

PERSONALITY AND THE NEWS: THE FIVE-FACTOR MODEL AND HEADLINE  
PREFERENCES

by

Mila Curry

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## ABSTRACT

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The current study examines the relationship between the Five-Factor Model of Personality and preferences for news headlines. This is an online study in which participants were presented two headlines and were asked to choose one of them. Next, participants were asked to fill out a personality inventory. In the results we examine whether certain personality types are more likely to read certain news stories. Authors created five news headline domains, which were intended to map onto the Five-Factor Model of Personality. As hypothesized, Openness to Experience significantly ( $p < .05$ ) predicted selection of items within the news headline domain entitled Culture. The study also found that personality can be predicted from news headline selection.

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The Five-Factor Model of Personality has been used by psychologists for decades to obtain a better understanding of individuals. Naturally, people like to learn about their own personalities. Sometimes, a personality test can reveal something about a person that initially was unknown. These tests have been used in numerous research experiments to determine the relationship that exists between personality and such things as job performance, leadership skills, and personality disorders. We propose that the five-factor model can be used to predict news headline preferences.

News headlines are created to grasp a reader's attention, but not all headlines are successful at accomplishing this feat. It is apparent that as news migrates from print to online media, the salience of creating attention-getting headlines increases. When surfing the web, one might click on a particular headline that seems interesting, yet ignore all others. Therefore, we pose the question: What are the underlying factors that contribute to our preferences for certain types of news over others? There are many reasons for these preferences. One of the major determinants of headline selection is personality. Who we are influences what we do. The choices we make are reflective of the people we are. Attitudes also largely influence a person's perceptions of and interest in a particular headline.

The relationship between the five-factor model and generalized prejudice has been previously researched. In the current study, we would like to determine these relationships in light of the relationships shared by the five-factor model and news preferences.

### *Social Impact Theory*

Social impact theory, created by Bibb Latané, states that a person's response to social influence increases with strength, immediacy, and number (Brown, 1986). Immediacy is defined as proximity in space and time as well as the absence of intervening barriers or filters. Similarly, Latané believes the three things that make a newspaper story interesting are the strength of the story, how close the story is to home (immediacy), and the number of people involved (Brown, 1986). Latané also believes that psychological immediacy dominates newspaper media (Brown, 1986). Social impact theory implies that the impact a story will have on a reader is partially dependent upon the location of the story relative to the reader. Strength and immediacy are also considered in this theory, but for the purposes of the current study we will focus on the distance hypothesis.

What other factors might determine why a person chooses to read a particular headline? Personality is a partial answer to this question. We choose to read certain types of news, watch certain television shows, read certain books, and indulge in other forms of media at least in part because of the personality characteristics we exhibit (Kraaykamp & Eijck, 2005).

### *Five-Factor Model Personality of Personality and News Headline Domains*

The Five-Factor Model of Personality, often referred to as “the five factors,” consists of five broad domains or dimensions of personality: *Openness to Experience*, *Conscientiousness*, *Extraversion*, *Agreeableness*, and *Neuroticism*, which are based on factor analytic research (Costa & McCrae, 1992). There are two different models of



personality that exist. One is Goldberg's Big Five (1990), the other is Costa and McCrae's Five-Factor Model of Personality (1992); the latter is utilized in this study. The model discussed in this study refers to the five personality domains that are operationally defined in the *Revised NEO Personality Inventory* (NEO PI-R) by Costa and McCrae (1992). The NEO PI-R is a concise measure of the five major factors or domains of personality (Costa & McCrae, 1992). In creating the five-factor model personality traits, McCrae and Costa used forty bipolar adjective scales selected by Goldberg (1990) to assess the Big Five personality traits; they then added another forty to represent each of the five dimensions as they interpreted them (Pervin, 1990). This also included the variables related to Openness to Experience, a factor which was created by McCrae and Costa and does not correspond with Goldberg's Big Five (Pervin, 1990).

In the current study, we created five news headline domains which are intended to be analogous to the five-factor personality traits. The corresponding personality traits and domains (shown in **bold**) appear in Tables 1-5, in addition to scales and *subscales* (shown in *italics*). The five-factor model personality traits appear in parentheses behind each of the five news headline domains.

Three of the scales for Culture, a domain that is most analogous to the Openness to Experience (denoted Openness in the following) personality trait are Arts, Travel, and World (see Table 1). Arts are reminiscent of the *Aesthetics* facet of Openness to Experience, as outlined in the NEO PI-R, whereas Travel and World are relevant within the context of the *Ideas* facet as well as the *Actions* and *Values* facets (Costa & McCrae, 1992). The *Ideas* facet corresponds to intellectual curiosity, open-mindedness, and "a willingness to consider new, perhaps unconventional ideas" (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

The Openness facet called *Actions* is described as “the willingness to try different activities, go new places, or eat unusual foods” and *Values* is “the readiness to reexamine social, political, and religious values” (Costa & McCrae, 1992). The fourth scale for Culture is World-Arab; this scale was added to determine if people high in Openness are also willing to choose news headlines about Arabs or Arab countries or regions.

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Table 1  
News headline domain: Culture

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Category	k	Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	$r_{ij}$
<b>Culture (Openness to Experience)</b>	60	.84	.08
Arts	15	.71	.14
Travel	15	.66	.11
World	15	.59	.09
World-Arab	15	.80	.21

---

The Human Interest domain is analogous to the Agreeableness personality trait. The scales for Human Interest include: 1) Tenderness, with subscales *Animals* and *Babies*, 2) Benevolence, with subscales *Altruism* and *Charity*, and 3) Survival (see Table 2). *Altruism* is one of the facets of Agreeableness, so its inclusion is apparent and charity is undeniably linked to altruism. The *Animals* and *Babies* subscales were included because of the *Tender-Mindedness* facet of Agreeableness. Survival stories are compelling and are associated with both the *Altruism* and *Tender-Mindedness* facets (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

Table 2  
News headline domain: Agreeableness

Category	k	Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	$r_{ij}$
<b>Human Interest (Agreeableness)</b>	45	.67	.04
Tenderness	15	.66	.11
<i>Animals</i>	10	.71	.20
<i>Babies</i>	5	.39	.11
Benevolence	15	.26	.02
<i>Altruism</i>	5	.05	.01
<i>Charity</i>	10	.36	.05
Survival	15	.58	.08

Conscientiousness is a personality trait with the following facets: *Competence*, *Order*, *Dutifulness*, *Achievement Striving*, *Self-Discipline*, and *Deliberation*. All of these facets are relevant to the Business scale and thus, both the *Career* and *Finance* subscales also. Therefore, people who are high in Conscientiousness are likely serious about their career or finances. Justice is another scale we assigned to this trait because of the *Dutifulness* facet, which indicates people high in Conscientiousness adhere strictly to their moral obligations. Finally, Health was included as a scale (see Table 3) because of the *Order* facet, which is concerned with neatness and cleanliness because many of the Health items are concerning tips for maintaining or improving health (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

Table 3  
News headline domain: Concern

Category	k	Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	$r_{ij}$
<b>Concern (Conscientiousness)</b>	45	.59	.03
Health	15	.48	.06
Business	15	.58	.08
<i>Career</i>	8	.29	.05
<i>Finance</i>	6	.61	.21
Justice	15	.71	.14

\* The business scale includes one item 'Employers must pay for safety gear' which was judged not to fit into either the career or the finance subscales.

Next is Excitement, whose scales include Gambling, Sensation-seeking, and Celebrity (see Table 4). Extraversion is the five-factor model personality trait associated with Excitement items. Gambling is relevant to the *Activity* facet of Extraversion because of the need to keep busy and in rapid tempo. Another facet that may be applicable to this category is *Gregariousness*, in that people who gamble excessively likely also gamble to fulfill their needs to be social. *Sensation-seeking* is congruous with the *Excitement-Seeking* facet (Costa & McCrae, 1992); sensation-seekers crave excitement and stimulation as well as bright colors and noisy environments. The Celebrity scale is included because of the *Gregariousness* and *Excitement-Seeking* facets. Celebrity names were included in the headlines of the *Celebrity* scale and eliminated from all other headlines in all other scales in order to target the personality trait of Extraversion.

Table 4  
News headline domain: Excitement

Category	k	Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	$r_{ij}$
<b>Excitement (Extraversion)</b>	45	.72	.05
Gambling	15	.54	.07
Sensation-Seeking	15	.52	.07
Celebrity	15	.77	.18

The last personality trait is Neuroticism, which was further divided into Crime, Disease / Pathology, and Anxiety scales (see Table 5). One of the facets of Neuroticism is *Anxiety*, which is also one of the scales. The *Anxiety* facet also has implications for the Crime scale. Moreover, Crime is included because of the *Vulnerability* facet, which leaves people high in Neuroticism helpless and panicked in emergency situations, such as a robbery (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Disease / Pathology scale items are included because of the *Anxiety* facet, which can be prompted by a fear of contracting an illness or disease.

Table 5  
News headline domain: Danger

Category	k	Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	$r_{ij}$
<b>Danger (Neuroticism)</b>	45	.61	.03
Crime	15	.70	.13
Disease / Pathology	15	.66	.11
Anxiety	15	.23	.02

*Prejudice, RWA, & SDO*

Prejudice is typically defined as “a judgment or opinion formed beforehand or without due examination” (as cited in Brown, 1995). Research conducted by Ekehammar and Akrami (2003, 2007) found the two best predictors of generalized prejudice to be Openness and Agreeableness, both producing higher correlations with prejudice as compared to the other five factors of personality. Also, another recent study by Jackson and Poulson (2005) found these relationships to exist. In addition, the Ekehammar and Akrami (2007) study explored the correlations of the five factors with sexism in order to compare the personality items with one example of generalized prejudice. They found that only Openness (-.32) and Agreeableness (-.27) showed a significant ( $p < .05$ ), negative correlation with sexism. They also found Extraversion to have a significantly negative correlation with generalized prejudice. However, this correlation was not as strong as the correlations among generalized prejudice and Openness or Agreeableness (Ekehammar & Akrami, 2007). In fact, previous research (Ekehammar & Akrami, 2003)

suggests that a significant correlation between Extraversion and generalized prejudice may not result. Neuroticism and Conscientiousness have been shown to have no effect on generalized prejudice in many studies (Ekehammar & Akrami 2003, 2007; Jackson & Poulsen, 2005; Ekehammar et al., 2004). However, McFarland (as cited in Ekehammar & Akrami, 2003) found these two traits to be significantly related to generalized prejudice. Based on a more substantial number of findings, it appears that no significant correlations will result among Neuroticism and generalized prejudice or Conscientiousness and generalized prejudice.

Right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) is defined as the covariation of three attitudinal clusters in a person: authoritarian submission, authoritarianism aggression, and conventionalism (Altemeyer, 1996). Thus, someone who is high in RWA submits to authority figures, is generally aggressive, and has a high degree of adherence to the social conventions that are perceived to be endorsed by society (Altemeyer, 1996). Right-wing authoritarianism has been shown to be highly correlated with Conscientiousness (Heaven & Bucci, 2001) and Extraversion (Lippa & Arad, 1999; Trapnell, 1994), whereas, Openness to Experience has been found to be negatively correlated with right-wing authoritarianism (Heaven & Bucci, 2001; Lippa & Arad, 1999).

Social dominance orientation (SDO) is defined as “a very general individual differences orientation expressing the value that people place on nonegalitarian and hierarchically structured relationships among social groups” (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). These social groups can be defined on the basis of gender, religion, social class, race, nationality, or ethnicity, and these are only a few examples among the many groups that potentially exist. In an earlier study, researchers found that one five-factor model trait

(Agreeableness) affected prejudice through SDO, whereas three personality traits (Extraversion, Conscientiousness, Openness to Experience) affected prejudice through RWA (Ekehammar et al., 2004). Meanwhile, Neuroticism had no effect at all. Thus, RWA and the traits of the Five-Factor Model of Personality seem to be more closely related to one another than SDO and the five factors. This study also concluded that SDO appears to be more closely related to prejudice than RWA. We used the Social Dominance Orientation scale to measure prejudice in the current study.

### *Social Categorization Theory*

An in-group is defined as “a group with which one feels a sense of solidarity or community of interests” (“In-group,” 2008). Conversely, an out-group is “a group that is distinct from one's own and so usually an object of hostility or dislike” (“Out-group,” 2008). Out-groups can be defined by their race, religion, or both (Brewer & Pierce, 2005). The concept of in-groups and out-groups is derived from the social categorization theory, which states that people place others into in-groups (“us”) and out-groups (“them”) (Bushman & Bonacci, 2004; Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994). As stated by the self-categorization theory, which is directly evolved from social categorization theory, the degree to which the differences between the in-group and out-groups are accentuated depends on the relative strength of the person's social identity compared to their personal identity (Hogg & Terry, 2002). Arabs have sometimes been considered an out-group in America, especially following the tragedy of September 11<sup>th</sup> (Oswald, 2005; Bushman & Bonacci, 2004; Reed & Aquino, 2003). The target out-group of interest in this study is people of Arab descent and in particular people of Iraqi descent. Since we are currently at



war with this particular out-group, the salience of determining American's perceptions of Iraqis are apparent and pertinent (Reed & Aquino, 2003).

Thus, headline selection can be attributed to distance, personality, or attitudes. It may also help us determine if in-group and out-group biases exist in headline choice. The salience of studying biases and prejudiced attitudes is apparent when they can result in hate crimes, especially violent ones.

### *Hate Crimes*

Following the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks, there was a staggering increase in hate crimes that were committed against Arabs and Muslims in the United States. Anti-Islamic incidents grew from 28 in the year 2000 to 481 in 2001; this is almost a 15-fold increase (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2000, 2001). In addition, actual crimes rose from 33 in the year 2000 to 546 in 2001. The aggregate incidents motivated by racial prejudice were 44.9% in 2001. Also, incidents based on ethnicity or national origin biases were 21.6% and those incidents based on religious bias were 18.8% (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2001). As of 2004, there had been approximately 532 attacks against Muslims, Sikhs or Arabs according to FBI director Robert Mueller, who also stated that all of which were being investigated ("FBI Oversight," 2004). In the current study, we do not make a clear distinction between Arabs or Muslims because the hate crimes were reported as the same by the FBI. It seems that the FBI categorized hate crimes into various types (e.g., racial, ethnic, or religious) based on the intent of the perpetrator rather than the actual identity of the victim (Kaplan, 2006). Thus, Sikhs, who are not of the Islamic religion, had hate crimes committed against them because they were believed

to be Muslim were included in the FBI statistics as anti-Muslim hate crimes (Kaplan, 2006). Similarly, many people of Indian or Hispanic descent had hate crimes committed against them post-9/11 because they were mistaken to be Arab and thus, were subject to misdirected hate crimes (Iyer, 2001; Ibish & Stewart, 2003; Perry, 2003). Kaplan (2006) explains the ambiguity that exists in the minds of many Americans as to the distinctions among Arabs, Middle Easterners, Sikhs, and Muslims.

In the days after September 11, it appeared that, for the lawless few, anyone looking vaguely “Middle Eastern” might be a convenient target for [their] anger. Here, the term “vaguely Middle Eastern” is used quite deliberately. For many Americans, there is genuine confusion over what a Muslim might look like. Could it be a stereotypical Arab sheikh in flowing robes or a turbaned Turk? Is an “Arab” black or white? [...] Or are the terms Middle Eastern, Arab, and terrorist synonymous? (Kaplan, 2006).

The number of reported hate crime incidents rapidly decreased in the year following the attacks, from 451 incidents in 2001 to 155 incidents in 2002 (Kaplan, 2006). In a recent study, Kaplan (2006) discusses the actions taken by the White House and U.S. Justice Department to prevent the continuance of anti-Muslim violence that was occurring following the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks. He also describes how the grassroots outreach to Muslims from churches, schools, radio and television shows enabled the American public to be more aware of this minority group. Thus, public outreach served as another means to reduce the incidence of hate crimes directed toward Arabs and Muslims, or those perceived to be either. However, what Kaplan believed to be the primary reason for the sharp decline in hate crimes from the year 2001 to 2002 was the leadership displayed by President George W. Bush. The president made a speech at

the Washington Islamic Center in the first week following the anti-Muslim attacks and it was there he stated:

“the face of terror is not the true faith of Islam . . . Islam is peace . . . [women who cover their heads should not fear leaving their homes] . . . That’s not the America I know. That should not and that will not stand in America.” (as cited by Kaplan, 2006).

The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee also recognized this act by President Bush declaring his statements, as well as those of Secretary Colin Powell, as one of only four “instances of support, compassion, and reassurance for Arab Americans” (Ibish & Stewart, 2003). Despite the considerable reduction in hate crimes from the year 2001 to 2002, it should still be acknowledged that Anti-Arab prejudice is still present in today’s society.

Jingoistic racism is “spontaneous, reactive, and episodic” (Abraham, 1994). It typically occurs during heightened international tensions, such as “hijackings, hostage takings, and military conflict” (Abraham, 1994). The U.S. news media reacts immediately to such crises, especially when Americans are involved. The hate crimes that occurred in the wake of the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks are one example of Jingoistic racism.

Anti-Arab racism exists in the contemporary society of the United States. Although the magnitude of violent acts of racism directed toward Arabs is not as strong as it is for African-Americans and other minority groups, it is nonetheless problematic (Abraham, 1994). In addition, even before September 11<sup>th</sup>, mainstream society generally tolerated such acts directed toward Arabs. Media hype, including stories printed in the headlines of a newspaper, can sometimes contribute to prejudice, racism, and even violent attacks against Arabs (Abraham, 1994).

### *Personality and the News*

Preferences for certain types of news can be attributed to the distance between the story and the reader, the personality of the reader or attitudes and values held by the reader. Another determinant of the impact of a news story on a reader is the role of the consumer in selecting media. A person may have an active role in choosing media or they can passively receive media presented to them. There are various forms of media including television, radio, books, magazines, and newspapers.

Research conducted to determine the relationship between the Five-Factor Model of Personality and media often cite the *uses-and-gratifications paradigm*, which assumes that media users play an active role in mass media selection, in order to fulfill specific needs (Eighmey & McCord, 1998). A recent study by Kraaykamp and Eijck (2005) looked at the effects of the five-factor model personality traits on media preferences and cultural participation. Television was the medium examined in this study. Cultural participation included book reading and attending museums and concerts. Kraaykamp and Eijck (2005) affirmed that the uses-and-gratifications paradigm can easily be combined with the personality characteristics approach to determine media preferences. With the exception of Extraversion, all of the five-factor model personality traits were significantly associated with preferences for media and cultural participation. Openness to Experience was found to be the most significant predictor of media preferences and cultural participation. Openness exhibited a negative correlation with reading romantic novels and preference for soap television programs. The authors argued that these were the two least challenging items in their study. Openness to Experience is associated with

intellect, thus these items may not have adequately challenged participants high in this trait.

Agreeableness, referred to as “friendliness” in the study, was the second best predictor of media preferences and cultural participation (Kraaykamp & Eijck, 2005). There was a positive effect on romantic novels and soap television series, whereas there were negative effects on reading literary novels or books in a foreign language, visiting art museums, and preferring cultural programs. It seems that participants high in Agreeableness were more likely to partake in simple, noncomplex activities.

Conscientiousness displayed a negative relationship between reading literary and suspense novels and visiting pop concerts (Kraaykamp & Eijck, 2005). The only positive effect was for romantic novels. The authors noted that the impact of this trait was not very large. Conscientiousness is concerned with self-discipline, order, and dutifulness; this may be an explanation for the negative relationship exhibited in this study.

Finally, “emotional stability”, which for the purposes of our study we will call Neuroticism, showed negative effects on reading of romantic novels and the preference for soap series and erotic television programs. However, there was a significant relationship between Neuroticism and popular television programs (Kraaykamp & Eijck, 2005). People high in Neuroticism are prone to anxiety. Perhaps that is why they are satisfied with watching status quo television.

Research suggests high sensation-seekers prefer to watch music videos, daytime talk shows, documentaries, stand-up comedy programs, and animated cartoons (Potts, Dedmon, & Halford, 1996). In 1994, Zuckerman revised his definition of the sensation-seeking personality trait as “the *seeking* of varied, novel, complex, and *intense* sensations

and experiences, and the willingness to take physical, social, *legal* and *financial* risks for the sake of such experiences” (Zuckerman, 1994). *Sensation-seeking* is similar to the *Excitement-seeking* facet of the Extraversion personality trait. Thus, people high in Extraversion likely read news headlines related to physical risks, such as stories about intense athletic activities. The preference for watching music television can be attributed to the up-tempo rock music and sexual images displayed during such music videos. Talk shows often exhibit people who live unusual lifestyles. Audience participation is encouraged, which often results in confrontation and sometimes violent outbursts. Interest in comedic programs, such as stand-up comedy might be due to sexual humor and interest in animated cartoons often lies in their nonsensical nature.

### *Hypotheses*

In the present study we consider hypotheses concerning relations between personality and news preferences. First, we focus on the distance variable of the social impact theory proposed by Latané (Brown, 1986). We predict an overall effect for distance corresponding to the news headlines. In other words, headlines that do not indicate location will be selected more often than headlines that do, such as items from the World and World-Arab domains.

Second, we expect people who score high in Openness to Experience to be more likely to choose news headlines regarding occurrences abroad. Third and more specifically, we predict that people high in Openness will be more likely to select World-Arab items than people low in Openness. Fourth, we also predict that there will be a strong, positive correlation between World-Arab items and Agreeableness.

We expect all five factors to be correlated with each of the scales and subscales indicated in Tables 1-5. Thus our fifth hypothesis is that we expect Openness to Experience to correlate with headlines related to arts, travel, and news from other, non-Arab, countries and regions around the world. Sixth, we anticipate Agreeableness to be highly correlated with news headlines regarding tenderness, benevolence, and survival, including stories about babies, animals, charity, and altruism. Seventh, a high correlation between Conscientiousness and stories relating to health, careers, finance, and justice is expected. Eighth, we hypothesize that Extraversion will exhibit high correlations with news headlines regarding celebrities, gambling, and sensation-seeking. Ninth, Neuroticism is predicted to be highly correlated with stories about crime, disease or pathology, and anxiety.

## Method

### *Overview of Study*

The current study is intended to determine if news preferences can be predicted based on personality. Participants completed an online survey in which they were presented pairs of news headlines and were asked to choose one of them. The headlines were previously coded so that there were equal numbers that corresponded to each of five domains we created that are intended to be analogous to the five-factor model personality traits. After completing the headlines portion of the survey, participants were asked a series of attitude questions. Some of the items in this portion of the survey were from the attitude toward Arab Americans scale (Lanning & Rosenberg, 2008), which was used to measure prejudice toward Arabs. The remaining items were taken from the social

dominance orientation (SDO) scale. The SDO items were used to measure generalized prejudice toward out-groups. Next, participants were asked to complete a personality inventory, which was used to distinguish between high scorers and low scorers for each of the five-factor model personality traits.

### *Participants*

A total of 158 subjects participated in this online study. One hundred and two participants were female and 43 were male, while 13 declined to state their gender. The modal age of participants was 30-39 years old (27%), the youngest were 19 or younger (20%) and the oldest 50 or older (17%). The majority of the participants (60) had at least some college (40%) education and 32 had obtained a Bachelor's degree (22%). Finally, the race, culture, or ethnic identification demographics included 108 White / European-American (72%), 17 Black / African-American (11%), three Asian / Asian-American (2%), four American Indian / Alaska Native (3%), two Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander (1%), 11 Hispanic / Latino (7%), and six Other/decline to state (4%). We included various answer choices for the ethnic identification demographics because we wanted to determine the number of Arab or Arab-American respondents. Thus, positive responses to Arab attitude questions could be assessed as reflective of either ethnic identification or personality. Participants were recruited via Google advertisements, which appear in Appendix A.



## *Materials*

*News Headlines Survey.* The majority of the 240 news headlines utilized in this study were compiled using online news sources. A large percentage of the headlines were obtained from MSNBC.com and Google News searches (see Appendix B). Other examples of online news sources used were USA Today, ABC News, and The Boston Globe. Another method we used to obtain news headlines was to search for the “top stories”, “most popular,” “most read,” “most emailed,” “most viewed,” and “most recommended” on various websites, however the majority such headlines came from USA Today (Appendix B).

The remaining headlines were created partially or entirely by the authors in order to target certain aspects of particular personality traits. News headlines were also frequently edited to adhere to several objectives, including our distance hypothesis, especially in relation to the Openness to Experience personality trait. If location was specified in a news headline, it was eliminated and the headline was edited accordingly. Also, due to our hypothesis regarding World-Arab items and the Openness to Experience personality trait, we eliminated headlines regarding both left- and right-wing politics. Inclusion of these items may cause biased results. In addition, all of the Iraq headlines (World-Arab items) are unrelated to the war. This is to avoid confounding effects, such as bias that may arise due to the negative feelings brought on by war, reducing the probability of the headline being chosen. Alternatively, another bias may result if participants choose the headline for the purpose of determining the current status of the United States in the war.

Location identifiers were edited out of headlines due to our distance hypothesis. The city, county, and state in which participants were located were unknown and thus, such location identifiers were eliminated in order to avoid confounding results. Biases could potentially arise as participants may select a headline based on the location of the story as opposed to the content of the story. We were only able to determine the country from which participants took the survey, determined by the internet protocol (IP) address of their computer. An IP address is essentially a computer address, which is unique to each computer and can be used to identify and communicate with other computers via a computer network. We used the IP addresses in this study to isolate participants from one another, while maintaining their anonymity. There were only four exceptions<sup>1</sup> to this location identifier rule: two headlines included famous sports event locations, one headline was in reference to a popular card game, and the other was a finance headline that mentioned the United States. These headlines were kept because they are all applicable to participants from various states and not just those cited within the headline. Although states were mentioned in these headlines, we expect participants will be more interested in the content of the headline than the location.

The Kentucky Derby is a famous horse race which takes place annually in Louisville, Kentucky; however with millions of people from across the nation betting on this race, we believe that people will not be biased by the mention of the state of Kentucky. Similarly, if participants select the news headline regarding Texas holdem, we predict they are more interested in the game of poker than in the state of Texas.

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<sup>1</sup> The four headlines that included location identifiers were: “Kentucky Derby field wide open”; “Knowing when to fold 'em: Tips for winning Texas holdem”; “Fastest lap ever recorded at Indianapolis”; “Global markets drop sharply amid U.S. fears.”

Motorsports fans we predict will select the headline with mention of Indianapolis for the same reason, because they are interested in the race not the city. Finally, the finance headline “Global markets drop sharply amid U.S. fears” is the only one to include the United States. Participants who choose this headline are likely more concerned about the global markets than the mention of the United States. Some headlines that included foreign countries (e.g., non-U.S. countries) or regions were necessary for our distance hypothesis in regards to the Openness to Experience personality trait.

Five news headline domains analogous to each of the Five-Factor Model personality traits were created and organized into a hierarchical model (see Tables 1-5). Three categories, which we will call scales, were created for each of these five domains with the exception of Culture, which has an additional scale entitled World-Arab that is pertinent to our central hypothesis. Some of the scales we created are similar to sections of a printed newspaper (e.g., Arts, Business, World), while others were named according to personality characteristics of the participant expected to select the headline (e.g., Sensation-Seeking, Anxiety, Altruism) (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Many of these categories were chosen based on the facets of each of the five factors as indicated by the NEO PI-R (1992). The domains and congruous scales described are all used to indicate high scorers on each of the five factors of personality.

Fifteen headlines were compiled and created for each of the three categories of each of the five factors (see Tables 1-5). Also, there were an additional 15 items for the World-Arab scale. The 240 headlines were presented in pairs of two, thus 120 headline pairs were compiled to create this news headlines survey. Using Microsoft Excel, we randomized the list of headlines and paired them. The headlines were coupled in such a

way that each item was paired with another item only once, each from a different domain, scale, and subscale.

There were 15 headlines we categorized as World-Arab (Tables 1-5), termed this merely for the sake of simplicity. These items pertained to various Arab countries and regions around the world, each of which we expected to have a high, positive correlation with the Openness to Experience personality trait. Items from the World category referenced regions or countries such as Mexico and Malaysia, none of whose populations included Arabs. The only exception was Sudan whose population is 39% Arab (Central Intelligence Agency, 2008). This headline reads, “Wildlife makes dramatic return to Sudan” and thus is not regarding Sudanese people. It is safe to assume that this item will not skew our results for the World category. The World-Arab category consists of countries that have an Arab population ranging from 23% (Dubai) to 98% (Jordan). The other headlines included the following Arab countries and/or Arabs: Iraq (75%-80%), Lebanon (95%), Syria (90.3%), Saudi Arabia (90%), and Kuwait (35%)<sup>2</sup>; each of these countries was selected because of the percentage of Arab inhabitants in each country (Central Intelligence Agency, 2008). The corresponding percentages are indicated in parentheses behind each country listed. Also, Palestinians, who are also considered to be Arabs, were mentioned in two headlines (“Palestine,” 2008). One headline describes Palestinians in a Lebanese refugee camp; the other places them at the Iraq-Syria border. Lebanon, Iraq, and Syria are all inhabited by Arabs as shown above. The headline “Five dead in gunfire at Fatah rally in Gaza” assumes Gaza is inhabited by Arabs as well and in particular Palestinian Arabs, as stated by the CIA World Factbook (“Palestine,” 2008).

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<sup>2</sup> The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has a population of 19% Emirati and 23% “other Arab and Iranian,” Dubai is one of the seven emirates in the UAE. Kuwait was cited as having 45% Kuwaiti and 35% “other Arab” (Central Intelligence Agency, 2008).

The news headlines survey was then entered onto a website ([www.personalitystudy.org/survey](http://www.personalitystudy.org/survey)) using UCCASS, a PHP based survey script (Unit Command Climate Assessment and Survey System, 2004), which was used to create our entire survey. Thus, in addition to the news headlines, the demographics questions, attitudes items, and personality items were all entered onto UCCASS. A program called PHP was used to make additional modifications to the system to allow tailored feedback of respondents. The consent form presented to participants at the beginning of the study was developed using Microsoft FrontPage. See Appendix B for complete copy of the news headlines survey.

*Personality Survey.* The personality inventory items were taken from the International Personality Item Pool, which is a website “intended to provide rapid access to measures of individual differences, all in the public domain, to be developed conjointly among scientists worldwide” (Goldberg et al., 2006). The items were answered on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree). There were also 120 items total for this portion of the survey. A few examples of personality items include, “Love to daydream,” “Trust what people say,” and “Handle tasks smoothly” (Goldberg et al., 2006).

*Attitudes Questionnaire.* The attitudes questionnaire was a compilation of items obtained from the social dominance orientation (SDO) scale (Pratto et al., 1994) and a measure of attitudes regarding equality toward Arabs and Muslims (Lanning & Rosenberg, 2008). These items were also presented on 5-point Likert scales. Some

examples of an attitudes item from the SDO are “Some groups of people are simply not the equals of others,” “Some people are just more worthy than others,” and “This country would be better off if we cared less about how equal all people were” (Pratto et al., 1994). The attitudes toward Arab Americans scale included items such as: “People of the Muslim religion tend to be fanatical,” “Muslims value peace and love,” “When it comes down to it, each American life means more than the lives of a dozen Arabs” (Lanning & Rosenberg, 2008). See Appendix C for the attitudes questionnaire items.

### *Procedure*

Participants first were asked to agree to the consent form. The following screen they were presented was a demographics questionnaire. Responses on this page were not mandatory. Next, they were presented the news headlines portion of the survey. Two headlines were displayed on the computer screen and participants were asked to choose one of them. The text above each headline simply read: “For each pair of headlines, please select the news headline you would be more likely to read.” Participants were forced to answer each question before proceeding to the next page of the survey; this was also true for the attitudes questionnaire and the personality inventory.

Next, participants were presented the attitudes questionnaire. The answer responses were presented on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree). A screenshot is exhibited in Figure 1 to illustrate this.

Figure 1. Attitudes questionnaire sample screenshot.

Your beliefs

For each phrase, please select the button which most accurately describes what you believe.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
People who are mentally retarded do have the right to have children.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would be embarrassed to drive a big vehicle like a "Hummer."	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
America should never monitor the daily activities of its citizens.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe in increased social equality.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People who are good at one thing tend to be good at most other things as well.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is never right for the government to read a person's mail or email.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In elections, ballots should be available to all people in their native languages.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Finally, participants completed the personality inventory. After completing this portion of the survey, participants were given feedback on their personality based on the Five-Factor Model of personality. For example one of the responses was, “With respect to the trait of Agreeableness you appear: ‘determined, competitive skeptical, and proud. You tend to express your anger directly.’” Comparable responses were given for each of the remaining four factors of personality. Each participant was given individual feedback with respect to each of the five factors of personality (see Appendix D for sample screenshot and list of possible feedback responses).

The last page participants were shown included an overview of the study, including the research objectives, and a comments section where participants had the option to discuss their reactions to the content of the survey, the feedback they received, and the program itself (e.g., bugs or problems encountered). A sample of the overview and comments page appears in Appendix E.

## Results

### *News Headline Selection*

The forced-choice nature of the survey results in a necessary pairing of the most-popular and least-popular headlines. The most popular headlines were more heterogeneous, whereas the least popular headlines were more homogeneous and many loaded on the Excitement domain. The *least* commonly selected items were in the Excitement domain, or more specifically items from the Gambling scale, which were selected between 8 and 17% of the time. The most commonly selected items appear to be more heterogeneous. The two most frequently chosen items were *Working smarter, not harder: Hints from the experts* and *Police warn shoppers about purse, package thefts*. Each of these items was chosen by 92% of participants. The first appeared in the Concern domain under the Business scale and the *Finance* subscale. The second item loaded on the Crime scale of the Danger domain. The least frequently chosen items were necessarily the headlines that were paired with the two statements above, that is, *Costa Rican hotel industry takes a dive* (measuring Culture/Travel, and paired with “Working smarter”) and *New casino ribbon-cutting today* (Excitement/Gambling, paired with “Police warn shoppers”).

When we look at pairings of the items, the most commonly selected headlines were often paired with Excitement headlines. There is a possibility that this is reflective of a demand characteristic. In other words, respondents felt compelled to reject such items because they believed these were not the "right answer." Participants were cognizant of the fact that they were taking a personality study and were less likely to



choose the headline *Fans get an early preview of Jay-Z's 'Gangster'* than *Mystery fever triggers panic*.

### *Inter-item Reliability*

The 240 headlines were categorized into a hierarchical arrangement starting with the five factors (e.g., Human Interest); each was partitioned into three scales (e.g., Tenderness, Benevolence, Survival) (see Tables 1-5). Three of the scales were further divided into subscales (e.g., the Tenderness scale includes *Animals* and *Babies*) and appear in *italics* in Tables 2 and 3.

We examined the internal consistencies of the domains, scales, and subscales using Cronbach's alpha (Tables 1-5). The results indicate that headline preferences are coherent. The 60 items in the Culture domain exhibited the highest internal consistency ( $\alpha = .84$ ). As can be seen in Tables 1-5, these internal consistencies reflect scale length and not necessarily a high level of inter-item correlation. For example, the average inter-item correlation for Culture ( $r_{ij} = .08$ ) indicates that these items are only weakly correlated with one another (Table 1). However, our measures are still reliable because of the large number of items we used in each domain.

The remaining domains each consisted of 45 items (Tables 2-5). The remaining domains, Excitement domain ( $\alpha = .72$ ), Human Interest (.67), Danger (.61), and Concern (.59), all had somewhat lower alpha levels.

At the next level down in the hierarchy, some scales were more internally consistent than others, but all scales consist of 15 items (Tables 1-5). Scales of items measuring Anxiety and Benevolence were less cohesive, whereas World-Arab and Celebrity scales were more internally consistent. The highest alpha for the scales was

World-Arab ( $\alpha = .80$ ). The next highest alpha was that of the scale Celebrity (.77) followed by Justice (.71) and Arts (.71). The lowest alphas were those for Anxiety (.23), Benevolence (.26), and Health (.48).

### *Inter-rater Reliability*

Cohen's Kappa was calculated to be .80 for the 240 headlines and thus, raters were in high agreement (see Table 6).

Table 6  
Inter-rater Reliability for News Headline Domains

		Rater 2					
		U	H	C	E	D	Total
Rater 1	Culture (U)	52	0	2	2	4	60
	Human Interest (H)	1	43	1	0	0	45
	Concern (C)	0	3	38	0	4	45
	Excitement (E)	5	0	2	37	0	44
	Danger (D)	1	4	9	0	31	45

*Note.* N = 44 for Excitement because Rater 2 did not respond to one of the items. The item was "Kentucky Derby field wide open."

The Human Interest domain displays the most agreement between raters, with a concordance rate of 95.6%. The Culture (86.7%) and Concern (84.4%) domains also display high agreement between raters. Forty-three of the items in the Human Interest domain were correctly identified, as were 52 items in the Culture domain and 38 in the Concern domain (Table 6).

Using the categories of rater one as a criterion, the lowest agreement between raters occurred for the Danger domain. Nine headlines of these headlines were incorrectly identified as Concern items. Danger was also confused with Human Interest, resulting in four disagreements. In addition, five Excitement headlines were incorrectly identified as Culture items. Thus, there was less concordance between Danger and Concern items, Danger and Human Interest items, and Excitement and Culture items.

#### *Correlations Among News Headline Domains*

In order to examine the extent to which the domains were independent, we examined correlations among these measures. The results are displayed in Table 7.

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Table 7  
Correlations Among News Headline Domains

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Five News Headline Domains					
	U	H	C	E	D
Culture (U)	---	-.39	-.47	-.35	-.42
Human Interest (H)	-.39	---	-.20	-.14	-.08
Concern (C)	-.47	-.20	---	-.12	.16
Excitement (E)	-.35	-.14	-.12	---	-.26
Danger (D)	-.42	-.08	.16	-.26	---

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Because of the forced choice format of the headlines, the expected correlation between these measures is negative. The correlations between the 45 items in each of the news headline domains are expected to be approximately -.23, with the exception of the Culture domain. The expected approximate correlation between the 60 news headline

items in the Culture domain is -.31, due to the larger number of items in this domain. The only positive correlation exists between the Concern and Danger headline domains (.16) and thus, differ the most from our expected correlation (-.23). Another correlation that differs greatly from our expected correlation is the correlation between Human Interest and Danger (-.08). Therefore, participants who selected Concern items often were also likely to select Danger items. There was also a slight tendency for individuals choosing Culture items to be particularly unlikely to choose headlines from the Concern ( $r = -.47$ ) or Danger (-.42) domain.

*Correlations Between Personality Traits and News Headline Domains*

We examined the correlations between the Big Five personality traits and the five news headline domains to determine which have the strongest relationships, for results see Table 8.

Table 8  
Correlations Between Personality (Big Five) and News Headline Domains

News Headline Domain	<u>Big Five Traits</u>				
	Pearson Correlations				
	O	A	C	E	N
Culture	<b>.32</b>	<b>.27</b>	<b>.28</b>	-.16	-.11
Human Interest	.00	.2	-.01	-.2	.11
Concern	<b>-.39</b>	-.2	-.08	<b>.34</b>	-.19
Excitement	-.15	<b>-.36</b>	-.14	.07	.36
Danger	.02	-.05	<b>-.27</b>	.05	-.21

*Note:* Correlations in **bold** are significant at  $p < .05$  at least,  $N = 59$ . Big Five Traits abbreviations: O is Openness, A is Agreeableness, C is Conscientiousness, E is Extraversion, and N is Neuroticism.

The strongest significant correlation was between Openness to Experience and Concern (-.39) (Table 8). Thus, as signified by the negative correlation, people high in Openness to Experience chose Concern items significantly less than items from any other headline domain. The next highest correlations were exhibited by Excitement and with both Agreeableness (-.36) and Neuroticism (.36). Therefore, people high in Agreeableness were significantly less likely to select headlines from the Excitement domain, whereas the opposite effect occurred for people high in Neuroticism. Another significant, positive correlation existed between Extraversion and Concern (.34). Also, as was originally hypothesized, people high in Openness were significantly more likely to select news headlines from the Culture domain (.32). Individuals high in Conscientiousness (.28) and Agreeableness (.27) were also more likely to select Culture items. Finally, those high in Conscientiousness were less likely to select news headlines from the Danger domain (-.27).

#### *Multiple Regression Analyses*

We conducted a multiple regression analysis (MRA) to examine which of the Big Five factors were significant predictors of news headline preferences (Table 9).

Table 9  
Multiple Regression Analyses for Predicting News Headline Preferences From the Five Factor Model of Personality

<u>Headline Domains</u>	<u>Big Five Traits (Predictors)</u>					Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>
	Standardized regression ( $\beta$ ) coefficients					
	O	A	C	E	N	
Culture (U)	.26	-.01	.26	-.25	-.20	<b>.14</b>
Human Interest (H)	-.08	.24	-.08	-.11	.06	-.01
Concern (C)	-.35	.01	-.11	.25	-.07	<b>.17</b>
Excitement (E)	-.04	-.22	.02	.27	.48	<b>.21</b>
Danger (D)	.01	.02	-.33	-.08	-.31	.07

*Note:* Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> totals in **bold** are significant at  $p < .05$ ,  $N = 59$ . The abbreviations in parentheses (e.g., Culture is denoted as U) are also used in Table 10. The predictors of this table are the abbreviations for the Big Five (e.g., Openness to Experience is denoted as O).

The results show that the Big Five personality traits best predicted the selection of Excitement [ $F(5, 53) = 4.04, p < .01$ ] headlines, followed by Concern [ $F(5, 53) = 3.41, p < .01$ ] and Culture [ $F(5, 53) = 2.93, p < .05$ ]. Human Interest and Danger domains were not significantly predicted by personality. Twenty-one percent of the variance in Excitement, 17% of the variance in Concern, and 14% of the variance in Culture headlines can be predicted by personality.

We also conducted a multiple regression analysis to determine which of the five news headline domains were the best predictors of personality (Big Five).

Table 10  
Multiple Regression Analyses for Predicting Personality (Big Five) From the Five  
Headline Domains

	<u>News Headline Domains (Predictors)</u>					Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>
	Standardized regression ( $\beta$ ) coefficients					
	U	H	C	E	D	
<u>Big Five Traits</u>						
Openness (O)	-.46	-.42	-.71	-.49	-.18	<b>.13</b>
Agreeableness (A)	1.12	.85	.50	.31	.26	<b>.19</b>
Conscientiousness (C)	1.15	.74	.63	.49	.13	.09
Extraversion (E)	-.72	-.59	-.12	-.38	-.23	.07
Neuroticism (N)	-.33	-.05	-.33	.12	-.24	<b>.11</b>

*Note:* Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> totals in **bold** are significant at  $p < .05$  at least,  $N = 59$ . The abbreviations in parentheses (e.g., Openness is denoted as O) are also used in Table 9. The predictors of this table are the abbreviations for the five headline domains (e.g., Culture is denoted as U).

The adjusted R<sup>2</sup> for Agreeableness (.19) was significant [ $F(5, 53) = 3.65, p < .01$ ] (see Table 10). Both Openness (R<sup>2</sup> = .13) and Neuroticism (R<sup>2</sup> = .11) also exhibited significant ( $p < .05$ ) adjusted R<sup>2</sup> totals. Nineteen percent of the variance in Agreeableness, 13% of the variance in Openness, and 11% of the variance in Neuroticism can be predicted by news headline domains. Thus, the five headline domains best predicted Agreeableness, Openness, and Neuroticism, respectively.

## Discussion

While there is an abundance of research regarding the five-factor model, there is a dearth of research on its relationship to the news. The current study examines this relationship at the broadest level using the five-factor model domains. In addition, we

focused on the Openness to Experience personality trait and the distance hypothesis set forth in the social impact theory (Brown, 1986).

As predicted, there was a main effect for distance in that news headlines from the Culture domain were selected less often than the other five-factor model personality traits, with the only exception being the Excitement domain. The headlines from the Excitement domain were selected less often than any other headline domain. As stated previously, this may be reflective of a demand characteristic in that people are less likely to select items such as *Take kite surfing lessons and get ready for competition* because they know that these items are likely to be perceived as trivial in comparison to *Spreading deserts threaten world food supply*.

The strongest correlation between the five-factor model and news headline domains was exhibited by Openness to Experience and Concern ( $r = -.39$ ). The negative relationship signifies that people low in Openness to Experience were more likely to choose news headlines regarding health, business, or justice. This result may be related to the idea that low scorers in Openness “tend to be conventional in behavior and conservative in outlook, they prefer the familiar to the novel, and their emotional responses are somewhat muted” (Costa & McCrae, 1992). This is reminiscent of characteristics exhibited by high scorers of the Conscientiousness domain who are competent, orderly, dutiful, achievement-striving, self-disciplined, and that have the tendency to think carefully before acting (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

As predicted, people high in Openness to Experience were significantly more likely to select news headlines from the Culture domain. In addition, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness also exhibited a significant correlation with Culture. We hypothesized



that people high in Agreeableness would select Culture headlines based on the prejudice studies of Ekahammar and Akrami (2003, 2007), which showed that there is a significant negative correlation between Agreeableness and prejudice. Our results suggest that people who are open, agreeable, and conscientious will be more likely to read news stories regarding arts, travel, and the world, even those which include Arabs or Arab countries or regions. This might also be attributable to the attitudes held by these participants; however, this is only speculative and based on findings from other researchers (Ekehammar & Akrami, 2003, 2007).

Finally, it appears that news preferences can be predicted by personality. The news headline domains that were best predicted by personality were Excitement (adjusted  $R^2 = .21$ ), Concern (.17), and Culture (.14). Headline preferences can, at least in part, be attributed our personality. Who we are does affect the type of news we read.

While these findings are interesting, what is even more intriguing is to find that we can predict personality based on their headline choice. Agreeableness ( $R^2 = .19$ ), Openness (.13), and Neuroticism (.11), respectively, were best predicted by headline selection. Thus, we can predict with a certain degree of accuracy for each trait, the personality of an individual with only the knowledge of what headlines they prefer.

### *Limitations*

Considering that this is an online study, we have only a small sample size which introduces a higher risk for error. Large sample sizes are more representative of the general population. With a large sample, we would be more likely to find statistically significant results. Thus, our small data set allows for more error, thereby making it less

representative and less likely to produce significant results. Future research should consider using a larger sample size.

The length of the survey may have caused the high attrition rate in our sample. Participants first responded to 120 news headline questions, followed by a 255 item attitudes questionnaire, and then 120 personality questions. This would take a considerable amount of time to complete and because the only compensation provided was feedback on their own personality, some may have decided the costs outweighed the benefits and dropped out early. A shortened version of this study may be one method to increase sample size and reduce attrition.

Some of our rationally developed measures of news headlines are not internally consistent, such as altruism ( $\alpha = .05$ ), a subscale of Benevolence (.26). These low alphas effectively limit the reliability of our measures and place a ceiling on validities.

Initially, we had intended on using the Internet Protocol (IP) addresses to determine the location of the participant. Although we collected the IP addresses, we were not able to sort them or determine from which countries participants were taking the survey. Thus, there may be some confounding effects if participants from a particular country or region selected news headlines with mention of that region (e.g., World or World-Arab items). We predicted people high in Openness to Experience would select news headlines from the World or World-Arab scales. Without the IP addresses, we cannot know what the rationale was behind selecting a World or World-Arab item. In a similar prior study, participation by subjects abroad, as determined by the IP addresses, was minimal (Lanning & Rosenberg, 2008). The study found that only 1% of survey responses were from foreign countries (Canada and India), thus it is likely that there were

few, if any, subjects from abroad who participated in the current study (Lanning & Rosenberg, 2008).

### *Future Research*

The current study only focuses on the broadest measures of personality—the five-factor model. Given the sample size, we decided to focus only on the personality domains. Future studies might want to measure the relationship between news preferences and the five-factor model facets as well as broad factors, since the facets have been shown to exhibit stronger correlations with generalized prejudice, for instance, than the correlations between generalized prejudice and the broad factors (Ekehammar & Akrami, 2007). By correlating the news headlines and the facets of the five factor model, the predictive accuracy of the Five Factor Model of Personality is expected to increase, thereby improving our understanding of the relationship between personality and news headline preferences (Ekehammar & Akrami, 2007).

Also, as mentioned earlier, a larger sample size may result if the length of the survey is shortened. A larger sample is a more representative sample, which will likely produce more significant values. In addition, improving the internal consistencies of the measures used is also expected to increase the number of significant values.

In conclusion, the current study provides valuable insight into the relationship between personality and news preferences. The relationship between the two is essentially reciprocal; we can predict news preferences from personality and personality from news headline selection.

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## Appendix A

### Sample Google Advertisement

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## Appendix B

### News Headlines Survey

1. Endangered duck gives birth in captivity
2. Mei Lan, panda cub, turns 1
3. Golden retriever nurses stray kitten
4. Pet owners opting for safer pet toys
5. Local pet parade debuts exotic animals
6. Lost dog found miles from home
7. Rare eye surgery saves dumped kitten
8. Litter of kittens adopted by rabbit
9. Puppy rescued from house fire
10. Turtle wins miracle fight for survival
11. Baby Janie returned to parents after three day ordeal
12. Family welcomes arrival of sextuplets
13. Baby of the Year contest is coming soon
14. Breast-feeding best for brainy baby, says study
15. Bring back 'Baby On Board' signs
16. Wallet found with \$3,000 returned intact
17. Altruism beyond September 11th
18. Woman turns in bag stuffed with \$65,000
19. Pizza waitress gets \$10,000 tip
20. Reaching beyond self-interest: The power of altruism
21. Make-A-Wish fulfills 150,000th dream
22. The microcredit revolution: Changing the world one loan at a time
23. Online game incubates philanthropy
24. Cleric donates estate to Red Cross
25. Foundation awards 'genius grants'
26. In time of giving, remember those in need
27. Giving back: Dedicated to the Salvation Army shelter
28. Celebrate philanthropy: It's more than big donations
29. Art auction raising funds for kids
30. Find a charity and make a difference
31. Golden retriever saves drowning baby
32. Dog saves family from blaze started by cat
33. Students halt bus after driver's seizure
34. Infant survives wild ride provided by tornado
35. Parrot imitates fire alarm, saves family
36. Woman swims to shore after boat capsizes
37. Toddler survives fall from a second-story window
38. Surfer survives 'Jaws' attack
39. Motorist survives fiery crash
40. Toddler survives plane crash in freezing weather
41. Woman survives attack by wild boar
42. Stroke patient lives to rock another day

43. New respirator helps teen survive
44. Woman survives being hit by train
45. 12-year-old survives home invasion
46. Study finds smokers take more sick leave
47. Secondhand smoke causes cancer in pets
48. Cutting cancer risk when grilling
49. Research study shows exercise to be best predictor of longevity
50. Running late? Punctuality associated with lower heart risk
51. World's oldest man turns 112
52. Healthier options in the school cafeteria
53. Exercise to battle breast cancer fatigue
54. Atkins diet can raise heart risks
55. Pedometer users walk farther, get healthier, researchers say
56. Onions and garlic for a healthy life
57. Exercise rates are up, CDC study says
58. Diet, exercise better than vitamins in promoting health
59. Go green, get lean! Scientists take a new tack
60. Scale won't budge? Time to tweak your habits
61. Global markets drop sharply amid U. S. fears
62. Soaring oil prices have yet to derail economy
63. Fed banks divided over how much to cut rates
64. The best markets for female executives
65. Weekly jobless claims show small improvement
66. Working longer hours: Typical work week now 47 hours
67. College tuition still rising
68. Striking sanitation workers seek mediation
69. More women than ever enter MBA programs
70. Work pensions set for overhaul
71. Working smarter, not harder: Hints from the experts
72. If time is money, talk has a price
73. Economic indicators index declines
74. Oil prices balk on drive to \$100 a barrel
75. Employers must pay for safety gear
76. Grand jury indicts state senator
77. Pastor & video tape help catch robbery suspect
78. Teens indicted in \$30,000 high school computer theft
79. Man gets life for lottery scam
80. Woman arrested after lover murdered
81. Missing children found, father arrested
82. Man convicted in '84 bludgeoning death
83. Rape victim's lawyer refuses to give in
84. Man convicted of attempted murder in stabbing
85. Ex-jailer convicted of killing student
86. Former soldier convicted of killing two men
87. Killing spree suspect indicted
88. Pilot indicted on federal child sex charges

89. Man who shot at deputies indicted
90. Couple indicted for fraud
91. Kentucky Derby field wide open
92. Online betting sites: Is winning possible?
93. Local housing market draws interest from speculators
94. Oddsmakers call big game a 'toss-up'
95. Lottery jackpot reaches \$47 million
96. Knowing when to fold 'em: Tips for winning Texas holdem
97. Champ heavy favorite in middleweight title bout
98. Arbitrage brokers win, lose millions in unstable market
99. Local couple wins lottery on Halloween
100. Lottery supporters earn respect, ridicule
101. New casino ribbon-cutting today
102. Gamblers pack new tribal casino
103. Backgammon game launches online
104. High rollers on the high seas
105. Is spread-betting a gamble? You bet!
106. Adventurer completes around-the-world balloon journey
107. Fastest lap ever recorded at Indianapolis
108. Festival expected to draw thousands
109. Four adventure destinations to hone your outdoor sports skills
110. Tailgating 101: How to host the ultimate tailgating bash
111. Blaze your own trail: Expert suggestions for off-roading
112. Heli-hiking: The ultimate hiking experience
113. Off the beaten path: Untapped mountain biking mecca
114. Take kite surfing lessons and get ready for competition
115. Zip lines: Leaves your hands trembling for a week
116. Off-road driving: An unforgettable slalom course
117. Ready for battle: A paintball course like you've never seen
118. Caving: Three stories below the earth's surface
119. Kayaking lessons offered by four-time freestyle champ
120. Skydiver, 83, makes 100th jump
121. Pitt and Jolie ready for fifth child
122. Stern wants share of Smith's husband's fortune
123. Timberlake tees off into Bob Hope territory
124. Fans get an early preview of Jay-Z's 'Gangster'
125. Matt Damon is 'sexiest man alive'
126. Kate Hudson's divorce finalized
127. Spice Girls: Back and naughtier than ever
128. Queen Latifah: 'Beauty is not just a white girl'
129. Grieving Kanye breaks down during concert
130. Britney dances her way back with 'Gimme More'
131. Clooney scolds paparazzi
132. Copperfield says he canceled shows over money
133. Jennifer Garner, the icon next door
134. Jennifer Lopez says she's pregnant

135. McCartney: Divorce like 'going through hell'
136. 'Preppie Killer' held after undercover drug sting
137. Thieves held bank manager, wife overnight
138. Woman guilty of pregnant woman death
139. Lock your doors: Burglary on the rise
140. Sex misconduct plaguing schools
141. Man robbed, shot on front porch
142. Police warn shoppers about purse, package thefts
143. Battling a new type of identity theft
144. Boy, 11, 'robbed officer'
145. Man shoots alleged burglars during 911 call
146. One killed, six wounded in shootout
147. Robbed twice: Man's car stolen while chasing mugger
148. Car wash employee robbed at gunpoint
149. Police searching for SUV stolen from gas station; baby inside vehicle
150. Stolen cars lead to murder
151. Crisis on campus: No privacy rights for mentally ill students
152. Salmonella scare closes popular restaurant
153. Having a plan is key to coping with mental-health crisis
154. Panel looks at mental health in workplace
155. Report: TV may contribute to schizophrenia
156. Lost Alzheimer's patient remains unidentified
157. E-coli scare at local restaurant
158. Mystery fever triggers panic
159. Antibiotic-resistant infection worries local health officials
160. Treating bipolar disorder in kids difficult for parents and doctors
161. Bipolar disorder: More than a punchline
162. More teens diagnosed with bipolar disorder
163. ADHD kids' brains mature more slowly
164. Parkinson's treatment fails clinical trial
165. Autism at epidemic levels
166. Child on amusement park ride bitten by snake
167. Bride dies from snake bite while posing for wedding photos
168. Experts warn prescription drug interactions 'unpredictable'
169. Economists fear unemployment spike 'likely'
170. America faces continuing risk of anthrax attack
171. Transportation official cites bioterrorism risk
172. War of words over terrorism threat
173. Mercury levels in fish remain high
174. Spark ignites blaze at gas station
175. Retailers recall more toxic toys
176. Cell phone radiation: Real risk?
177. Diesel fumes increase heart attack threat
178. Air collision risk increasing, officials warn
179. Consumer group cites new food processing dangers

180. Health dept. quandary: Warn the public or supervise the doctor?
181. Impressionist art sale fails to sparkle
182. News headlines inspire local artist
183. Art is brief. You just have to be there
184. Figurative art moves up on price chart
185. Rembrandt masterpieces to visit art museum
186. The chocolate cottage: Where confections meet art
187. Art brings inspiration to cancer patients
188. Art show highlights 12 year old 'Picasso'
189. Recycling performance art
190. Art with glue on its back
191. Art addresses stigma of poverty
192. Sculpture prize goes to painter
193. World record balloon sculpture on display
194. Artist combines painting, assemblage
195. The art of song, dance, and self-defense
196. To Nepal: Three days in Kathmandu
197. Surprising new wine regions in South America
198. Speed east from Paris on train to Champagne
199. From the ancient to the modern: A weekend in Istanbul
200. Beyond the Taj Mahal: 25 exceptional Indian tourist attractions
201. Spots to see before they sink or scorch
202. Five great day hikes from Mexico City
203. Costa Rican hotel industry takes a dive
204. Passport secrets revealed
205. Pier pressure: Cruise lines boost ticket costs
206. Take an 'Ends of the Earth' trip
207. Extraordinary (sometimes odd) hotel perks
208. Ten best scuba spots in the world
209. Best places around the world for foodies
210. Top luxury jungle lodges
211. Brazil to expand Amazon search for oil
212. Protest over Venezuela reforms
213. Argentine first lady nears presidential win
214. Spreading deserts threaten world food supply
215. Diseases threaten Mexico flood victims
216. Wildlife makes dramatic return to Sudan
217. Malaysian officials crack down on pirate DVD production
218. Asia's rich, poor divide grows
219. China tries farmers for fighting over fossils
220. China mine accident kills 29
221. Indonesian volcano roaring to life
222. Europe braces for major storm
223. Police say Finland shooter left suicide note
224. Ancient China warriors wow British
225. Dutch, British flood fears ease after surge passes

226. Boy recounts alleged sex attack in Dubai court
227. Iraqis streaming home from abroad
228. Iraq mostly shrugs at cholera outbreak
229. Beirut: The real flavour of Lebanon
230. Palestinians weave their legacy in Lebanon refugee camp
231. Lebanon vote could be held outside parliament: candidate
232. Major powers warn Syria against meddling in Lebanon vote
233. Palestinians at the Iraq-Syria border
234. Five dead in gunfire at Fatah rally in Gaza
235. Jordanian King Abdullah visits eight leaders in world tour
236. An interview with Saudi foreign minister
237. Syria may interfere in Lebanon vote
238. Refugees from Lebanon siege camp want EU visas
239. Kuwaiti minister rejects allegations of spying by Kuwait
240. Kuwait plans to build world's tallest building

## Appendix C

### Attitudes Questionnaire

1. I think that the threat of another terrorist attack has been overstated.
2. No one has the right to intrude on my privacy.
3. People of the Muslim religion tend to be fanatical.
4. In order to reduce the risk of terrorism, the government should search everyone, rather than stigmatize a few individuals who look dangerous.
5. What our country really needs, rather than more "civil rights," is a good stiff dose of law and order.
6. Some people are just more deserving than others.
7. America should never monitor the daily activities of its citizens.
8. Our highest priority as a nation must be to preserve freedom rather than prevent terrorism.
9. Everyone should have their own lifestyle, religious beliefs, and sexual preferences, even if it makes them different from everyone else.
10. Because terrorists are unpredictable, there is no reason for us to even try to prevent future acts of terrorism.
11. Muslims value peace and love.
12. It is important that we treat other countries as equals.
13. Some people are just inferior to others.
14. The only way our country can get through the crisis ahead is to get back to our traditional values, put some tough leaders in power, and silence the troublemakers spreading bad ideas.
15. Some people are just more worthy than others.
16. It is important that our government should not falsely arrest innocent people from the Middle East, even if it means an increased risk of terrorism.
17. Every American should be required to carry an ID card at all times to help authorities identify those people who pose a threat to our country.
18. Obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues children should learn.
19. In an ideal world, all nations would be equal.
20. Increased social equality.
21. Increased economic equality.
22. The government should not be allowed to monitor people's credit card activity, even if it were done to increase homeland security.
23. The U.S. Congress should pass an Arab Registration Act which would keep track of potential terrorists.
24. America must restrict Arab immigration if it is to increase homeland security.
25. We must be willing to suspend some of the liberties we hold as American citizens if terrorism puts our safety at too great a risk.
26. When it comes down to it, each American life means more than the lives of a dozen Arabs.



27. If we lost our right to privacy, this wouldn't be America any longer.
28. If America is truly to be safe, all of us must sacrifice equally, even if it means long lines at airports and entertainment venues.
29. A person with a name like Abdul or Saeed should not be treated any differently by airlines than a person named Mike.
30. Equality.
31. This country would be better off if we cared less about how equal all people were.
32. Arabs have little appreciation for democratic values.
33. We should treat protestors and radicals with open arms and open minds, since new ideas are the lifeblood of progressive change.
34. Any suspected involvement in activities related to terrorism is reason enough to detain a person indefinitely.
35. I am not willing to surrender freedom in order to become more secure.
36. Because there is no greater threat to the world than terrorism, we must do everything in our power to stop it.
37. Most of the terrorists in the world today are Arabs.
38. I would not be frightened by the sight of a Muslim praying or reading the Koran on an airplane.
39. I'd rather live in fear than sacrifice my civil liberties.
40. People of Arab descent should be subject to full body and luggage searches before boarding airplanes or entering government buildings.
41. We should try to treat one another as equals as much as possible. (All humans should be treated equally).
42. There is no liberty so sacred that we couldn't do without it if it meant the assurance of our safety.
43. It is not a problem if some people have more of a chance in life than others.
44. I'd be willing to surrender certain aspects of my personal privacy if it would guarantee an increase in security.
45. Some groups of people are simply not the equals of others.
46. There are many Arabs who are Christians.
47. There is no "one right way" to live life; everybody has to create their own way.
48. Historically, Arabs have made important contributions to world culture.
49. Despite the threat to national security, freedom must not be compromised in any way.
50. What our country really needs is a strong, determined leader who will crush evil, and take us back to our true path.
51. Even if it takes an extra hour at the airport, every passenger should be subject to a full body and luggage search.
52. There are too many restraints on the activities of Arabs in America.
53. It is important that the government respects the privacy of the majority of its citizens, even if it would mean the arrest of some Arabs who only look dangerous.

54. If people were treated more equally we would have fewer problems in this country.
55. To get ahead in life, it is sometimes necessary to step on others.
56. Our country needs free-thinkers who will have the courage to defy traditional ways, even if this upsets many le.
57. For now, our country's greatest concern must be the prevention of terrorism.
58. It is never right for the government to read a person's mail or email.
59. Worry about things.
60. Make friends easily.
61. Have a vivid imagination.
62. Trust others.
63. Complete tasks successfully.
64. Get angry easily.
65. Love large parties.
66. Believe in the importance of art.
67. Use others for my own ends.
68. Like to tidy up.
69. Often feel blue.
70. Take charge.
71. Experience my emotions intensely.
72. Love to help others.
73. Keep my promises.
74. Find it difficult to approach others.
75. Am always busy.
76. Prefer variety to routine.
77. Love a good fight.
78. Work hard.
79. Go on binges.
80. Love excitement.
81. Love to read challenging material.
82. Believe that I am better than others.
83. Am always prepared.
84. Panic easily.
85. Radiate joy.
86. Tend to vote for liberal political candidates.
87. Sympathize with the homeless.
88. Jump into things without thinking.
89. Fear for the worst.
90. Feel comfortable around people.
91. Enjoy wild flights of fantasy.
92. Believe that others have good intentions.
93. Excel in what I do.
94. Get irritated easily.
95. Talk to a lot of different people at parties.
96. See beauty in things that others might not notice.

97. Cheat to get ahead.
98. Often forget to put things back in their proper place.
99. Dislike myself.
100. Try to lead others.
101. Feel others' emotions.
102. Am concerned about others.
103. Tell the truth.
104. Am afraid to draw attention to myself.
105. Am always on the go.
106. Prefer to stick with things that I know.
107. Yell at people.
108. Do more than what's expected of me.
109. Rarely overindulge.
110. Seek adventure.
111. Avoid philosophical discussions.
112. Think highly of myself.
113. Carry out my plans.
114. Become overwhelmed by events.
115. Have a lot of fun.
116. Believe that there is no absolute right or wrong.
117. Feel sympathy for those who are worse off than myself.
118. Make rash decisions.
119. Am afraid of many things.
120. Avoid contacts with others.
121. Love to daydream.
122. Trust what people say.
123. Handle tasks smoothly.
124. Lose my temper.
125. Prefer to be alone.
126. Do not like poetry.
127. Take advantage of others.
128. Leave a mess in my room.
129. Am often down in the dumps.
130. Take control of things.
131. Rarely notice my emotional reactions.
132. Am indifferent to the feelings of others.
133. Break rules.
134. Only feel comfortable with friends.
135. Do a lot in my spare time.
136. Dislike changes.
137. Insult people.
138. Do just enough work to get by.
139. Easily resist temptations.
140. Enjoy being reckless.
141. Have difficulty understanding abstract ideas.
142. Have a high opinion of myself.

143. Waste my time.
144. Feel that I'm unable to deal with things.
145. Love life.
146. Tend to vote for conservative political candidates.
147. Am not interested in other people's problems.
148. Rush into things.
149. Get stressed out easily.
150. Keep others at a distance.
151. Like to get lost in thought.
152. Distrust people.
153. Know how to get things done.
154. Am not easily annoyed.
155. Avoid crowds.
156. Do not enjoy going to art museums.
157. Obstruct others' plans.
158. Leave my belongings around.
159. Feel comfortable with myself.
160. Wait for others to lead the way.
161. Don't understand people who get emotional.
162. Take no time for others.
163. Break my promises.
164. Am not bothered by difficult social situations.
165. Like to take it easy.
166. Am attached to conventional ways.
167. Get back at others.
168. Put little time and effort into my work.
169. Am able to control my cravings.
170. Act wild and crazy.
171. Am not interested in theoretical discussions.
172. Boast about my virtues.
173. Have difficulty starting tasks.
174. Remain calm under pressure.
175. Look at the bright side of life.
176. Believe that we should be tough on crime.
177. Try not to think about the needy.
178. Act without thinking.
179. Intelligence is the most important thing there is about a person.
180. People who are good at one thing tend to be good at most other things as well.
181. If a person is smart enough, he or she can succeed in just about anything.
182. Intelligence is less important than most people think.
183. When it comes down to it, no one is really better than anyone else
184. I think that things like artistic skill and athletic talent are just as important as intelligence in our society.
185. Some people are simply evil.
186. All people are basically good.

187. When it comes down to it, each of us is equally good and worthy.
188. I think that all religions are equally worthy.
189. If we are to succeed in the long run, our government will need to encourage smart and productive people to have more children.
190. Some people should not be allowed to become parents.
191. People who are mentally retarded do have the right to have children.
192. Government does not have the right to sterilize anyone, including criminals.
193. No one has the right to decide whether anyone else can have a child.
194. It is a mistake to allow people with mental problems to vote.
195. If you aren't well informed, you shouldn't be allowed to vote.
196. Ex-felons should have the right to vote.
197. In elections, ballots should be available to all people in their native languages.
198. It is important that every adult citizen has the right to vote.
199. I think that there need to be higher standards for entry into this country.
200. When it comes right down to it, foreigners are ruining this country.
201. I don't pay much attention to news about foreign disasters.
202. When a natural disaster like a hurricane occurs, I believe that our government does its best to help every citizen regardless of race or social class.
203. Our tax dollars should be spent on improving the worst public schools, not the best ones.
204. I am not particular about things like coffee, dessert, wines, and so forth.
205. I like sushi.
206. I like unprocessed raw sugar more than the white, granulated kind.
207. I think that fancy coffee drinks like lattes and cappuccinos are a waste of money.
208. Inexpensive wines in boxes are probably just as good as the expensive, bottled ones.
209. I think it is foolish to spend money on bottled water,
210. I do not much care for imported cheese.
211. There is no difference between expensive perfumes and less expensive copies.
212. I can not usually tell what is cooking in a kitchen by the smell
213. I have avoided certain foods because I did not like their odor.
214. I am not very particular about the music that I listen to.
215. I am sensitive to loud or distorted sounds.
216. I would like to hear people sing in a karaoke bar.
217. I prefer to wear clothes made of textured, natural fabrics.
218. The tags on the inside of shirt collars often irritate my neck.
219. I would rather use a disposable ball-point than an expensive fountain pen.
220. Cheap razors work just as well as the expensive ones.
221. I think I would enjoy a massage or spa treatment.
222. I find museums boring.
223. I think I have a good sense of color.

224. I do not like to sit near the front in movie theaters.
225. I do appreciate an attractive table setting, with nice china and silverware.
226. I would like to buy a thin and elegant watch.
227. I need to live in a place with a nice climate.
228. I could be just as happy living anywhere, even if far away from the mountains and the sea.
229. I think that chewing tobacco is gross.
230. I would be embarrassed to eat fast-food at a place like McDonalds.
231. I would be embarrassed to drive a big vehicle like a "Hummer."
232. I would take pride in attending an Ivy League university.
233. Obesity disgusts me.
234. Sometimes people think that I am a "snob."
235. People often don't meet my expectations.
236. Most television shows are awful.
237. I sometimes think that other drivers are idiots.
238. I would like to belong to a selective club or social organization.
239. Gifted programs and honors societies are valuable.
240. I prefer to spend time with people who are pretty much like me.
241. The merchandise at big discount stores is mostly junk.
242. I would prefer spending an evening in conversation with interesting people than attend a popular movie or sporting event.
243. I would not enjoy a stock car (NASCAR) race.
244. A good way to stay healthy is to avoid shaking hands or touching other people.
245. I am careful about the local water and food when I travel.
246. I would prefer to be seen as nice rather than clever.
247. Much of what passes for "wit" today is really nastiness.
248. I was taught to be careful to associate with "the right type of people."
249. I enjoy knowing celebrities and important people.
250. I would rather visit with friends than go to a party where celebrities might be present.
251. I could easily fall in love with someone who did not have at least a high school education.
252. I would rather live in a mixed neighborhood than one in which everyone is wealthy.
253. It could not live in a place where there were strong rules about things like pick-up trucks parked on the streets, basketball hoops, and the colors people are allowed to paint their homes.
254. Which of the following values is most important to you? (Preserving homeland security / Protecting the right to privacy / Treating all Americans equally)
255. Which of the following values is least important to you? (Preserving homeland security / Protecting the right to privacy / Treating all Americans equally)

## Appendix D

### Sample Feedback Response

[Personalitystudy.org](http://Personalitystudy.org)

#### A brief analysis of your responses

##### **Personality**

This section is based on your responses to the questions concerning personality in the final part of the survey. These questions were taken from the International Personality Item Pool, and measure five broad domains or dimensions of personality. This is not a test of intelligence or ability, and is not intended to diagnose psychological problems. It can, however, inform you about how your responses compare with others, and can provide you with an empirically-based perspective on your personality. Your responses indicate the following:

- With respect to the trait of *Agreeableness*, you appear determined, competitive, skeptical, and proud. You tend to express your anger directly.
- With respect to *Neuroticism*, you resemble the average respondent in your ability to tolerate stress. Like most others, you are generally calm, but can at times experience negative emotions such as fear, anger, worry, and self-doubt.
- With respect to *Extraversion*, you are moderate in your social enthusiasm and your activity level. You enjoy social situations but at times find these to be stressful. You value both the company of others as well as quiet time spent alone.
- With respect to *Conscientiousness*, you are generally dependable, consistent, and careful. You are neither excessively playful nor obsessed with your work, but you are generally prepared and organized.
- With respect to *Openness to Experience*, you are open-minded and enjoy new experiences. You are imaginative, have broad interests, and enjoy abstract, philosophical concerns. You are emotionally responsive.

[Please continue to comments and credit page](#)

### Full List of Possible Feedback Responses

“With respect to the trait of “Agreeableness you appear ”;

- "determined, competitive, skeptical, and proud. You tend to express your anger directly.";
- "trusting, modest, sympathetic, compassionate, good-natured, and cooperative. You are willing to make sacrifices to preserve interpersonal relationships.";
- "generally trusting, warm, and sympathetic, but you can sometimes be skeptical, competitive, and stubborn.";

"With respect to Neuroticism, ";

- "you appear calm, secure, and relaxed under stressful conditions in comparison with others. You are not fearful.";
- " you are particularly sensitive, emotional, and prone to feeling discouraged or overwhelmed.";
- "you resemble the average respondent in your ability to tolerate stress. Like most others, you are generally calm, but can at times experience negative emotions such as fear, anger, worry, and self-doubt.";

"With respect to Extraversion";

- "you are reflective and socially cautious. You are seen as reserved and serious. You find many social situations as effortful or even stressful, and generally prefer to be alone or with a few close friends.";

- "you are energetic, outgoing, and high-spirited. You are comfortable in most social settings, and enjoy the opportunity to lead or coordinate social activities that serve a common good.";

- "you are moderate in your social enthusiasm and your activity level. You enjoy social situations but at times find these to be stressful. You value both the company of others as well as quiet time spent alone.";

"With respect to Conscientiousness, ";

- "you are easygoing, but do not always finish what you begin. You do not like making or keeping plans, and others may feel that you break commitments or promises to them. You may appear careless or disorganized.";

- "you are well-organized. You are careful and consistent in striving for high standards. Others see you as hard-working, but not particularly spontaneous.";

- "you are generally dependable, consistent, and careful. You are neither excessively playful nor obsessed with your work, but you are generally prepared and organized.";

"With respect to Openness to Experience, ";

- "you are practical, traditional, and down-to-earth. You prefer to deal with real concerns rather than with fantasy or theory. You may appear to be conventional or even set in your ways.";

- "you are open-minded and enjoy new experiences. You are imaginative, have broad interests, and enjoy abstract, philosophical concerns. You are emotionally responsive.";

- "you are generally practical, but are willing to consider new ways of doing things. You are moderately open to aesthetic and emotional experiences."



## Appendix E

### Sample Overview and Comments Page

#### An overview of our research

You participated in one of three studies examining relations between current events and personality. These are described in more detail below. Your responses on this survey are valuable, and greatly appreciated. A report of this research should be ready for circulation by the end of August 2008. If you would like to receive a copy, please send an e-mail to Kevin Lanning (lanning@fau.edu) expressing your interest in the results and providing your e-mail address.

For problems or questions regarding your rights as a subject, the Division of Research of Florida Atlantic University can be contacted at (561) 297-0777. For questions about the study, you should call the senior principal investigator, Dr. Kevin Lanning, at (561) 799-8652. If you would like your responses to be withdrawn from the study, please click [here](#). If you would like a copy of this information, please click the “print” button on your browser now.

#### News headlines and personality

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between preferences for news headlines and personality. That is, which kinds of people choose to read which kind of news stories?

Based on prior research, we can predict that most people will prefer news about local rather than distant events. However, we know that people high in a trait called Openness to Experience are more likely to be interested in other cultures; therefore, we hypothesize that people high in Openness will be more likely than people low in this trait to read news headlines about events that occurred abroad. Similarly, Conscientiousness should be related to the selection of articles concerning work, healthfulness, and concerns for justice. Extraversion will be associated with gambling, sensation-seeking, and celebrity news, while Agreeableness will be related to human interest stories about infants and animals, altruism and charity, and survival. The fifth major personality trait, Neuroticism, is expected to relate to a preference for articles about topics such as crime.

#### Comments

Thank you for your participation. If you have any comments concerning the survey, the feedback you received, or this program, we would appreciate hearing from you.

Comments concerning the content of the survey (the items):

Comments concerning the feedback you received at the end of the survey:

Comments concerning the program itself (bugs or problems):