimone, J. (2015). Caution! MTurk workers ahead-fines doubled. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 8*(2), 183–190. https://doi.org/10.1017/iop.2015.23

Hartman, R., Moss, A. J., Jaffe, S. N., Rosenzweig, C., Robinson, J., & Litman, L. (2023). *Introducing Connect by CloudResearch: Advancing online participant recruitment in the digital age.* PsyArXiv. https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/ksgyr.

Hauser, D. J., & Schwarz, N. (2016). Attentive Turkers: MTurk participants perform better on online attention checks than do subject pool participants. *Behavior Research Methods, 48*, 400–407. https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-015-0578-z

Hayes, A. F. (2022). *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach* (3rd ed.). Guilford Press.

Heikoop, D. D., de Winter, J. C. F., van Arem, B., & Stanton, N. A. (2016). Psychological

    constructs in driving automation: A consensus model and critical comment on construct

    proliferation. *Theoretical Issues in Ergonomics Science, 17*(3), 284–303.

    https://doi.org/10.1080/1463922X.2015.1101507

Hendon, D. W., & Williams, E. L. (1985). Winning the battle for your customer. *Journal of*

    Consumer Marketing, 2(4), 65–75. https://doi.org/10.1108/eb008147

Higdon, N., & Lyons, J. (2022). The other populist media: The rise of the prog-left and the

    decline of legacy media? *Democratic Communiqué, 31*(1), Article 3.

    https://doi.org/10.7275/6x96-6y12

Hollensen, S., Kotler, P., & Opresnik, M. O. (2020). *Social media marketing: A practitioner*

    guide (4th ed.). Opresnik Management Consulting.

Hollingworth, H. L., & Poffenberger, A. T. (1923). *Applied psychology*. D. Appleton and

    Company.

Holm, S. (1979). A simple sequentially rejective multiple test procedure. *Scandinavian Journal*

    of Statistics, 6(2), 65–70. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4615733

Hornsey, M. J. (2008). Social identity theory and self-categorization theory: A historical review.

    Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 2(1), 204–222.

    https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2007.00066.x

Hughes, J. L., Camden, A. A., Yangchen, T., Smith, G. P. A., Domenech Rodríguez, M. M.,

    Rouse, S. V., McDonald, C. P., & Lopez, S. (2022). Guidance for researchers when using

    inclusive demographic questions for surveys: Improved and updated questions. *Psi Chi*

    Journal of Psychological Research, 27(4), 232–255. https://doi.org/10.24839/2325-

    7342.JN27.4.232

Hunt, N. C., & Scheetz, A. M. (2019). Using MTurk to distribute a survey or experiment:

Methodological considerations. *Journal of Information Systems, 33*(1), 43–65.

https://doi.org/10.2308/isys-52021

Indeed Editorial Team. (2022, June 24). What is a brand? (Plus types and how-to guide). *Indeed*.

https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/what-is-a-brand

Interactive Advertising Bureau & PricewaterhouseCoopers. (2023, May). U.S. podcast

advertising revenue study: 2022 revenue & 2023-2025 growth projections.

https://www.iab.com/wp-

content/uploads/2023/05/IAB_2022_Podcast_Advertising_Revenue_Report_2023.pdf

Jacquemet, N., James, A. G., Luchini, S., Murphy, J. J., & Shogren, J. F. (2021). Do truth-telling

oaths improve honesty in crowd-working? *PLOS ONE, 16*(1), Article e0244958.

https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0244958

Jin, S.-A. A., & Sung, Y. (2010). The roles of spokes-avatars' personalities in brand

communication in 3D virtual environments. *Journal of Brand Management, 17*(5), 317–

327. https://doi.org/10.1057/bm.2009.18

Jost, J. T. (2017). The marketplace of ideology: "Elective affinities" in political psychology and

their implications for consumer behavior. *Journal of Consumer Psychology, 27*(4), 502–

520. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2017.07.003

Jesse, M., & Jannach, D. (2021). Digital nudging with recommender systems: Survey and future

directions. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports, 3*, Article 100052.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chbr.2020.100052

Judd, C. M., Westfall, J., & Kenny, D. A. (2012). Treating stimuli as a random factor in social

psychology: A new and comprehensive solution to a pervasive but largely ignored

problem. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *103*(1), 54–69.

https://doi.org/10.1037/a0028347

Juster, F. T. (1966). Consumer buying intentions and purchase probability: An experiment in

survey design. *Journal of the American Statistical Association, 61*(315), 658–696.

https://doi.org/10.2307/2282779

Kahle, L. R., Lowery, T. M., & Huber, J. (2022). *APA handbook of consumer psychology*.

American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/0000262-000

Kardes, F. R., & Herr, P. M. (2019). Experimental research methods in consumer psychology. In

F. R. Kardes, P. M. Herr, & N. Schwarz (Eds.), *Handbook of research methods in*

consumer psychology (pp. 3–16). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351137713

Katz, E., Blumler, J. G., & Gurevitch, M. (1973-1974). Uses and gratifications research. *The*

Public Opinion Quarterly, 37(4), 509–523. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2747854

Kelley, K., & Pornprasertmanit, S. (2016). Confidence intervals for population reliability

coefficients: Evaluation of methods, recommendations, and software for composite

measures. *Psychological Methods, 21*(1), 69–92.

https://doi.apa.org/doi/10.1037/a0040086

Khatamian Far, P. (2018). Challenges of recruitment and retention of university students as

research participants: Lessons learned from a pilot study. *Journal of the Australian*

Library and Information Association, 67(3), 278–292.

https://doi.org/10.1080/24750158.2018.1500436

Kim, D. H., & Sung, Y. (2013). Gucci versus Old Navy: Interplay of brand personality and

regulatory focus in advertising persuasion. *Psychology & Marketing, 30*(12), 1076–1087.

https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.20668

Klaß, N., & Wellbrock, C.-M. (2019). When journalists become stars: Drivers of human brand images and their influence on consumer intentions. *Journal of Media Economics, 32*(1-2), 35–55. https://doi.org/10.1080/08997764.2021.1889814

Kline, R. B. (2016). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling* (4th ed.). Guilford Press.

Krajnović, A., Sikirić, D., & Bosna, J. (2018). Digital marketing and behavioral economics. *CroDiM: International Journal of Marketing Science, 1*(1), 33–46.

Kumar, A. (2018). Story of Aaker's brand personality scale criticism. *Spanish Journal of Marketing, 22*(2), 203–230. https://dx.doi.org/10.1108/SJME-03-2018-005

LaRose, R., Mastro, D., & Eastin, M. S. (2001). Understanding Internet usage: A social-cognitive approach to uses and gratifications. *Social Science Computer Review, 19*(4), 395–413. https://doi.org/10.1177/089443930101900401

LeBel, E. P., Berger, D., Campbell, L., & Loving, T. J. (2017). Falsifiability is not optional. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 113*(2), 254–261. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspi0000106

Lee, J. K., Hansen, S. S., & Lee, S.-Y. (2020). The effect of brand personality self-congruity on brand engagement and purchase intention: The moderating role of self-esteem in Facebook. *Current Psychology, 39*(6), 2116–2128. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-018-9898-3

Levitan, L. C., & Verhulst, B. (2015). Conformity in groups: The effects of others' views on expressed attitudes and attitude change. *Political Behavior, 38*(2), 277–315. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-015-9312-x

Levy, S. J. (1958). Symbols by which we buy. In L. H. Stockman (Ed.), *Advancing marketing efficiency* (pp. 409–416). American Marketing Association.

Lieven, T. (2017). How to create reproducible brand personality scales. *Journal of Brand Management, 24*, 592–608. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41262-017-0058-0

Lin, L.-Y. (2010). The relationship of consumer personality trait, brand personality and brand loyalty: An empirical study of toys and video game buyers. *Journal of Product & Brand Management, 19*(1), 4–17. https://doi.org/10.1108/10610421011018347

Lin, Y., Osman, M., & Ashcroft, R. (2017). Nudge: Concept, effectiveness, and ethics. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 39*(6), 293–306. https://doi.org/10.1080/01973533.2017.1356304

Lindenberg, S., & Papies, E. K. (2019). Two kinds of nudging and the power of cues: Shifting salience of alternatives and shifting salience of goals. *International Review of Environmental and Resource Economics, 13*(3-4), 229–263. https://dx.doi.org/10.1561/101.00000110

Litman, L., Robinson, J., & Rosenzweig, C. (2015). The relationship between motivation, monetary compensation, and data quality among US- and India-based workers on Mechanical Turk. *Behavior Research Methods, 47*(2), 519–528. https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-014-0483-x

Lyndsay, R. M., & Ehrenberg, A. S. C. (1993). The design of replicated studies. *The American Statistician, 47*(3), 217–228. https://doi.org/10.2307/2684982

MacInnis, C. C., Boss, H. C. D., & Bourdage, J. S. (2020). More evidence of participant misrepresentation on MTurk and investigating who misrepresents. *Personality and Individual Differences, 152*, Article 109603. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2019.109603

Macy, M., Deri, S., Ruch, A., & Tong, N. (2019). Opinion cascades and the unpredictability of

    partisan polarization. *Science Advances, 5*(8), Article aax0754.

    https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.aax0754

Maehle, N., Otnes, C., & Supphellen, M. (2011). Consumers' perceptions of the dimensions of

    brand personality. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour: An International Research Review,*

    10(5), 290–303. https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.355

Mandler, G. (2002). Origins of the cognitive (r)evolution. *Journal of the History of the*

    Behavioral Sciences, 38(4), 339–353. https://doi.org/10.1002/jhbs.10066

Manson, J. H. (2020). Right-wing authoritarianism, left-wing authoritarianism, and pandemic-

    mitigation authoritarianism. *Personality and Individual Differences, 167*, Article

    110251. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2020.110251

MasterClass. (2021). *Types of podcasts: A look at podcast formats and genres*.

    https://www.masterclass.com/articles/types-of-podcasts-explained

McClung, S., & Johnson, K. (2010). Examining the motives of podcast users. *Journal of Radio*

    & Audio Media, 17(1), 82–95. https://doi.org/10.1080/19376521003719391

McCrae, R. R., & John, O. P. (1992). An introduction to the five-factor model and its

    application. *Journal of Personality, 60*(2), 175–215. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-

    6494.1992.tb00970.x

McDonald, H. J., & Alpert, F. (2001). *Using the Juster scale to predict adoption of an innovative*

    product. Semantic Scholar. https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Using-the-Juster-

    scale-to-predict-adoption-of-an-McDonald-

    Alpert/eb65c58d63eaae926addc9d12974cd0a4669694d

McDonald, R. P. (1999). *Test theory: A unified treatment*. Psychology Press.

https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410601087

Meehl, P. E. (1956). Wanted—a good cook-book. *American Psychologist, 11*(6), 263–272.

https://doi.org/10.1037/h0044164

Meserve, E. [@ejmeserve6894] (2022). Let me just say this. You guys are doing so well because

people (myself included) trust you [Online forum post]. YouTube.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDRIjKy6eZOvKtOELtTdeUA/community?lc=Ugy

AVLxIi-1jHuyEWbZ4AaABAg&lb=UgkxC582aGgdixnsv3BSOhdBhjFgyTwM79oi

Miller, G. A. (2003). The cognitive revolution: A historical perspective. *TRENDS in Cognitive

Sciences, 7*(3), 141–144. https://doi.org/10.1016/s1364-6613(03)00029-9

Mitchell, V-W. (1995). Using astrology in market segmentation. *Management Decision, 33*(1),

48–57. https://doi.org/10.1108/00251749510075383

Mochon, D., & Frederick, S. (2011). The middle option bias: Is the compromise effect driven by

a response order effect. In Darren W. Dahl, Gita V. Johar, & Stijn M. J. van Osselaer

(Eds.), *Advances in Consumer Research* (4th vol., pp. 180). Association for Consumer

Research.

Moncrieff, M., & Lienard, P. (2023). Radicalization and violent extremism depend on envy;

conspiracy ideation, sometimes. *Frontiers in Psychology, 14*, Article 1111354.

https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1111354

Morrison, D. G. (1979). Purchase intentions and purchase behavior. *Journal of Marketing, 43*(2),

65–74. https://doi.org/10.2307/1250742

Moss, A. J., Budd, R. D., Blanchard, M. A., & O'Brien, L. T. (2023). The upside of acknowledging prejudiced behavior. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 104*, Article 104401. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2022.104401

Moss, N. D., O'Conner, E. L., & White, K. M. (2010). Psychosocial predictors of the use of enhanced podcasting in student learning. *Computers in Human Behavior, 26*(3), 302–309. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2009.10.012

Moss, N. D., Hamilton, K., White, K. M., & Hansen, J. (2015). The changing motivations of students' use of lecture podcasts across a semester: An extended theory of planned behaviour approach. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International, 52*(6), 559–609. https://doi.org/10.1080/14703297.2012.746513

Mou, Y., & Lin, C. A. (2015). Exploring podcast adoption intention via perceived social norms, interpersonal communication, and theory of planned behavior. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, 59*(3), 475–493. https://doi.org/10.1080/08838151.2015.1054997

Muddle, C. (2004). The populist zeitgeist. *Government and Opposition, 39*(4), 542–563. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1477-7053.2004.00135.x

Mullinix, K. J., Leeper, T. J., Druckman, J. N., & Freese, J. (2015). The generalizability of survey experiments. *Journal of Experimental Political Science, 2*(2), 109–138. https://doi.org/10.1017/XPS.2015.19

Mulyanegara, R. C., Tsarenko, Y., & Anderson, A. (2009). The Big Five and brand personality: Investigating the impact of consumer personality on preferences toward particular brand personality. *Journal of Brand Management, 16*, 234–247. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2550093

Mummolo, J., & Peterson, E. (2019). Demand effects in survey experiments: An empirical assessment. *American Political Science Review, 113*(2), 517–529. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055418000837

Murphy, J. M. (1987). *Branding: A key marketing tool*. The MacMillan Press.

Nathans, L. L., Oswald, F. L., & Nimon, K. (2012). Interpreting multiple linear regression: A guidebook of variable importance. *Practical Assessment, Research, and Evaluation, 17*(9), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.7275/5fex-b874

Necka, E. A., Cacioppo, S., Norman, G. J., & Cacioppo, J. T. (2016). Measuring the prevalence of problematic respondent behaviors among MTurk, campus, and community participants. *PLOS ONE, 11*(6), Article e0157732. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0157732

Needham, C., & Smith, G. (2015). Introduction: Political branding. *Journal of Political Marketing, 14*(1-2), 1–6. https://doi.org/10.1080/15377857.2014.990828

Newport, C. (2022, June 15). *The rise of the Internet's creative middle class*. The New Yorker. https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/the-rise-of-the-internets-creative-middle-class

Noggle, R. (2018). Manipulation, salience, and nudges. *Bioethics, 32*(3), 164–170. https://doi.org/10.1111/bioe.12421

O'Brien, R. M. (2007). A caution regarding rules of thumb for variance inflation factors. *Quality & Quantity, 41*, 673–690. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-006-9018-6

Open Science Collaboration. (2015). Estimating the reproducibility of psychological science. *Science, 349*(6251), Article aac4716. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aac4716

Paolacci, G., Chandler, J., & Ipeirotis, P. G. (2010). Running experiments on Amazon

    Mechanical Turk. *Judgment and Decision Making, 5*(5), 411–419.

    https://doi.org/10.1017/S1930297500002205

Papaioannou, K., Pantazi, M., & van Prooijen, J.-W. (2023). Unravelling the relationship

    between populism and belief in conspiracy theories: The role of cynicism, powerlessness,

    and zero-sum thinking. *British Journal of Psychology, 114*(1), 159–175.

    https://doi.org/10.1111/bjop.12602

Peer, E., Vosgerau, J., & Acquisti, A. (2014). Reputation as a sufficient condition for data quality

    on Amazon Mechanical Turk. *Behavioral Research, 46*, 1023–1031.

    https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-013-0434-y

Peer, E., Brandimarte, L., Samat, S., & Acquisti, A. (2017). Beyond the Turk: Alternative

    platforms for crowdsourcing behavioral research. *Journal of Experimental Social*

    Psychology, 70, 153–163. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2017.01.006

Perks, L. G., Turner, J. S., & Tollison, A. C. (2019). Podcast uses and gratifications scale

    development. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, 63*(4).

    https://doi.org/10.1080/08838151.2019.1688817

Petty, R. E., & Cacioppo, J. T. (1986). The elaboration likelihood model of persuasion. *Advances*

    in Experimental Social Psychology, 19, 123–205. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-

    2601(08)60214-2

Pew Research Center (2020, August 27). *No more than half of U.S. adults feel confident in the*

    news media or think other Americans feel this way.

    https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/2020/08/31/americans-see-skepticism-of-news-

media-as-healthy-say-public-trust-in-the-institution-can-improve/pj_2020-08-31_trust-in-news-media_0-01/

Pew Research Center (2021a, June 29). *Audio and podcasting fact sheet*.

https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/fact-sheet/audio-and-podcasting/

Pew Research Center. (2021b, November 19). *Beyond red vs. blue: The political typology*.

https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2021/11/09/beyond-red-vs-blue-the-political-typology-2/

Pew Research Center. (2022, February 15). *Nearly a quarter of Americans get news from podcasts*. https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/02/15/nearly-a-quarter-of-americans-get-news-from-podcasts/

Pew Research Center. (2023a, April 18). *Podcasts as a source of news and information*.

https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/2023/04/18/podcasts-as-a-source-of-news-and-information/

Pew Research Center. (2023b, June 15). *A profile of the top-ranked podcasts in the U.S*.

https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/2023/06/15/a-profile-of-the-top-ranked-podcasts-in-the-u-s/

Pina, L. S., Loureiro, S. M. C., Rita, P., Sarmento, E. M., Bilro, R. G., & Guerreiro, J. (2019). Analysing consumer-brand engagement through appreciative listening on social network platforms. *Journal of Promotion Management, 25*(3), 304–313. https://doi.org/10.1080/10496491.2019.1557805

Poddar, A., Donthu, N., & Wei, Y. (2009). Web site customer orientations, Web site quality, and purchase intentions: The role of Web site personality. *Journal of Business Research, 62*(4), 441–450. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2008.01.036

Popper, K. R. (2002). *The logic of scientific discovery* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

> https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203994627

Prasetyo, D. B. (2020). *Changing citizen behaviour: An investigation on nudge approach in developing society*. SSRN. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3603819

Priester, J. R., Fleming, M. A., Donovan, L. A. N., & Dutton, C. (2022). The brand property strength framework: Integrating theory and research on brand consumer psychology. In L. R. Kahle, T. M. Lowrey, & J. Huber, *APA handbook of consumer psychology* (pp. 691–711). American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/0000262-031

Quetelet, M. A. (1849). *Letters addressed to H. R. H. the Grand Duke of Saxe Coburg and Gotha, on the theory of probabilities, as applied to the moral and political sciences* (O. G. Downes, Trans). Charles & Edwin Layton.

Rao, A. R., Qu, L., & Ruekert, R. W. (1999). Signaling unobservable product quality through a brand ally. *Journal of Marketing Research, 36*(2), 258–268. https://doi.org/10.2307/3152097

Rauschnabel, P. A., Krey, N., Babin, B. J., & Ivens, B. S. (2016). Brand management in higher education: The University Brand Personality Scale. *Journal of Business Research, 69*(8), 3077–3086. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.01.023

Reisch, L. A., & Zhao, M. (2017). Behavioural economics, consumer behaviour, and consumer policy: State of the art. *Behavioural Public Policy, 1*(2), 190–206. https://doi.org/10.1017/bpp.2017.1

Reise, S. P. (2012). The rediscovery of bifactor measurement models. *Multivariate Behavioral Research, 47*(5), 667–696. https://doi.org/10.1080/00273171.2012.715555

Reise, S. P., Bonifay, W. E., & Haviland, M. G. (2013). Scoring and modeling psychological

   measures in the presence of multidimensionality. *Journal of Personality Assessment,*

   95(2), 129–140. https://doi.org/10.1080/00223891.2012.725437

Risen, E., & Risen, L. (2008, December 19). *The use of intent scale transactions to predict*

   purchase interest. BioTrak Research Inc. https://biotrak.com/hello-world/

Robertson, A. Z., & Yoon, A. H. (2019). You get what you pay for: An empirical examination of

   the use of MTurk in legal scholarship. *Vanderbilt Law Review, 72*(5), 1633–1674.

   https://scholarship.law.vanderbilt.edu/vlr/vol72/iss5/4

Rohrer, J. M. (2018). Thinking clearly about correlations and causation: Graphical causal models

   for observational data. *Advances in Methods and Practices in Psychological Science,*

   1(1), 27–42. https://doi.org/10.1177/2515245917745629

Rojas-Méndez, J.I., Papadopoulos, N., & Murphy, S.A. (2013). Measuring and positioning

   nation brands: A comparative brand personality approach. *Corporate Reputation Review,*

   16(1), 48–65. https://doi.org/10.1057/crr.2012.25

Roozen, I., Raedts, M., & Meijburg, L. (2021). Do verbal and visual nudges influence

   consumers' choice for sustainable fashion? *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing, 12*(4),

   327–342. https://doi.org/10.1080/20932685.2021.1930096

Rovira Kaltwasser, C. (2021). Bringing political psychology into the study of populism.

   Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences, 376(1822),

   Article 2020148. https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2020.0148

Rutter, R. N., Hanretty, C., & Lettice, F. (2018). Political brands: Can parties be distinguished by

   their brand personality? *Journal of Political Marketing, 17*(3), 193–212.

   https://doi.org/10.1080/15377857.2015.1022631

Saeed, M. R., Burki, U., Ali, R., Dahlstrom, R., & Zameer, H. (2022). The antecedents and consequences of brand personality: A systematic review. *EuroMed Journal of Business*, 17(4), 448–476. https://doi.org/10.1108/EMJB-12-2020-0136

Salganik, M. J., Dodds, P. S., & Watts, D. J. (2006). Experimental study of inequality and unpredictability in an artificial cultural market. *Science, 311*(5762), 854–856. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1121066

Schmidt, S. (2009). Shall we really do it again? The powerful concept of replication is neglected in the social sciences. *Review of General Psychology, 13*(2), 90–100. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0015108

Schulz, A., Wirth, W., & Müller, P. (2020). We are the people and you are fake news: A social identity approach to populist citizens' false consensus and hostile media perceptions. *Communication Research*, *47*(2), 201–226. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0093650218794854

Schumacker, R. E., & Lomax, R. G. (2010). *A beginner's guide to structural equation modeling* (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Shadish, W. R., Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T. (2002). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference*. Houghton, Mifflin and Company.

Shaffer, J. A., DeGeest, D., & Li, A. (2016). Tackling the problem of construct proliferation: A guide to assessing the discriminant validity of conceptually related constructs. *Organizational Research Methods, 19*(1), 80–110. https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428115598239

Shahin, A., Gharibpoor, M., Teymouri, S., & Iraj, E. B. (2013). Studying the influence of e-CRM on web-based brand personality: The case of Mellat Bank. *International Journal of*

Business Information Systems, 13(4), 453–470.

https://dx.doi.org/10.1504/IJBIS.2013.055301

Shobeiri, S., Laroche, M., & Mazaheri, E. (2013). Shaping e-retailer's website personality: The

importance of experiential marketing. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services,*

20(1), 102–110. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2012.10.011

Sirgy, M. J. (1982). Self-concept in consumer behavior: A critical review. *Journal of Consumer*

Research, 9(3), 287–300. https://doi.org/10.1086/208924

Sirgy, M. J. (1985). Using self-congruity and ideal congruity to predict purchase motivation.

Journal of Business Research, 13(3), 195–206. https://doi.org/10.1016/0148-

2963(85)90026-8

Snyder, C. R., & Newburg, C. L. (1981). The Barnum effect in a group setting. *Journal of*

Personality Assessment, 45(6), 622–629. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327752jpa4506_10

Snyder, J. L., & Cistulli, M. D. (2023). The impact of insult ad reads on podcast listeners.

Atlantic Marketing Journal, 12(1), 1–16.

https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/amj/vol12/iss1/7/

Solomon, J. (2014). *Customization bias in decision support systems* [Conference session].

SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, Ontario, Toronto,

Canada. https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/2556288.2557211

Spears, N., & Singh, S. N. (2004). Measuring attitude toward the brand and purchase intentions.

Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising, 26(2), 53–66.

https://doi.org/10.1080/10641734.2004.10505164

Spector, P. E., & Brannick, M. T. (2011). Methodological urban legends: The misuse of

    statistical control variables. *Organizational Research Methods*, *14*(2), 287–305.

    https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428110369842

Spence, M. (1973). Job market signaling. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *87*(3), 355–374.

    https://doi.org/10.2307/1882010

Sperry, R. W. (1993). The impact and promise of the cognitive revolution. *American*

    Psychologist, *48*(8), 878–885. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.48.8.878

Spruyt, B., Keppens, G., & Van Droogenbroeck, F. (2016). Who supports populism and what

    attracts people to it? *Political Research Quarterly*, *69*(2), 335–

    346. https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912916639138

Stewart, N., Ungemach, C., Harris, A. J. L., Bartels, D. M., Newell, B. R., Paolacci, G., &

    Chandler, J. (2015). The average laboratory samples a population of 7,300 Amazon

    Mechanical Turk workers. *Judgment and Decision Making, 10*(5), 479–491.

    https://doi.org/10.1017/S1930297500005611

Suh, W., & Kahle, L. R. (2018). Social values in consumer psychology: Key determinants of

    human behavior. In M. R. Solomon & T. M. Lowery (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to*

    consumer behavior (pp. 165–174). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315526935

Sullivan, J. L. (2018). Podcast movement: Aspirational labour and the formalization of

    podcasting as a cultural industry. In D. Llinares, N. Fox, & R. Berry

    (Eds.), *Podcasting* (pp. 35–56). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-

    90056-8_3

Sung, Y., & Tinkham, S. F. (2005). Brand personality structures in the United States and Korea:

    Common and culture-specific factors. *Journal of Consumer Psychology, 15*(4), 334–350.

    https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327663jcp1504_8

Sunstein, C. R. (2022). Sludge audits. *Behavioural Public Policy, 6*(4), 654–673.

    https://doi.org/10.1017/bpp.2019.32

Szabolcsi, V. (2023). *Childhood stability and adult relationship functioning* [Master's thesis,

    Florida Atlantic University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

    https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/childhood-stability-adult-

    relationship/docview/2814608988/se-2

Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2013). *Using multivariate statistics*. Pearson Education.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In S.

    Worchel & W. G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations* (2nd ed., pp. 7–24).

    Nelson-Hall.

Thaler, R. (1980). Toward a positive theory of consumer choice. *Journal of Economic Behavior*

    & Organization, 1(1), 39–60. https://doi.org/10.1016/0167-2681(80)90051-7

Thaler, R. H., & Sunstein, C. R. (2008). *Nudge: Improving decisions about health, wealth, and*

    happiness. Penguin Books.

Thaler, R. H., & Sunstein, C. R. (2021). *Nudge: The final edition*. Penguin Books.

The Decision Lab (n.d.). *Why do we believe our horoscopes? The Barnum effect explained*.

    https://thedecisionlab.com/biases/barnum-effect

Thomas, K. A., & Clifford, S. (2017). Validity and Mechanical Turk: An assessment of

    exclusion methods and interactive experiments. *Computers in Human Behavior, 77*, 184–

    197. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2017.08.038

Toldos-Romero, M. D. L. P., & Orozco-Gómez, M. M. (2015). Brand personality and purchase

intention. *European Business Review, 27*(5), 462–476. https://doi.org/10.1108/EBR-03-

2013-0046

Tormala, Z. L., & Rucker, D. D. (2022). Attitude change and persuasion: Classic, metacognitive,

and advocacy perspectives. In L. R. Kahle, T. M. Lowery, & J. Huber (Eds.), *APA*

handbook of consumer psychology (pp. 749–812). American Psychological Association.

https://doi.org/10.1037/0000262-013

Tobin, S. J., & Guadagno, R. E. (2022). Why people listen: Motivations and outcomes of podcast

listening. *PLOS ONE, 17*(4), Article e0265806.

https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0265806

Tong, X., & Li, C. (2013). Impact of brand personality and consumer ethnocentrism in China's

sportswear market. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics, 25*(3), 491–509.

https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-08-2012-0081

Tonidandel, S., & LeBreton, J. M. (2011). Relative importance analysis: A useful supplement to

regression analysis. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 26*(1), 1–9.

https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-010-9204-3

Tucker, L. R., & Lewis, C. (1973). The reliability coefficient for maximum likelihood factor

analysis. *Psychometrika, 38*(1), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02291170

Tyber, J. M., Inbar, Y., Güler, E., & Molho, C. (2015). Is the relationship between pathogen

avoidance and ideological conservatism explained by sexual strategies? *Evolution and*

Human Behavior, 36(6), 489–497. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2015.01.006

United States Department of Labor. (2022). *Consolidated minimum wage table*.

https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/mw-consolidated

Vagias, W. M. (2006). *Likert-type scale response anchors*. Clemson International Institute for

Tourism and Research Development.

https://media.clemson.edu/cbshs/prtm/research/resources-for-research-page-2/Vagias-

Likert-Type-Scale-Response-Anchors.pdf

Vahdati, H., & Nejad, S. H. M. (2016). Brand personality toward customer purchase intention:

The intermediate role of electronic word-of-mouth and brand equity. *Asian Academy of

Management Journal, 21*(2), 1–26. https://doi.org/10.21315/aamj2016.21.2.1

Valette-Florence, R., & De Barnier, V. (2013). Towards a micro conception of brand personality:

An application for print media brands in a French context. *Journal of Business Research,

66*(7), 897–903. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.12.008

Vickery, A. J., & Ventrano, S. (2021). Listening goals and parasocial relationships: How

listening styles impact the development of parasocial relationships with media personas.

International Journal of Listening, 35(3), 149–165.

https://doi.org/10.1080/10904018.2020.1781637

Wang, X., & Yang, Z. (2011). The impact of brand credibility and brand personality on purchase

intention: An empirical study in China. In S. Zou. & H. Fu. (Eds.), *International

marketing: Advances in international marketing, Vol. 21* (pp. 137–153). Emerald Group

Publishing Limited. https://doi.org/10.1108/S1474-7979(2011)0000021009

Watkins, M. W. (2017). The reliability of multidimensional neuropsychological measures: From

alpha to omega. *The Clinical Neuropsychologist, 31*(6-7), 1113–1126.

https://doi.org/10.1080/13854046.2017.1317364

Webster, A. (2016, June 23). *Talking to the man behind Sonic the Hedgehog's incredible Twitter*. The Verge. https://www.theverge.com/2016/6/23/12008576/sonic-the-hedgehog-sega-twitter-interview-meme

Weinmann, M., Schneider, C., & vom Brock, J. (2016). Digital nudging. *Business & Information Systems Engineering, 58*(6), 433–436. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12599-016-0453-1

Whitley, B. E., Jr., & Kite, M. E. (2013). *Principles of research in behavioral science* (3rd ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203085219

Winkielman, P., & Schooler, J. (2009). Unconscious, conscious, and metaconscious in social cognition. In F. Strack & J. Förster (Eds.), *Social cognition: The basis of human interaction* (pp. 49–70). Psychology Press.

Wyer, R. S., Jr. (2022). The activation and use of declarative and procedural knowledge. In L. R. Kahle, T. M. Lowery, & J. Huber (Eds.), *APA handbook of consumer psychology* (pp. 47–78). American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/0000262-002

Wysocki, A. C., Lawson, K. M., & Rhemtulla, M. (2022). Statistical control requires causal justification. *Advances in Methods and Practices in Psychological Science, 5*(2). https://doi.org/10.1177/25152459221095823

Xia, L. (2013). Effects of companies' responses to consumer criticism in social media. *International Journal of Electronic Commerce, 17*(4), 73–100. https://doi.org/10.2753/JEC1086-4415170403

Yun, J. T., Pamuksuz, U., & Duff, B. R. L. (2019). Are we who we follow? Computationally analyzing human personality and brand following on Twitter. *International Journal of Advertising, 38*(5), 776–795. https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2019.1575106

Zhang, X. A. (2017). Effects of Twitter communication styles on consumers' brand personality

perceptions, attitudes and purchase intentions. *International Journal of Internet*

Marketing and Advertising, 11(2), 158–182. https://doi.org/10.1504/IJIMA.2017.084082

APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPROVAL LETTER

SIU Southern Illinois University
CARBONDALE

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE
WOODY HALL - MAIL CODE 4344
900 SOUTH NORMAL AVENUE
CARBONDALE, ILLINOIS 62901

siuhsc@siu.edu
618/453-4534
FAX 618/453-4573

To: Stephen Berry
From: M. Daniel Becque
                Chair, Institutional Review Board

Date: February 7, 2023

Title: *The Psychology of Brand Personality in the Context of Podcasting: Does Nudging and Brand Personality Perceptions Influence Behavioral Intentions to Subscribe to the Breaking Points Podcast?*

Protocol Number: 23027

The SIUC Institutional Review Board has approved the above-referenced study. The study is determined to be exempt according to 45 CFR 46.104. This approval does not have an expiration date. However, this approval is valid only for as long as you are a student or employee of SIUC. Additionally, any future modifications to your protocol must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval before implementation.

The IRB requests updates on exempted studies every three years. Failure to file a project update report may lead to the premature closure of your protocol.

When your study is complete, please fill out and return a study close-out form. A study is considered complete when you are no longer enrolling new participants, collecting or analyzing data.

Best wishes for a successful study.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the USDHHS Office of Human Research Protection. The Assurance number is FWA00005334.

MDB:eb

cc: Reza Habib

EXPERIMENT 1 CONNECT BY CLOUDRESEARCH SETUP INFORMATION

BASIC INFORMATION:

What are you going to call this project? Your Opinions About a Political Podcast

What are you going to call this project internally? Berry Dissertation 1

Provide participants with a short description of your task. This approximately 18-minute survey will entail: 1) introductory questions; 2) a summary and clip from the Breaking Points podcast; 3) opinion questions about the podcast; 4) demographics. You must be a United States resident aged 19 or older.

Provide instructions to display to the participants. I am Stephen Berry, a Ph.D. student at Southern Illinois University Carbondale's School of Psychological and Behavioral Sciences (stephen.berry@siu.edu). I am conducting a research study under the supervision of Dr. Reza Habib, Associate Professor of Psychology at Southern Illinois University Carbondale's School of Psychological and Behavioral Sciences (rhabib@siu.edu; 618-453-3529).

This approximately 18-minute survey will entail: 1) introductory questions; 2) a summary and clip from the Breaking Points podcast; 3) opinion questions about the podcast; 4) demographics. You must be a United States resident aged 19 or older.

Select "Go to Study" to complete the survey. At the end of the survey, you will automatically be redirected back to Connect by CloudResearch. This will provide evidence of your study completion.

Which devices can participants use to complete your project? Mobile, Tablet, Desktop

Does your project require any of the following? Audio

Does your project contain sensitive content? No

PROJECT LINK:

What is your project's URL?
https://siucpsyc.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6ljY9orDhG4KYB0

Collecting Connect IDs
https://siucpsyc.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6ljY9orDhG4KYB0?participantId=XXXXX&assignmentId=XXXXX&projectId=XXXXX
Note to IRB: The function of this metadata is to ensure that participants completed the study, which is in turn automatically reported back to Connect by CloudResearch. After participants are paid, I will delete any trace of participants' Connect IDs from the dataset.

Which platform will you be hosting your survey on? Qualtrics

COST:

How many participants does your project require? 275

How much are you paying for this project: $2.40 (United States Dollars)

How long will it take for you to complete your project: 18 minutes

Would you like to set a maximum time for participants to complete your project? (left blank; automated to 72 minutes by default)

PARTICIPANT TARGETING:

Demographic Targeting: Age (Minimum set to 19, Maximum set to 100), Current U.S. State of Residence (All states and territories selected; none of the above was left unchecked)

Platform Targeting: (left blank)

Do you want to apply your universal block list? No

COMPLETION:

How will participants confirm their submission? Redirect Url
https://connect.cloudresearch.com/participant/project/e5a9e97b73bb4a898d28efe58d58898d/complete

EXPERIMENT 1 SURVEY

INFORMED CONSENT

Title of Study
- Your Opinions about a Political Commentary Podcast

Investigators
- Stephen D. Berry, M.S.
- Reza Habib, Ph.D.

Introduction
- I am Stephen Berry, a doctoral candidate in the School of Psychological and Behavioral Sciences at Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC). My supervisor is Dr. Reza Habib, Associate Professor and Director of the School of Psychological and Behavioral Sciences at SIUC.
- I am asking you to voluntarily participate in an online survey about consumers' opinions regarding *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar*, a political commentary podcast. The podcast is a point of reference for better understanding differences in consumers' responses to podcasts.
- The investigators of this study are not in any way affiliated with Breaking Points LLC or *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar*.
- All data collected will be kept strictly anonymous.

Criteria/Eligibility to Participate
- You must be a United States resident.
- You must be 19 years of age or older.

Description of the Study Procedures
- Below is an overview of what you will do for this survey (estimated 18 minutes to complete).
    - You will answer introductory questions.
    - You will read a summary about the podcast and listen to a clip from the podcast.
    - You will answer questions about your opinions of the *Breaking Points* brand.
    - You will answer demographic questions about yourself.

Foreseeable Risks and Benefits of Participation
- There are no anticipated significant risks for completing this study other than what you would experience in daily life (i.e., risk of participation is minimal).
- Benefits for completing this study include contributing to knowledge about consumer psychology. Specifically, the anonymous data from this study will be used for my dissertation; as such, the data may be presented at a research conference and/or published in a scholarly journal.

Compensation for Participation
- You will receive $2.40 in exchange for your complete participation of 18 minutes of work, which is aligned with the United States federal minimum wage and with Connect by CloudResearch's norms regarding the ethics of payment for research participants.
- Payment should be received within 48 hours of study completion.

Anonymity
- Your responses will be anonymous. We will take all reasonable steps to protect your identity. Data from this study will be kept in a secure, encrypted online platform.
- Federal or state laws may require us to show information to university or government officials (or sponsors) who are responsible for monitoring the safety of this study.
- Deidentified data may be shared with other researchers in the future.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw
- The decision to participate in this study is entirely up to you (i.e., voluntary). You may refuse to take part in the study at any time by closing out of the online survey. Such a decision would not affect your relationship with the investigators of this study or SIUC.
- Not participating will bear no penalty.
- You have the right not to answer any single question, as well as to withdraw completely from the study at any point during the process.
- Because your participation is anonymous, it will not be possible to withdraw your survey answers from the study after you have submitted the survey.

Right to Ask Questions
- You have the right to ask questions about this research and to have those questions answered by the researchers before, during, or after the study.
- As the primary investigator, you may contact me (Stephen Berry) at stephen.berry@siu.edu.
- You may also contact my supervisor/co-primary investigator, Dr. Reza Habib, at rhabib@siu.edu or 618-453-3529.

Research Study Approved by an Institutional Review Board
- This project has been reviewed and approved by the SIUC Institutional Review Board. Questions concerning your rights as a participant in this research may be addressed to the Institutional Review Board Chair, Office of Research Compliance, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901-4709. Phone: 618-453-4534. E-mail: siuhsc@siu.edu.

By selecting "I CONSENT," then clicking "CONTINUE," I acknowledge that I have read the material above, and any questions I asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand if I would like to keep a copy of this material for my records, including contact information, I should print or save this page now. I realize that I may withdraw from the study without prejudice at any time. I affirm that I am 19 years of age or older and voluntarily consent to participate in this study, in which my responses may be quoted directly and anonymously.

I CONSENT
I DO NOT CONSENT AND HEREBY WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY

PARTICIPANT SCREENING INFORMATION

Truth-Telling Oath
(Adapted from Jacquemet et al., 2021; Reuse Permitted by Publisher via Creative Commons Attribution License)

Jacquemet, N., James, A. G., Luchini, S., Murphy, J. J., & Shogren, J. F. (2021). Do truth-telling oaths improve honesty in crowd-working? *PLOS ONE, 16*(1), Article e0244958. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0244958

Before we begin, do you swear upon your honor to answer the following questions truthfully? (You will be allowed to continue with this survey regardless of your answer to this question)
   a. Yes
   b. No

Country of Residence
   In what country do you currently live?
   a. Angola
   b. Argentina
   c. Australia
   d. Bangladesh
   e. Belgium
   f. Bolivia
   g. Brazil
   h. Britain
   i. Bulgaria
   j. Burkina Faso
   k. Canada
   l. Chile
   m. China
   n. Colombia
   o. Czech Rep.
   p. Denmark
   q. Egypt
   r. El Salvador
   s. Ethiopia
   t. France
   u. Germany
   v. Ghana
   w. Greece
   x. Guatemala
   y. Honduras
   z. Hungary
   aa. India
   bb. Indonesia
   cc. Israel

dd. Italy
ee. Ivory Coast
ff. Japan
gg. Jordan
hh. Kenya
ii. Kuwait
jj. Lebanon
kk. Lithuania
ll. Malaysia
mm.   Mali
nn. Mexico
oo. Morocco
pp. Mozambique
qq. Netherlands
rr. New Zealand
ss. Nicaragua
tt. Nigeria
uu. Pakistan
vv. Palestine
ww.   Peru
xx. Philippines
yy. Poland
zz. Russia
aaa.   South Africa
bbb.   Senegal
ccc.   Singapore
ddd.   South Korea
eee.   Slovakia
fff. Spain
ggg.   Sweden
hhh.   Taiwan
iii. Tanzania
jjj. Thailand
kkk.   Tunisia
lll. Turkey
mmm.   Uganda
nnn.   Ukraine
ooo.   United States
ppp.   Uzbekistan
qqq.   Venezuela
rrr. Vietnam

Age

What is your age?

_____

Prior Exposure to Podcasts

Have you ever listened to a podcast? MasterClass (2021) defined podcasts as "a collection or series of digital audio files that are made available for downloading or listening via the Internet."

a. Yes
b. No

Prior Exposure to the *Breaking Points* Podcast

Have you ever listened to the *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* podcast?

a. Yes
b. No

PREDICTOR VARIABLE:
EXPERIMENTAL MANIPULATION – POTENTIAL SOCIAL NUDGES
(Adapted from Breaking Points LLC, 2022a; Publicly Available on YouTube)

Breaking Points LLC. (2022a). Our Spotify Wrapped is in for 2022 and we couldn't be more amazed to be in the top 1% most shared globally [Online forum post]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/post/UgkxC582aGgdixnsv3BSOhdBhjFgyTwM79oi

Everyone Experienced the Following:

Please read the following description about the *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* podcast. Then, please view the following clip from the podcast.

Note: You cannot move forward in the survey until you watch the video in full.

"*Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* is a fearless anti-establishment YouTube show and podcast."

Half of the Initial Sample Experienced the Experimental Condition: Exposure to Potential Nudge

Breaking Points 1 month ago (edited)
Our Spotify Wrapped is in for 2022 and we couldn't be more AMAZED to be in the top 1% most shared globally. Thank you to all our new listeners and dedicated long time audiences that keep tuning in every single morning. Cheers to all of you!

Half of the Initial Sample Experienced the Control Condition: No Exposure to Potential Nudge

N/A

Everyone Watched a Clip from the Podcast (Breaking Points LLC, 2022b; Publicly Available on YouTube)

Breaking Points LLC. (2022b). *Report: Americans need six figure income to afford a home* [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/vpkBS0fviPw

Everyone Responded to One Attention Check

What topics were covered in the *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* podcast clip you viewed? Select ALL that apply.
   a. The American Dream (correct answer)
   b. Gas prices
   c. Housing market (correct answer)
   d. Income (correct answer)

PREDICTOR VARIABLES:
BRAND PERSONALITY PERCEPTIONS
(Instructions Adapted from Aaker, 1997; Reuse of Content Permitted by Publisher for Dissertations)

Aaker, J. L. (1997). Dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of Marketing Research, 34*(3), 347-356. https://doi.org/10.2307/3151897

If I asked you to give me your impression of a particular person, you might answer with a set of personality attributes. Now, let's think about brands in the same way. For example, you may be asked to rate the extent to which a set of attributes describes *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar.* Please ask yourself, "If *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* was a person, how would I describe them?"

(Items Adapted from Davies et al., 2018; Examples are Provided Below Per Fair Use)

Davies, G., Rojas-Méndez, J. I., Whelan, S., Mete, M., & Loo, T. (2018). Brand personality: Theory and dimensionality. *Journal of Product & Brand Management, 27*(2), 115-127. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-06-2017-1499

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

The "Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar" brand is…

(Sincerity Subscale)
Trustworthy
Caring

(Competence Subscale)
Enterprising
Confident

(Status Subscale)
Sophisticated
Elegant

CRITERION VARIABLE:
BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS TO SUBSCRIBE TO *BREAKING POINTS*
(Adapted from Juster, 1966; Reuse of Content Permitted by Publisher for Dissertations)

Juster, F. T. (1966). Consumer buying intentions and purchase probability: An experiment in survey design. *Journal of the American Statistical Association, 61*(315), 658-696. https://doi.org/10.2307/2282779

Please answer the following question about your opinions regarding *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar.*

No chance, almost no chance	Very Slight Probability	Slight Possibility	Some Possibility	Fair Possibility	Fairly Good Possibility	Good Possibility	Probable	Very Probable	Almost Sure	Certain, practically certain
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Taking everything into account, what are the prospects that you personally will subscribe to *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar*?

I now want you to consider the following time periods: 30 days, 60 days, and 90 days.

What are the prospects that you personally will be subscribed to *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* sometime within the next 30 days?
What are the prospects that you personally will be subscribed to *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* sometime within the next 60 days?
What are the prospects that you personally will be subscribed to *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* sometime within the next 90 days?

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC AND PSYCHOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Almost done! Please answer the following questions about yourself.

Populist Values-Short Form
(Adapted from Castanho Silva et al., 2018; Example Items are Provided Below Per Fair Use)

Castanho Silva, B., Andreadis, I., Anduiza, E., Blanuša, N., Corti, Y. M., Delfino, G., Rico, G., Ruth, S. P., Spruyt, B., Steenbergen, M., & Littvay, L. (2018). Public opinion surveys: A new scale. In K. Hawkins, R. Carlin, L. Littvay, & C. Rovira Kaltwasser (Eds.), *The ideational approach to populism: Theory, method, & analysis* (pp. 150-178). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315196923

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please mark the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Politicians should always listen closely to the problems of the people.
The government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves.
The people I disagree with politically are not evil.*

*Reverse-scored

Political Orientation
(Adapted from Tyber et al., 2015; Reuse of Content Permitted by Publisher via License #5663240663039)

Tyber, J. M., Inbar, Y., Güler, E., & Molho, C. (2015). Is the relationship between pathogen avoidance and ideological conservatism explained by sexual strategies? *Evolution and Human Behavior, 36*(6), 489-497. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2015.01.006

Left-Wing	Left-Leaning	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Right-Leaning	Right-Wing
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

How would you describe your political orientation when it comes to social issues?
How would you describe your political orientation when it comes to economic issues?
How would you describe your political orientation, overall?

Gender Identity
(Adapted from Hughes et al., 2022; Publicly Available From the Publisher)

Hughes, J. L., Camden, A. A., Yangchen, T., Smith, G. P. A., Domenech Rodríguez, M. M.,
Rouse, S. V., McDonald, C. P., & Lopez, S. (2022). Guidance for researchers when using
inclusive demographic questions for surveys: Improved and updated questions. *Psi Chi
Journal of Psychological Research, 27*(4), 232-255. https://doi.org/10.24839/2325-
7342.JN27.4.232

> In research, we often must present demographic information in categories. We
> understand these labels are limiting. If you had to select one of the options below,
> which one best describes your gender identity?
> a. Agender
> b. Gender fluid
> c. Gender queer
> d. Gender questioning
> e. Māhū, or muxe, or two spirit
> f. Man
> g. Nonbinary
> h. Woman
> i. I prefer not to answer

Gender Modality
(Adapted from Hughes et al., 2022; Publicly Available From the Publisher)

Hughes, J. L., Camden, A. A., Yangchen, T., Smith, G. P. A., Domenech Rodríguez, M. M.,
Rouse, S. V., McDonald, C. P., & Lopez, S. (2022). Guidance for researchers when using
inclusive demographic questions for surveys: Improved and updated questions. *Psi Chi
Journal of Psychological Research, 27*(4), 232-255. https://doi.org/10.24839/2325-
7342.JN27.4.232

> Do you identify as transgender?
> a. Yes
> b. No
> c. I prefer not to answer

Racial and Ethnic Identity
(Adapted from Hughes et al., 2022; Publicly Available From the Publisher)

Hughes, J. L., Camden, A. A., Yangchen, T., Smith, G. P. A., Domenech Rodríguez, M. M., Rouse, S. V., McDonald, C. P., & Lopez, S. (2022). Guidance for researchers when using inclusive demographic questions for surveys: Improved and updated questions. *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research, 27*(4), 232-255. https://doi.org/10.24839/2325-7342.JN27.4.232

Ethnicity reflects the cultural traditions, values, and practices that are shared by people across generations. When you consider your personal and familial cultural values, traditions, and practices, what labels best describe your ethnicity? (mark ALL that apply)
a. Arab, Middle Eastern, or North African
b. Asian or Asian American
c. Black or African American
d. Hispanic or Latino
e. Native American or Alaska Native
f. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
g. White or European American
h. Some other race, ethnicity, or origin (please specify): _____
i. I prefer not to answer

Social Class
(Adapted from Hughes et al., 2022; Publicly Available From the Publisher)

Hughes, J. L., Camden, A. A., Yangchen, T., Smith, G. P. A., Domenech Rodríguez, M. M., Rouse, S. V., McDonald, C. P., & Lopez, S. (2022). Guidance for researchers when using inclusive demographic questions for surveys: Improved and updated questions. *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research, 27*(4), 232-255. https://doi.org/10.24839/2325-7342.JN27.4.232

Thinking about *your childhood*, which social class did you identify with?
a. Working class
b. Lower middle class
c. Upper middle class
d. Upper class
e. I prefer not to answer

Thinking about *your current situation*, which social class do you identify with?
a. Working class
b. Lower middle class
c. Upper middle class
d. Upper class
e. I prefer not to answer

DEBRIEFING

For Eligible Participants Who Completed the Survey

Thank you for participating in this study! <u>To confirm your participation, you must click "NEXT" to be redirected back to Connect by CloudResearch.</u>

Before you do, please review the following debriefing information:

- Payment should be received within 48 hours of study completion.

- If you have any questions regarding your participation in the study, please feel free to contact the following researchers:
  - Stephen Berry, Primary Investigator: stephen.berry@siu.edu
  - Dr. Reza Habib, Co-Primary Investigator: rhabib@siu.edu; 618-453-3529

- This project has been reviewed and approved by the SIUC Institutional Review Board. Questions concerning your rights as a participant in this research may be addressed to the Institutional Review Board Chair, Office of Research Compliance, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901-4709. Phone: 618-453-4534. E-mail: siuhsc@siu.edu.

Note: By clicking "NEXT," participants returned to the Connect website via the following completion redirect URL, which was programmed into Qualtrics: https://connect.cloudresearch.com/participant/project/e5a9e97b73bb4a898d28efe58d58898d/complete

For Prospective Participants Who Declined Informed Consent

Thank you for your interest in this study! You selected "I do not consent and hereby withdraw from the study."

Before you manually return to Connect by CloudResearch, please review the following information:

- If you have any questions regarding your participation in the study, please feel free to contact the following researchers:
  - Stephen Berry, Primary Investigator: stephen.berry@siu.edu
  - Dr. Reza Habib, Co-Primary Investigator: rhabib@siu.edu; 618-453-3529

- This project has been reviewed and approved by the SIUC Institutional Review Board. Questions concerning your rights as a participant in this research may be addressed to the Institutional Review Board Chair, Office of Research Compliance, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901-4709. Phone: 618-453-4534. E-mail: siuhsc@siu.edu.

APPENDIX D

EXPERIMENT 2 CONNECT BY CLOUDRESEARCH SETUP INFORMATION

BASIC INFORMATION:

What are you going to call this project? Your Opinions About a Political Podcast

What are you going to call this project internally? Berry Dissertation 2

Provide participants with a short description of your task. This approximately 18-minute survey will entail: 1) introductory questions; 2) a summary and clip from the Breaking Points podcast; 3) opinion questions about the podcast; 4) demographics. You must be a United States resident aged 19 or older. You also must not have ever completed a previous version of this survey.

Provide instructions to display to the participants. I am Stephen Berry, a Ph.D. student at Southern Illinois University Carbondale's School of Psychological and Behavioral Sciences (stephen.berry@siu.edu). I am conducting a research study under the supervision of Dr. Reza Habib, Associate Professor of Psychology at Southern Illinois University Carbondale's School of Psychological and Behavioral Sciences (rhabib@siu.edu; 618-453-3529).

This approximately 19-minute survey will entail: 1) introductory questions; 2) a summary and clip from the Breaking Points podcast; 3) opinion questions about the podcast; 4) demographics. You must be a United States resident aged 19 or older. You also must not have ever completed a previous version of this survey.

Select "Go to Study" to complete the survey. At the end of the survey, you will automatically be redirected back to Connect by CloudResearch. This will provide evidence of your study completion.

Which devices can participants use to complete your project? Mobile, Tablet, Desktop

Does your project require any of the following? Audio

Does your project contain sensitive content? No

PROJECT LINK:

What is your project's URL?
https://siucpsyc.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bjVH1ft0QgSdYhM

Collecting Connect IDs
https://siucpsyc.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bjVH1ft0QgSdYhM?participantId=XXXXX&assignmentId=XXXXX&projectId=XXXXX

Note to IRB: The function of this metadata is to ensure that participants completed the study, which is in turn automatically reported back to Connect by CloudResearch. After participants are paid, I will delete any trace of participants' Connect IDs from the dataset.

Which platform will you be hosting your survey on? Qualtrics

COST:

How many participants does your project require? 275

How much are you paying for this project: $2.40 (United States Dollars)

How long will it take for you to complete your project: 18 minutes

Would you like to set a maximum time for participants to complete your project? (left blank; automated to 76 minutes by default)

PARTICIPANT TARGETING:

Demographic Targeting: Age (Minimum set to 19, Maximum set to 100), Current U.S. State of Residence (All states and territories selected; none of the above was left unchecked)

Platform Targeting: Excluded Projects: Berry Dissertation 1

Do you want to apply your universal block list? No

COMPLETION:

How will participants confirm their submission? Redirect Url
https://connect.cloudresearch.com/participant/project/c83d970a20c94571ace1d24e0610603f/complete

EXPERIMENT 2 SURVEY

INFORMED CONSENT

Title of Study
- Your Opinions about a Political Commentary Podcast

Investigators
- Stephen D. Berry, M.S.
- Reza Habib, Ph.D.

Introduction
- I am Stephen Berry, a doctoral candidate in the School of Psychological and Behavioral Sciences at Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC). My supervisor is Dr. Reza Habib, Associate Professor and Director of the School of Psychological and Behavioral Sciences at SIUC.
- I am asking you to voluntarily participate in an online survey about consumers' opinions regarding *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar*, a political commentary podcast. The podcast is a point of reference for better understanding differences in consumers' responses to podcasts.
- The investigators of this study are not in any way affiliated with Breaking Points LLC or *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar*.
- All data collected will be kept strictly anonymous.

Criteria/Eligibility to Participate
- You must be a United States resident.
- You must be 19 years of age or older.
- You must not have ever completed a previous version of this survey.

Description of the Study Procedures
- Below is an overview of what you will do for this survey (estimated 19 minutes to complete).
    o You will answer introductory questions.
    o You will read a summary about the podcast and listen to a clip from the podcast.
    o You will answer questions about your opinions of the *Breaking Points* brand.
    o You will answer demographic questions about yourself.

Foreseeable Risks and Benefits of Participation
- There are no anticipated significant risks for completing this study other than what you would experience in daily life (i.e., risk of participation is minimal).
- Benefits for completing this study include contributing to knowledge about consumer psychology. Specifically, the anonymous data from this study will be used for my dissertation; as such, the data may be presented at a research conference and/or published in a scholarly journal.

Compensation for Participation
- You will receive $2.40 in exchange for your complete participation of 18 minutes of work, which is aligned with the United States federal minimum wage and with Connect by CloudResearch's norms regarding the ethics of payment for research participants.
- Payment should be received within 48 hours of study completion.

Anonymity
- Your responses will be anonymous. We will take all reasonable steps to protect your identity. Data from this study will be kept in a secure, encrypted online platform.
- Federal or state laws may require us to show information to university or government officials (or sponsors) who are responsible for monitoring the safety of this study.
- Deidentified data may be shared with other researchers in the future.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw
- The decision to participate in this study is entirely up to you (i.e., voluntary). You may refuse to take part in the study at any time by closing out of the online survey. Such a decision would not affect your relationship with the investigators of this study or SIUC.
- Not participating will bear no penalty.
- You have the right not to answer any single question, as well as to withdraw completely from the study at any point during the process.
- Because your participation is anonymous, it will not be possible to withdraw your survey answers from the study after you have submitted the survey.

Right to Ask Questions
- You have the right to ask questions about this research and to have those questions answered by the researchers before, during, or after the study.
- As the primary investigator, you may contact me (Stephen Berry) at stephen.berry@siu.edu.
- You may also contact my supervisor/co-primary investigator, Dr. Reza Habib, at rhabib@siu.edu or 618-453-3529.

Research Study Approved by an Institutional Review Board
- This project has been reviewed and approved by the SIUC Institutional Review Board. Questions concerning your rights as a participant in this research may be addressed to the Institutional Review Board Chair, Office of Research Compliance, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901-4709. Phone: 618-453-4534. E-mail: siuhsc@siu.edu.

By selecting "I CONSENT," then clicking "CONTINUE," I acknowledge that I have read the material above, and any questions I asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand if I would like to keep a copy of this material for my records, including contact information, I should print or save this page now. I realize that I may withdraw from the study without prejudice at any time. I affirm that I am 19 years of age or older and voluntarily consent to participate in this study, in which my responses may be quoted directly and anonymously.
    I CONSENT
    I DO NOT CONSENT AND HEREBY WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY

PARTICIPANT SCREENING INFORMATION

Truth-Telling Oath
(Adapted from Jacquemet et al., 2021; Reuse Permitted by Publisher via Creative Commons Attribution License)

Jacquemet, N., James, A. G., Luchini, S., Murphy, J. J., & Shogren, J. F. (2021). Do truth-telling oaths improve honesty in crowd-working? *PLOS ONE, 16*(1), Article e0244958. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0244958

Before we begin, do you swear upon your honor to answer the following questions truthfully? (You will be allowed to continue with this survey regardless of your answer to this question)
a. Yes
b. No

Country of Residence
In what country do you currently live?
a. Angola
b. Argentina
c. Australia
d. Bangladesh
e. Belgium
f. Bolivia
g. Brazil
h. Britain
i. Bulgaria
j. Burkina Faso
k. Canada
l. Chile
m. China
n. Colombia
o. Czech Rep.
p. Denmark
q. Egypt
r. El Salvador
s. Ethiopia
t. France
u. Germany
v. Ghana
w. Greece
x. Guatemala
y. Honduras
z. Hungary
aa. India
bb. Indonesia
cc. Israel

dd. Italy
ee. Ivory Coast
ff. Japan
gg. Jordan
hh. Kenya
ii. Kuwait
jj. Lebanon
kk. Lithuania
ll. Malaysia
mm. Mali
nn. Mexico
oo. Morocco
pp. Mozambique
qq. Netherlands
rr. New Zealand
ss. Nicaragua
tt. Nigeria
uu. Pakistan
vv. Palestine
ww. Peru
xx. Philippines
yy. Poland
zz. Russia
aaa. South Africa
bbb. Senegal
ccc. Singapore
ddd. South Korea
eee. Slovakia
fff. Spain
ggg. Sweden
hhh. Taiwan
iii. Tanzania
jjj. Thailand
kkk. Tunisia
lll. Turkey
mmm. Uganda
nnn. Ukraine
ooo. United States
ppp. Uzbekistan
qqq. Venezuela
rrr. Vietnam

Age

What is your age?

_____

Prior Exposure to Podcasts

Have you ever listened to a podcast? MasterClass (2021) defined podcasts as "a collection or series of digital audio files that are made available for downloading or listening via the Internet."

 a. Yes

 b. No

Prior Exposure to the *Breaking Points* Podcast

Have you ever listened to the *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* podcast?

 a. Yes

 b. No

PREDICTOR VARIABLE:
EXPERIMENTAL MANIPULATION – POTENTIAL SOCIAL NUDGES
(Adapted from Breaking Points LLC, 2022a and Meserve, 2022; Publicly Available on YouTube)

Breaking Points LLC. (2022a). Our Spotify Wrapped is in for 2022 and we couldn't be more amazed to be in the top 1% most shared globally [Online forum post]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/post/UgkxC582aGgdixnsv3BSOhdBhjFgyTwM79oi

Meserve, E. [@ejmeserve6894] (2022). Let me just say this. You guys are doing so well because people (myself included) trust you [Online forum post]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDRIjKy6eZOvKtOELtTdeUA/community?lc=UgyAVLxIi-1jHuyEWbZ4AaABAg&lb=UgkxC582aGgdixnsv3BSOhdBhjFgyTwM79oi

Everyone Experienced the Following:

Please read the following description about the *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* podcast. Then, please view the following clip from the podcast.

Note: You cannot move forward in the survey until you watch the video in full.

"*Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* is a fearless anti-establishment YouTube show and podcast."

Half of the Initial Sample Experienced the Experimental Condition: Exposure to Potential Nudge

Breaking Points 1 month ago (edited)
Our Spotify Wrapped is in for 2022 and we couldn't be more AMAZED to be in the top 1% most shared globally. Thank you to all our new listeners and dedicated long time audiences that keep tuning in every single morning. Cheers to all of you!

Ej Meserve 1 month ago
Let me just say this. You guys are doing so well because people (myself included) trust you. Not because we agree with you, not because we know we'll hear exactly what we want but because you guys give honest perspectives on whatever it is you choose to report on from the basic big news stories, to government corruption, to UFOs and crypto stories. Just remember as you guys grow it is your authenticity that brought me and many others here and that authenticity is what has gotten us to stay.

Half of the Initial Sample Experienced the Control Condition: No Exposure to Potential Nudge

N/A

Everyone Watched a Clip from the Podcast (Breaking Points LLC, 2022b; Publicly Available on YouTube)

Breaking Points LLC. (2022b). *Report: Americans need six figure income to afford a home* [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/vpkBS0fviPw

Everyone Responded to One Attention Check

What topics were covered in the *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* podcast clip you viewed? Select ALL that apply.
- a. The American Dream (correct answer)
- b. Gas prices
- c. Housing market (correct answer)
- d. Income (correct answer)

PREDICTOR VARIABLES:
BRAND PERSONALITY PERCEPTIONS
(Instructions Adapted from Aaker, 1997; Reuse of Content Permitted by Publisher for Dissertations)

Aaker, J. L. (1997). Dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of Marketing Research, 34*(3), 347-356. https://doi.org/10.2307/3151897

If I asked you to give me your impression of a particular person, you might answer with a set of personality attributes. Now, let's think about brands in the same way. For example, you may be asked to rate the extent to which a set of attributes describes *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar*. Please ask yourself, "If *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* was a person, how would I describe them?"

NOTE: Measure Was Randomly Assigned; Everyone Received Mean Scores for Each Factor (See Next Two Pages)

PREDICTOR VARIABLE:
EXPERIMENTAL MANIPULATION –
COMPETING MEASURES OF BRAND PERSONALITY

Half of the Initial Sample Responded to a Brand Personality Measure Based on Theories of Social Cognition (Items Adapted from Davies et al., 2018; Examples are Provided Below Per Fair Use)

Davies, G., Rojas-Méndez, J. I., Whelan, S., Mete, M., & Loo, T. (2018). Brand personality: Theory and dimensionality. *Journal of Product & Brand Management, 27*(2), 115-127. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-06-2017-1499

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

The "Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar" brand is…

(Sincerity Subscale)
   Trustworthy
   Caring

(Competence Subscale)
   Enterprising
   Confident

(Status Subscale)
   Sophisticated
   Elegant

Half of the Initial Sample Responded to a Brand Personality Measure Based on the Five-Factor Model of Human Personality (Items Adapted from Aaker, 1997; Reuse of Content Permitted by Publisher for Dissertations)

Aaker, J. L. (1997). Dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of Marketing Research, 34*(3), 347-356. https://doi.org/10.2307/3151897

Not at All Descriptive	Undescriptive	Neutral	Descriptive	Extremely Descriptive
1	2	3	4	5

The "Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar" brand is...

(Sincerity Subscale)
  Down-to-earth
  Family-oriented
  Small-town
  Honest
  Sincere
  Real
  Wholesome
  Original
  Cheerful
  Sentimental
  Friendly

(Competence Subscale)
  Reliable
  Hard working
  Secure
  Intelligent
  Technical
  Corporate
  Successful
  Leader
  Confident

(Status Subscale)
  Upper class
  Glamorous
  Good looking
  Charming
  Feminine
  Smooth

CRITERION VARIABLE:
BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS TO SUBSCRIBE TO *BREAKING POINTS*
(Adapted from Juster, 1966; Reuse of Content Permitted by Publisher for Dissertations)

Juster, F. T. (1966). Consumer buying intentions and purchase probability: An experiment in survey design. *Journal of the American Statistical Association, 61*(315), 658-696. https://doi.org/10.2307/2282779

Please answer the following question about your opinions regarding *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar.*

No chance, almost no chance	Very Slight Probability	Slight Possibility	Some Possibility	Fair Possibility	Fairly Good Possibility	Good Possibility	Probable	Very Probable	Almost Sure	Certain, practically certain
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Taking everything into account, what are the prospects that you personally will subscribe to *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar*?

I now want you to consider the following time periods: 30 days, 60 days, and 90 days.

What are the prospects that you personally will be subscribed to *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* sometime within the next 30 days?
What are the prospects that you personally will be subscribed to *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* sometime within the next 60 days?
What are the prospects that you personally will be subscribed to *Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar* sometime within the next 90 days?

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC AND PSYCHOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Almost done! Please answer the following questions about yourself.

Populist Values-Long Form
(Adapted from Castanho Silva et al., 2018; Example Items are Provided Below Per Fair Use)

Castanho Silva, B., Andreadis, I., Anduiza, E., Blanuša, N., Corti, Y. M., Delfino, G., Rico, G., Ruth, S. P., Spruyt, B., Steenbergen, M., & Littvay, L. (2018). Public opinion surveys: A new scale. In K. Hawkins, R. Carlin, L. Littvay, & C. Rovira Kaltwasser (Eds.), *The ideational approach to populism: Theory, method, & analysis* (pp. 150-178). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315196923

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please mark the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

(People-Centrism Subscale)
>   Politicians should always listen closely to the problems of the people.
>   The will of the people should be the highest principle in this country's politics.

(Anti-Establishment Subscale)
>   Government officials use their power to try to improve people's lives.*
>   Quite a few of the people running the government are crooked.

(Manichaeanism Subscale)
>   You can tell if a person is good or bad if you know their politics.
>   The people I disagree with politically are not evil.*

*Reverse-scored

Political Orientation
(Adapted from Tyber et al., 2015; Reuse of Content Permitted by Publisher via License #5663240663039)

Tyber, J. M., Inbar, Y., Güler, E., & Molho, C. (2015). Is the relationship between pathogen avoidance and ideological conservatism explained by sexual strategies? *Evolution and Human Behavior, 36*(6), 489-497. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2015.01.006

Left-Wing	Left-Leaning	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Right-Leaning	Right-Wing
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

How would you describe your political orientation when it comes to social issues?
How would you describe your political orientation when it comes to economic issues?
How would you describe your political orientation, overall?

Gender Identity
(Adapted from Hughes et al., 2022; Publicly Available From the Publisher)

Hughes, J. L., Camden, A. A., Yangchen, T., Smith, G. P. A., Domenech Rodríguez, M. M., Rouse, S. V., McDonald, C. P., & Lopez, S. (2022). Guidance for researchers when using inclusive demographic questions for surveys: Improved and updated questions. *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research, 27*(4), 232-255. https://doi.org/10.24839/2325-7342.JN27.4.232

In research, we often must present demographic information in categories. We understand these labels are limiting. If you had to select one of the options below, which one best describes your gender identity?
a. Agender
b. Gender fluid
c. Gender queer
d. Gender questioning
e. Māhū, or muxe, or two spirit
f. Man
g. Nonbinary
h. Woman
i. I prefer not to answer

Gender Modality
(Adapted from Hughes et al., 2022; Publicly Available From the Publisher)

Hughes, J. L., Camden, A. A., Yangchen, T., Smith, G. P. A., Domenech Rodríguez, M. M., Rouse, S. V., McDonald, C. P., & Lopez, S. (2022). Guidance for researchers when using inclusive demographic questions for surveys: Improved and updated questions. *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research, 27*(4), 232-255. https://doi.org/10.24839/2325-7342.JN27.4.232

Do you identify as transgender?
a. Yes
b. No
c. I prefer not to answer

Racial and Ethnic Identity
(Adapted from Hughes et al., 2022; Publicly Available From the Publisher)

Hughes, J. L., Camden, A. A., Yangchen, T., Smith, G. P. A., Domenech Rodríguez, M. M., Rouse, S. V., McDonald, C. P., & Lopez, S. (2022). Guidance for researchers when using inclusive demographic questions for surveys: Improved and updated questions. *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research, 27*(4), 232-255. https://doi.org/10.24839/2325-7342.JN27.4.232

Ethnicity reflects the cultural traditions, values, and practices that are shared by people across generations. When you consider your personal and familial cultural values, traditions, and practices, what labels best describe your ethnicity? (mark ALL that apply)
a. Arab, Middle Eastern, or North African
b. Asian or Asian American
c. Black or African American
d. Hispanic or Latino
e. Native American or Alaska Native
f. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
g. White or European American
h. Some other race, ethnicity, or origin (please specify): _____
i. I prefer not to answer

Social Class
(Adapted from Hughes et al., 2022; Publicly Available From the Publisher)

Hughes, J. L., Camden, A. A., Yangchen, T., Smith, G. P. A., Domenech Rodríguez, M. M., Rouse, S. V., McDonald, C. P., & Lopez, S. (2022). Guidance for researchers when using inclusive demographic questions for surveys: Improved and updated questions. *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research, 27*(4), 232-255. https://doi.org/10.24839/2325-7342.JN27.4.232

Thinking about *your childhood*, which social class did you identify with?
a. Working class
b. Lower middle class
c. Upper middle class
d. Upper class
e. I prefer not to answer

Thinking about *your current situation*, which social class do you identify with?
a. Working class
b. Lower middle class
c. Upper middle class
d. Upper class
e. I prefer not to answer

DEBRIEFING

For Eligible Participants Who Completed the Survey

Thank you for participating in this study! <u>To confirm your participation, you must click "NEXT" to be redirected back to Connect by CloudResearch</u>.

Before you do, please review the following debriefing information:

- Payment should be received within 48 hours of study completion.

- If you have any questions regarding your participation in the study, please feel free to contact the following researchers:
  - Stephen Berry, Primary Investigator: stephen.berry@siu.edu
  - Dr. Reza Habib, Co-Primary Investigator: rhabib@siu.edu; 618-453-3529

- This project has been reviewed and approved by the SIUC Institutional Review Board. Questions concerning your rights as a participant in this research may be addressed to the Institutional Review Board Chair, Office of Research Compliance, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901-4709. Phone: 618-453-4534. E-mail: siuhsc@siu.edu.

Note: By clicking "NEXT," participants returned to the Connect website via the following completion redirect URL, which was programmed into Qualtrics: https://connect.cloudresearch.com/participant/project/c83d970a20c94571ace1d24e0610603f/complete

For Prospective Participants Who Declined Informed Consent

Thank you for your interest in this study! You selected "I do not consent and hereby withdraw from the study."

Before you manually return to Connect by CloudResearch, please review the following information:

- If you have any questions regarding your participation in the study, please feel free to contact the following researchers:
  - Stephen Berry, Primary Investigator: stephen.berry@siu.edu
  - Dr. Reza Habib, Co-Primary Investigator: rhabib@siu.edu; 618-453-3529

- This project has been reviewed and approved by the SIUC Institutional Review Board. Questions concerning your rights as a participant in this research may be addressed to the Institutional Review Board Chair, Office of Research Compliance, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901-4709. Phone: 618-453-4534. E-mail: siuhsc@siu.edu.

APPENDIX F

LINK TO DATA, MATERIALS, AND MEASURES

Table S1

Disclosure of Open Science Practices

Open Access?	Open Data?	Open Materials?	Preregistered?
Yes [a]	Yes	Yes	No [b]

[a] This document should be available as an open access dissertation via Southern Illinois University Carbondale's institutional repository: OpenSIUC. [b] Although it was "preregistered" with the dissertation committee, the dissertation was not preregistered through a public registry.

Berry, S. D. (2023, November 6). *Stephen D. Berry's dissertation: Data, materials, and measures.* OSF. https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/7ZE5X

Supplemental Analyses for Experiment 1

Table S2

Experiment 1 Hierarchical Regression Results for Explaining Behavioral Intentions (With Collinearity Statistics)

Variables	R^2	t	B	SE B	Tolerance	VIF
Block 1:	.024					
Age		-1.28	-.02	.02	.96	1.04
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]		-1.70	-.71	.42	1.00	1.00
Populist Values		.33	.15	.25	.97	1.03
Political Orientation		1.39	.11	.11	.95	1.05
Block 2:	.026					
Age		-1.23	-.02	.02	.96	1.05
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]		-1.70	-.71	.42	1.00	1.00
Populist Values		.34	.09	.25	.97	1.03
Political Orientation		1.37	.15	.11	.96	1.05
Manipulation: Social Nudge [b]		-.57	-.21	.36	.99	1.01
Block 3:	.410***					
Age		-1.78	-.02	.01	.91	1.10
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]		-.71	-.24	.34	.94	1.07
Populist Values		1.00	.20	.20	.96	1.05
Political Orientation		.73	.06	.09	.94	1.07
Manipulation: Social Nudge [b]		-.55	-.16	.29	.99	1.01
BPP: Sincerity*** [c]		7.14	1.88	.26	.54	1.84
BPP: Competence		.99	.33	.33	.49	2.05
BPP: Status** [d]		2.89	.69	.24	.66	1.52

Note. BPP = brand personality perceptions. CI = confidence intervals. LL = lower limit. UL = upper limit. VIF = variance inflation factors.

*** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$.

[a] 0 = no, 1 = yes. [b] 0 = no exposure to potential social nudge (control group); 1 = exposure to potential social nudge (experimental group). [c] $p' < .001$ after Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests. [d] $p' = .03$ after Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

Table S3

Experiment 1 Hierarchical Regression Results for Explaining Behavioral Intentions (Corrected with Robust Standard Errors/Heteroscedasticity-Consistent Standard Error Estimates)

Variables	R^2	t	B	SE B
Block 1:	.024			
Age		-1.28	-.02	.02
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]		-1.70	-.71	.42
Populist Values		.33	.08	.25
Political Orientation		1.39	.15	.11
Block 2:	.026			
Age		-1.22	-.02	.02
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]		-1.74	-.71	.42
Populist Values		.33	.09	.25
Political Orientation		1.33	.15	.11
Manipulation: Social Nudge [b]		-.58	-.21	.36
Block 3:	.410***			
Age		-1.88	-.02	.01
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]		-.71	-.24	.34
Populist Values		.92	.20	.21
Political Orientation		.73	.06	.09
Manipulation: Social Nudge [b]		-.56	-.16	.28
BPP: Sincerity*** [c]		8.22	1.89	.23
BPP: Competence		1.09	.33	.30
BPP: Status** [d]		2.83	.69	.24

Note. BPP = brand personality perceptions.

*** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$.

[a] 0 = no, 1 = yes. [b] 0 = no exposure to potential social nudge (control group); 1 = exposure to potential social nudge (experimental group). [c] $p' = .006$ after Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests. [d] $p' = .007$ after Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

Table S4

Experiment 1 Inter-Item Correlations of the Populist Values Short Form (Castanho Silva et al., 2018)

Item	1	2	3	4	5
1. The government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves.	-	-	-	-	-
2. Government officials use their power to try to improve people's lives. (R)	-.30	-	-	-	-
3. The people I disagree with politically are not evil. (R)	.27	.00	-	-	-
4. You can tell if a person is good or bad if you know their politics.	-.21	.17	-.55	-	-
5. Politicians don't have to spend time among ordinary people to do a good job. (R)	.06	.00	.12	-.09	-
6. Politicians should always listen closely to the problems of the people.	.02	.07	-.18	.18	-.47

Note. Items intended to be reverse scored are denoted with an (R) but were not reverse scored prior to analysis.

Table S5

Experiment 1 Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Populist Values Short Form (Castanho Silva et al., 2018)

Item	Factor Loading		
	1	2	3
Factor 1: Anti-Establishment			
The government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves.	**.95**	-.01	-.09
Government officials use their power to try to improve people's lives. (R)	**-.58**	.06	.15
Factor 2: Manichaeanism			
The people I disagree with politically are not evil. (R)	.02	**.81**	.00
You can tell if a person is good or bad if you know their politics.	.01	**-.57**	-.02
Factor 3: People-Centrism			
Politicians don't have to spend time among ordinary people to do a good job. (R)	-.05	.02	**.75**
Politicians should always listen closely to the problems of the people.	.27	-.07	**-.37**

Note. A principal axis factoring extraction method and Promax rotation method were selected. Factor loadings above .30 are in bold. Items intended to be reverse scored are denoted with an (R) but were not reverse scored prior to analysis. KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy = .53. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity $\chi^2(15) = 206.53$, $p < .001$.

Table S6

Experiment 1 Independent Samples T-Tests for the Potential Social Nudge Manipulation

Dependent Variables	Exposed to Social Nudge		Not Exposed to Social Nudge		$t(234)$	Cohen's d
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
BPP: Sincerity	3.88	.64	3.87	.80	-.09	-.01
BPP: Competence	3.87	.56	3.90	.65	.34	.05
BPP: Status	2.96	.72	3.02	.72	.63	.08

Note. BPP = brand personality perceptions. *M* = mean. *SD* = standard deviation. No significant differences emerged.

Supplemental Analyses for Experiment 2

Table S7

Experiment 2 Hierarchical Regression Results for Explaining Behavioral Intentions (With Collinearity Statistics)

Variables	R^2	ΔR^2	t	B	SE B	Tolerance	VIF
Block 1:	.075**	.075					
Age			-1.79	-.03	.01	.96	1.05
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]			-.94	-.42	.44	.97	1.03
Political Orientation** [b]			3.11	.34	.11	.92	1.09
Populist Values: People-Centrism** [b]			2.72	.55	.20	.92	1.08
Populist Values: Anti-Establishment			-1.20	-.18	.15	.94	1.07
Block 2:	.088**	.012					
Age			-1.85	-.03	.01	.96	1.05
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]			-.96	-.42	.44	.97	1.03
Political Orientation** [b]			3.23	.36	.11	.91	1.10
Populist Values: People-Centrism** [c]			2.82	.57	.20	.92	1.09
Populist Values: Anti-Establishment			-.99	-.15	.15	.93	1.08
Manipulation: Social Nudge [d]			1.74	.60	.34	.98	1.02
Block 3:	.090**	.003					
Age			-1.84	-.03	.01	.95	1.05
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]			-.87	-.38	.44	.96	1.04
Political Orientation** [b]			3.18	.35	.11	.91	1.10
Populist Values: People-Centrism** [b]			2.81	.57	.20	.92	1.09
Populist Values: Anti-Establishment			-1.04	-.16	.15	.92	1.08
Manipulation: Social Nudge [d]			1.62	.56	.35	.96	1.04
Manipulation: BPP Measure [e]			.82	.29	.35	.97	1.03
Block 4:	.394***	.304***					
Age			-1.86	-.02	.01	.92	1.09
Prior Exposure to Podcasts [a]			-.62	-.23	.37	.95	1.06
Political Orientation			1.91	.18	.09	.87	1.16
Populist Values: People-Centrism			.34	.06	.18	.83	1.20
Populist Values: Anti-Establishment			.02	.00	.13	.90	1.11
Manipulation: Social Nudge [d]			.97	.28	.29	.95	1.06
Manipulation: BPP Measure [e]			-1.84	-.59	.32	.76	1.31
BPP: Sincerity*** [f]			6.52	1.73	.26	.52	1.92
BPP: Competence			.32	.10	.32	.50	2.02
BPP: Status*** [c]			3.38	.77	.23	.63	1.59

Note. BPP = brand personality perceptions. CI = confidence intervals. LL = lower limit. UL = upper limit. VIF = variance inflation factors.

*** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$

[a] 0 = no, 1 = yes. [b] $p' < .05$ after Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests. [c] $p' < .01$ after Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests. [d] 0 = no exposure to potential social nudge (control group); 1 = exposure to potential social nudge (experimental group). [e] 0 = Aaker (1997) measure based on five-factor model of human personality; 1 = Davies et al. (2018) measure based on social cognition theories [f] $p' < .001$ after Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

Table S8

Experiment 2 Independent Samples T-Tests for the Potential Social Nudge Manipulation

Dependent Variables	Exposed to Social Nudge		Not Exposed to Social Nudge		$t(234)$	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD		
BPP: Sincerity*	3.67	.72	3.49	.73	-1.85	-.24
BPP: Competence*	3.84	.53	3.70	.71	-1.80	-.23
BPP: Status	3.03	.78	2.99	.77	-.41	-.05

Note. BPP = brand personality perceptions. *M* = mean. *SD* = standard deviation.
* $p < .05$. *p' > .05* after Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

Table S9

Experiment 2 Independent Samples T-Tests for the Competing BPP Measures Manipulation

Dependent Variables	Exposed to Davies et al. (2018) Measure Based on Social Cognition Theories		Exposed to Aaker (1997) Measure Based on Five-Factor Model of Human Personality		$t(234)$	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD		
BPP: Sincerity***	3.87	.77	3.30	.57	-6.39	-.83
BPP: Competence***	3.91	.66	3.64	.57	-3.38	-.44
BPP: Status	2.97	.90	3.05	.64	.85	.11

Note. BPP = brand personality perceptions. *M* = mean. *SD* = standard deviation.
*** $p < .001$. *p' < .001* after Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

Supplemental Analyses for Both Experiments

Table S10

Meta-Analyses of Both Experiments' Correlations with Behavioral Intentions (JASP Version 0.18.1)

Dependent Variables	Estimate		95% CI	Coefficient	*df*
Classical Meta-Analysis	Q[a]	Wald	95% CI LL, UL	z	df
Restricted Maximum Likelihood (ML):					
BPP: Sincerity	35.99***/.04	.57***	.39, .76	6.00	1
BPP: Competence	30.29***/.03	.45***	.29, .61	5.50	1
BPP: Status	21.19***/.04	.44***	.25, .63	4.60	1
Weighted Average of the	WAAP	WLS	95% CI LL, UL	t	df
Adequately Powered Studies (WAAP-WLS):					
BPP: Sincerity	.57*	.57*	.53, .61	28.65	1
BPP: Competence	.45*	.45*	.42, .48	29.82	1
BPP: Status	.44*	.44*	.40, .48	21.99	1

Note. BPP = brand personality perceptions. CI = confidence intervals. LL = lower limit. UL = upper limit.
*** $p < .001$. * $p < .05$.
[a] The first number represents the omnibus test of model coefficients; the second number represents the test of residual heterogeneity.

VITA

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale

Stephen D. Berry

sdbpsychology@gmail.com

Arkansas State University (A-State):
Associate of Science, En Route, December 2014
Bachelor of Science, Psychology, May 2016
Master of Science, Psychological Science, August 2019

Special Honors and Awards:
> A-State Alice Horn Bryant Psychology Scholarship, August 2014
> A-State Distinguished Service Award, April 2016
> A-State Outstanding Graduating Student (M.S. Psychological Science), April 2019

Dissertation Paper Title:
> Psychology in a Podcast Context:
> Do Brand Personality Perceptions and Social Nudges Explain
> Consumers' Behavioral Intentions to Subscribe to *Breaking Points*?

Major Professors: Dr. Reza Habib and Dr. Wayne Wilkinson

Publications:
> Cook, C. L., Demanarig, D., Metviner, S., Stoppa, T., Milius, H., Grahe, J., Kawabata, Y., Schmidt, K., Sonnentag, T. L., DeNigris, D., Norvilitis, J., Berry, S. D., Keum, B. T., Cuccolo, K., Gosnell, C. L., Kagialis, A., Hawkins, G., Ogba, K. T. U., Farahani, H., … Moussa Rogers, M. (2023). Personal need for structure as a protective factor on beliefs and coping with COVID-19: A crowd-sourced multicultural exploration. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 17*(10), e12797. https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12797
>
> Wilkinson, W. W., & Berry, S. D. (2020). Together they are Troy and Chase: Who supports demonetization of gay content on YouTube? *Psychology of Popular Media*, *9*(2), 224-235. https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000228
>
> Wilkinson, W. W., Berry, S. D., DuBar, L., & Garner, Z. (2020). Throwing shade at Cyrus: Willingness to censor teen homosexuality in Disney's "Andi Mack." *Journal of Homosexuality, 67*(14), 2050-2070. https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2019.1618648
>
> Berry, S. D., McGowen, M. L., & Davis, S. J. (2019). A brief review of addictive tendencies related to technology use: Conceptualization, treatment, and future directions. *IAFOR Journal of Psychology & the Behavioral Sciences*, *5*(1), 27-42. https://doi.org/10.22492/ijpbs.5.1.03