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Social Media and the Youth Vote

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Genevieve Kurtz

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Signatures of Honors Thesis Committee

Mentor:

Kirsten Passyn

Reader 1:

Jennifer Cox

Reader 2:

Joseph Venora

Dean:

Signature

Print

Abstract

Young adults (ages 18-24) are regarded as politically detached and apathetic about voting. Elected officials and political candidates have integrated social media into their campaigns to re-engage young adults with politics. Though critics argue that social media are ruining politics and the political discourse, the use of social media platforms by political candidates to engage voters, particularly young adults, is an increasing part of the political process in the United States. This research builds upon a collection of scholarly work that argues that social media have the power to reinforce democratic politics and, if used strategically, can effectively connect politicians with their young constituents. This research takes a deeper look at what draws young voters – or diverts them – from politicians based on the politicians' presence and depiction of themselves on social media. The central objective of this research is to explore how authenticity is perceived from politicians' social media by young-adult voters, and examine what characteristics influence young-adult voters' perceptions of political authenticity. The current research involves Salisbury University students in a political science course between the ages of 18 to 24 completing an open-ended, paper-and-pencil questionnaire to determine how they perceive authenticity of politicians on social media. Based on previous research about celebrity authenticity, the literature on transformational and transactional leadership and qualitative analysis of the open-ended questionnaires, the researchers determined three theoretical constructs – rarity, stability and charismatic/inspirational leadership. Each theoretical construct is composed of several sub-categories. Results yield greater insight into young-adult voter perceptions, their knowledge of the political process and how candidates can better attempt to reach voters and shape their message through social media.

Keywords: authenticity, political engagement, social media, young-adult voters

Social Media and the Youth Vote

Young-adult voters, 18- to 24-year-olds, are often less targeted than any other age groups eligible to vote because of the relatively low turnout. This demographic group is often overlooked by politicians and political candidates, which may also be reason for the lower turnout rates. According to the 2004 U.S. Census Bureau, no election has ever gathered over 50% of the youth vote since the voting age was changed to 18 in 1972 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). While 18- to 24-year-olds vote in smaller numbers than any other age group, there are still millions of young-adult voters who go to the polls (Parmelee, Perkins, & Sayre, 2016). In fact, in the 2004 U.S. presidential election, almost 11 million citizens under the age of 25 voted, accounting for 9.3% of total votes (Parmelee, Perkins, & Sayre, 2016). While young adults are not currently as likely to cast votes in elections as older generations, millennials (considered ages 20-37 in 2018) now make up 31% of the voting-eligible population, matching Baby Boomers (ages 52-70 in 2016) as the largest generation in the electorate (Fry, 2016). With younger adults having a growing influence on the potential outcome of elections, politicians and political candidates have shifted campaign focuses to engage young-adult voters on social media platforms, like Facebook and Twitter.

Literature Review

Social Media as a Political Platform

Though critics argue that social media are ruining politics and political growth, the use of social media platforms by politicians and political candidates to engage voters, particularly young-adult voters, is an increasing part of the political process in the United States. Social media platforms have become a centerpiece for popular culture and are changing the way consumers and public figures, like celebrities and politicians, interact (Kowalczyk & Pounders,

2016). More and more, celebrities and public figures are utilizing social media as a platform to advocate for social and environmental causes. Contrary to critics who argue that social media are trivializing politics and the political process, many scholars are now claiming that using social media platforms to engage young adults can create a more inclusive and democratic setting for public policy making (Loader, B. D., Vromen, A., & Xenos, M. A., 2016).

Social media have become a platform for political candidates to disclose and maintain their “message,” which in marketing terms is referred to as one’s personal “brand” (Silverstein, 2011). A political candidate’s ‘message,’ or personal brand, has always been an important factor in campaigning. This is why campaigns have long been managed and led by professionals with advertising and marketing backgrounds (Silverstein, 2011). “American politics – since General Eisenhower’s campaign of 1952, to be precise – has merged both conceptually and organizationally with modern advertising,” (Silverstein, 2011, p. 204). The emergence of social media as a campaign tool has given candidates an online platform to do what they’ve always done – spread their brand-centered message – while engaging new, and often younger, audiences. Social media was first used in the context of a major political campaign during the 2004 presidential election, when campaigns began writing political blogs (Fernandes, Giurcanu, Bowers & Neely, 2010). This continued in the 2006 midterm Congressional elections. However, it wasn’t until the 2008 presidential election that we saw the use of social media sites as political platforms. During the 2008 presidential election, “all Democratic and Republican candidates established Facebook and MySpace profiles, and hundreds of thousands of social network sites (SNSs) users added them as ‘friends’ (Ancu & Cozma, 2009)” (Fernandes et. al, 2010). This allowed users to interact and engage with politicians in a way they had never before. Barack Obama’s 2008 presidential campaign is considered the pioneering campaign that successfully

integrated social media in a way that energized and mobilized voters, especially young-adult voters (Yamamoto & Kushin, 2013). According to a 2011 Pew Research Center study, over 21 percent of American adults used social media sites during the 2010 midterm election to engage in political discourse. Young adults (ages 18-29) led in use of social media sites for political purposes (Smith, 2011).

Social media is not just a tool for politicians to spread their political message. Recent research has found that it generates social capital, as well as political participation (Teresi & Michelson, 2014). According to this research, “the increased use of online social networking sites should not be interpreted as a danger to social capital but rather as an alternative means of generating it” (p. 195). Social media platforms provide a space for voters to engage in the political process, and this is especially true for young-adult voters (Fernandes et. al, 2010). Beginning in the 2008 presidential election, youth online communities have emerged on Facebook and other social media sites. These online spaces closely follow political campaigns, creating political dialogue and civic engagement (Fernandes et. al, 2010). Social media have created a new form of political expression, which in turn, can lead voters to participate in the political process (Gil de Zúñiga, Molyneux & Zheng, 2014). Furthermore, this research suggests that “even relational uses of social media may lead people to express themselves politically, thereby putting them on a pathway to participation. The results contribute to an understanding of expressive citizenship models now emerging in younger generations (Gil de Zúñiga, Bachmann, Hsu, & Brundidge, 2013)” (p. 613). The increasing influence of social media have produced a sudden rise of grassroots participation, and has allowed voters to form more active and substantial relationships with official institutions (Gil de Zúñiga, Molyneux & Zheng, 2014). As social media become a resource for political information and political dialogue for voters,

politicians and political candidates must adapt to the evolving platforms. It is now crucial to utilize social media to engage with voters, particularly young-adults.

For politicians and political candidates looking to engage young-adult voters on social media, a starting point for effective communication strategies would be to look to the stars. By turning to celebrities, the experts of social media, we can see how social media can be used as a tool to connect public figures directly with their consumers and engage with their fan bases (Kowalczyk & Pounders, 2016). Significant research has been done analyzing effective branding for celebrities on social media, but there is less information on the use of social media as an effective tool by politicians. In Jasmina Ilicic and Cynthia M. Webster's article, "Being True to Oneself: Investigating Celebrity Brand Authenticity," "Celebrity brands are perceived as true to self when they appear genuine in their relationships with consumers and behave in accordance with their perceived held values," (Ilicic & Webster, 2016, p. 410). This notion of 'appearing genuine' or *authentic* becomes an important factor in exploring how young adults perceive politicians and political candidates on social media, and how these perceptions could affect voter intentions and engagement.

Authenticity

While many definitions of authenticity exist, the most comprehensive definition relating to this research can be found in, "What Makes a Human Brand Authentic? Identifying the Antecedents of Celebrity Authenticity," by Julie Guidry Moulard, Carolyn Popp Garrity and Dan Hamilton Rice. The article states that authenticity of an individual, "relates to whether a person behaves according to his 'true self'" (Moulard, Garrity & Rice, 2015). There is little research in marketing addressing the authenticity of others (Moulard et. al, 2015), primarily research on authenticity revolves around one's own authenticity and on 'being yourself' (Mengers, 2014).

This research explores how young adults, eligible to vote, perceive the authenticity of politicians based on their self-depictions on social media. Thus, advancing the following research question:

RQ1. What qualities or characteristics do college-aged students view as authentic among politicians?

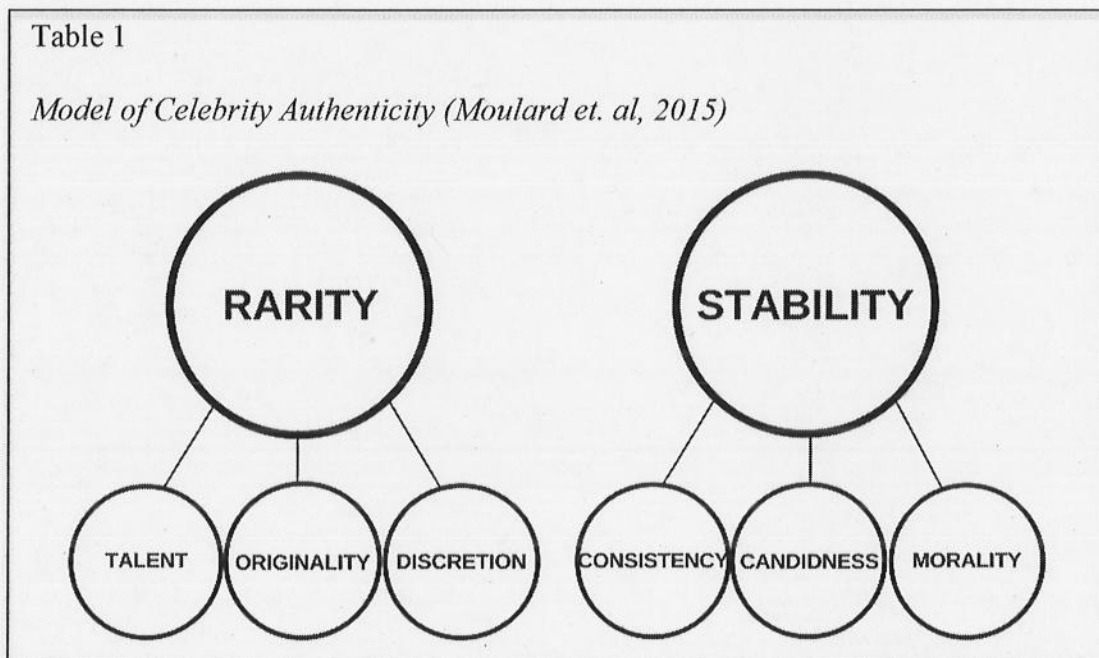
When people determine another individual's authenticity, there is no way to be certain whether the other individual is really authentic, but rather acting in a way that the other person perceives to be authentic (Moulard et. al, 2015). This perception of authenticity in regards to this research is based on whether young-adult voters perceive politicians and political candidates to be authentic based on their presence on social media. Basing our definition for political authenticity on the definition for celebrity authenticity given in Moulard et. al's article (2015), political authenticity will be defined as the perception that a politician or political candidate behaves according to his or her true self.

Celebrity Authenticity as a Foundation for Measuring Political Authenticity

With limited research done on politicians and authenticity, our research uses celebrity authenticity as a basis for measuring perceptions of authenticity in politicians. This research not only sought to analyze perceptions of politicians' authenticity through social media, but also sought to compare the perceptions of authenticity of politicians with celebrities, based on Moulard et. al's original research (2015). This was done by conducting a study that closely replicated Moulard et. al's study done on celebrity authenticity. However, instead of applying the questions to celebrities, they were applied to politicians. The researchers propose the following research question:

RQ2. How do authentic politicians differ from authentic celebrities?

In Moulard et. al's research on celebrity authenticity, two higher-order factors emerged which were used as antecedents to best determine celebrity authenticity: rarity and stability. Both of the higher-order factors consisted of three theoretical constructs, resulting in six total theoretical constructs. Rarity consisted of talent, originality and discretion. Stability consisted of consistency, candidness and morality (Moulard et. al, 2015). This model for celebrity authenticity is shown in Table 1:



Rarity refers to the degree to which a celebrity or other individual is considered uncommon or unique (Moulard et. al, 2015, p. 178). Within rarity, talent is explained as “the perception that the celebrity demonstrates skill in his / her chosen field” (Moulard et. al, 2015, p. 178). Discretion refers to the perception that a celebrity is discrete, inconspicuous, and does not seek publicity – guarding their personal life. And originality refers to the perception that the celebrity thinks and acts independently and creatively.

Stability refers to “the degree to which the celebrity is perceived as unwavering” (Moulard et. al, 2015, p. 178). Within stability, consistency is the perception that a celebrity’s

characteristic and personality has been continuous and unchanging over the course of their career. Candidness is defined as the “perception that what the celebrity states is consistent with how the celebrity feels” (Moulard et. al, 2015, p. 178). Morality is the perception that the celebrity upholds their ideals, values and standards (Moulard et. al, 2015, p. 178).

In the study, researchers compared the impact of rarity and stability on younger and older participants – younger participants being those aged 40 and younger, older participants consisting of adults 49 and older. Older participants considered stability to be a more important factor in determining celebrity authenticity, while younger participants considered rarity to be more important.

Leadership’s Role in Determining Political Authenticity

While using celebrity authenticity as a foundation for analyzing the characteristics of political authenticity, there are other factors that may affect political authenticity in a way that does not apply to celebrities. One area in which researchers expected to find differences is in the influence of leadership. The researchers pose the following research question:

RQ3. Is leadership a central factor in the perception of political authenticity?

To consider how qualities of leadership might affect the perceived authenticity of politicians, the researchers looked into different measures of leadership and leadership scales. This was an important step in addressing perceptions of political authenticity because, “According to Cronshaw and Lord (1987), research on leadership perceptions can inform broader research into the nature of social perceptions” (Tate, 2008, p. 16).

Because we are exploring perceived authenticity, we first explored authentic leadership. The term was first coined by Bill George, Harvard Business School professor and former CEO of the medical device company, Medtronic Inc. (Marshall & Heffes, 2004). Authentic leadership

was used to describe “a form of leadership concerned with developing positive leader-follower relationships (May, Chan, Hodges & Avolio, 2003), high moral standards, and integrity (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans & May, 2004)” (Tate, 2008, p. 18). George developed the five dimensions of authentic leadership in 2003, which include 1. Demonstrating self-discipline, 2. Leading with the heart, 3. Establishing enduring relationships, 4. Practicing solid values and 5. Passion for purpose (Tate, 2008). Though authentic leadership has been based primarily on case studies of prominent leaders (Tate, 2008), Brian Tate took the first step toward developing a measure of authentic leadership in 2008. By conducting a content analysis of George’s five dimensions of authentic leadership, Tate developed a measure of authentic leadership to test the legitimacy of authentic leadership as a leadership style (Tate, 2008). The measure was meant to determine how individuals are perceived as leaders. The Authentic Leadership Measure included measurement items like, ‘my behavior is pretty consistent from day to day,’ ‘I am passionate about what I do,’ and ‘I am genuinely interested in other people and their ideas even if they are different from my own’ (Tate, 2008). There have been other recent developments of new measures of authentic leadership, like the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) developed by Fred Walumbwa, Bruce Avolio, William Gardner and Tara Wernsing in 2008, and the Authentic Leadership Inventory (ALI) developed by Linda Neider and Chester Schriesheim in 2011 (Neider & Schriesheim, 2011). Both the ALI and ALQ pull from four factors that make up the higher-order authentic leadership construct: self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing and internalized moral perspective (Neider & Schriesheim, 2011).

As authentic leadership emerges as a relatively new form of leadership, scholars continue to compare the features of authentic leadership to other types of leadership perspectives, including transformational, charismatic, servant and spiritual leadership (Avolio & Gardner,

2005). Many scholars, like Bernard Bass and Paul Steidlmeier, have even suggested that authenticity is an extension of other forms of leadership, like transformational leadership (Neider & Schriesheim, 2011). Transformational leadership is a leadership style that causes positive change to individuals and social systems, with a goal of transforming followers into leaders (iedunote.com, 2018). Bass identified and developed four basic components of transformational leadership in 1985, commonly referred to as 'the Four I's of transformational leadership' (Bass & Avolio, 1993). The Four I's include: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (Avolio, Waldman & Yammarino, 1991).

Years after developing the Four I's of transformational leadership, Bass and Avolio developed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), a psychological inventory which assesses a range of leadership types and factors of transformational and transactional leadership (Avolio, Bass & Jung, 1999). The most recent version of the MLQ (Form 5X) survey is made up of six factors that determine transformational and transactional leadership, including: 1. Charisma/Inspirational Leadership, 2. Intellectual Stimulation, 3. Individualized Consideration, 4. Contingent Reward, 5. Active Management-by-Exception and 6. Passive-Avoidance Leadership (Avolio, Bass & Jung, 1999). These measures will be relevant when reviewing and coding responses in this study to determine what characteristics and qualities make a politician authentic.

Method

An open-ended, paper-and-pencil questionnaire based on Moulard et. al (2015) was administered to 32 Salisbury University students (ages 18-24) in a political science course. For this study, the researchers wanted participants to be relatively knowledgeable of the political process to provide high-quality, substantial, and informed responses to ensure insightful

qualitative results. For that reason, the researchers wanted to work with political science majors, or students enrolled in a political science course. The researchers collaborated with Dr. Adam Hoffman's "State and Local Government in the United States" (POSC 202) course, in which a majority of students were political science majors, but some were not. The research proposal went through expedited review by the Institutional Review Board, and the student researcher completed CITI Program training for social and behavioral research before receiving IRB approval.

The questionnaire was distributed to willing participants during class time. The instructions for the questionnaire stated that the objective of the study was to determine the characteristics of authentic political candidates and politicians. Participants were asked to choose the political candidate who seemed most authentic and most inauthentic from a set list of candidates. The given list included Jeb Bush (R), Chris Christie (R), Hillary Clinton (D), Barack Obama (D), Bernie Sanders (D) and Donald Trump (R). Participants were then asked to describe why they perceived each candidate to be authentic or inauthentic. The next section of the questionnaire compared Twitter posts from two candidates, Bernie Sanders and Jeb Bush, and asked the participant to select which candidate seemed more authentic and more inauthentic based on their social media presence, and describe why.

The following section compared tweets from Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton and asked participants to select which candidate seems more authentic and more inauthentic based on their social media presence, and describe why. The last section of the questionnaire collected demographic information and asked participants about their voting habits and social media preferences.

There were two versions of the questionnaire distributed randomly among participants, with half of the participants receiving Version One, and the other half receiving Version Two. Both versions of the full questionnaire are available in appendices C and D. Participants were unaware that there were two versions of the questionnaire. The two versions were identical, except for the section that compared tweets from Bernie Sanders and Jeb Bush. In Version One, Bernie Sanders and Jeb Bush's names were attached to their tweets so participants knew whose tweets they were reading. In Version Two, Bernie Sanders and Jeb Bush's names were omitted to remove the potential for any bias when reviewing the tweets. Table 2 shows how candidates were listed in Version One:

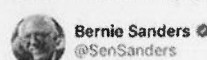
Table 2

Questionnaire – Version One

Next, we would like you to take a moment to look at examples from two 2016 presidential candidate's Twitter accounts.

Jeb Bush (R)

As the grandfather of two precious girls, I find that no apology can excuse away Donald Trump's reprehensible comments degrading women.

Bernie Sanders (D)

The Republican budget is disgraceful. Millions will lose health care and thousands will die in order to give tax breaks to billionaires.

Table 3 shows how candidates' names were omitted in Version Two:

Table 3

Questionnaire – Version Two

Next, we would like you to take a moment to look at examples from two political candidate's Twitter accounts.

Political Candidate #1

As the grandfather of two precious girls, I find that no apology can excuse away Donald Trump's reprehensible comments degrading women.

10/7/16, 19:05

Political Candidate #2

The Republican budget is disgraceful. Millions will lose health care and thousands will die in order to give tax breaks to billionaires.

10/26/17, 15:28

Qualitative data were coded and analyzed using an inductive coding method conceived by Spiggle (1994), who laid a framework for analyzing and interpreting qualitative data. The coding process closely replicated the coding done by Moulard et. al (2015), to compare results most accurately. The researchers initially categorized similar responses into corresponding groups. This categorization of data was done separately for responses regarding authentic politicians and inauthentic politicians. This process resulted in 40 categories relating to authentic politicians and 40 categories relating to inauthentic politicians (see appendix B.). These categories were collapsed into three higher-order theoretical constructs based on Moulard et. al's research on celebrity authenticity and Avolio, Bass and Dong Jung's research on transformational and transactional leadership (1999). Two informed researchers and one graduate assistant unfamiliar with the research coded the data independently and then resolved differences through discussion, resulting in an 81% intercoder reliability. Out of the 32 questionnaires, one was pulled for insufficient responses.

Results

Sample Characteristics

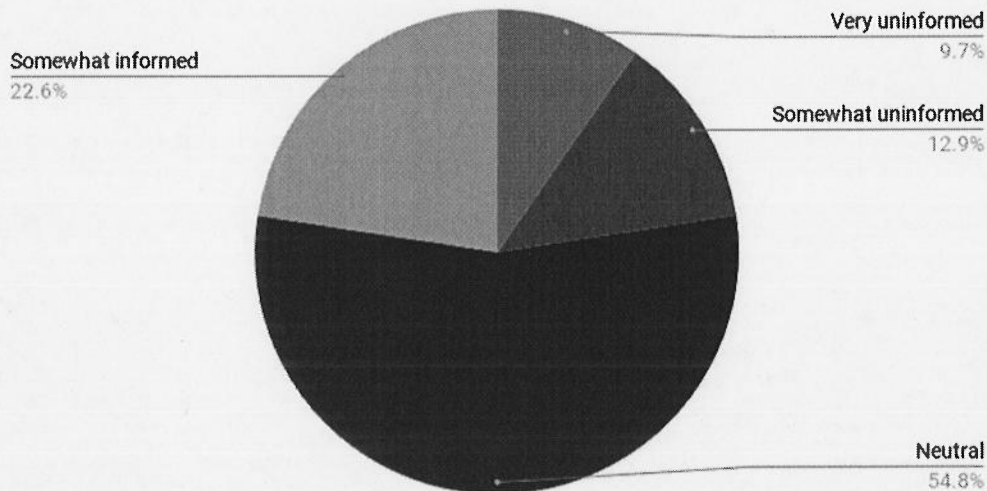
Approximately 58% of participants were male, and 42% were female. Participants all fell within the 18-24 age range, with an average age of 20.7. 80.65% of participants identified as white, 12.9% as black or African American, 3.23% as Hispanic or Latino and 3.23% as Asian or Pacific Islander. Approximately 52% of participants were political science majors, and other participants' majors included communications, marketing, urban and regional planning, business management, history and a few others. 38.7% of participants were Democrat, 32.26% were Republican, 16.13% were Independent and the remainder had no political affiliation, another political affiliation or preferred not to say. 35.48% of participants described their political view

as liberal, 25.8% were moderate, 19.35% were conservative, 12.9% were liberal and 6.45% identified as very conservative. 80.65% of participants said they voted in the 2016 presidential election, and 86.66% said they ‘definitely will’ vote in the next presidential election – while 6.66% said they ‘probably will,’ and the remainder said they ‘may or may not’ or ‘probably will not’. Thus, as expected the majority of the sample is politically engaged.

Participants were also asked about their news consumption and social media habits. Participants were asked where they get news about national politics, and had the option to select all choices that applied. 83.9% of participants said they get news about national politics from online newspapers, 67.78% said they get news from television and social media, 35.5% said they get news from word-of-mouth, 25.8% said they get news from internet blogs, 22.58% said they get news from print media and 16.13% said they learned about news from other sources, like parents, school and podcasts. Just 22.58% of participants felt they were ‘somewhat informed’ about current national politics, and the remainder of participants felt ‘very uninformed,’ ‘somewhat uninformed’ or ‘neutral’. Interestingly, despite high voting engagement and enrollment in a political science course, most participants felt ill-informed. In fact, no participants reported feeling ‘very informed’ about current national politics. See Table 4 for the breakdown. When asked how reliable participants’ think the news on social media is, approximately 55% of participants said it was ‘very unreliable’ or ‘somewhat unreliable’. Only 25.81% of participants thought news on social media was ‘somewhat reliable,’ 19.35% were neutral and no participants considered news from social media ‘very reliable’.

Table 4

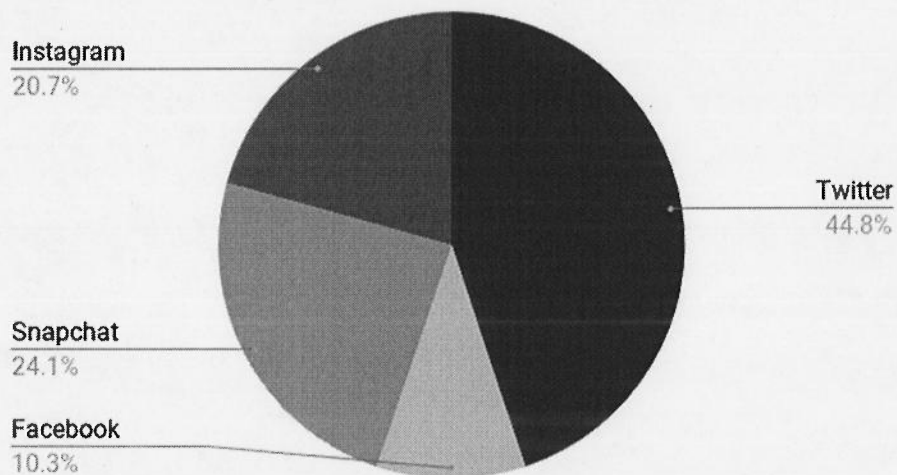
Do You Feel as Though You're Well Informed About Current National Politics?



Participants were active on social media, and actively following politicians through their social media sites. Participants said they used up to seven social media sites regularly, including Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, LinkedIn, Google+, Pinterest and Tumblr, but on average, participants used four social media sites. 44.83% of participants said Twitter was the social media sites they used most often, followed by Snapchat at 24.14%, Instagram at 20.69% and Facebook at 10.34%.

Table 5

Which Social Media Site Do You Use Most Often?



80.65% of participants said they followed political figures on social media. Of those participants, 24% said they followed one to two political figures, 44% said they followed three to five, 24% said they followed six to nine and 8% said they followed 10 or more political figures on social media. It is important to note that social media platforms and their popularity are ever-changing, making this difficult to study in the long run. The one constant is that social media sites are present and influential in the political process, but the specific platforms are variable to change.

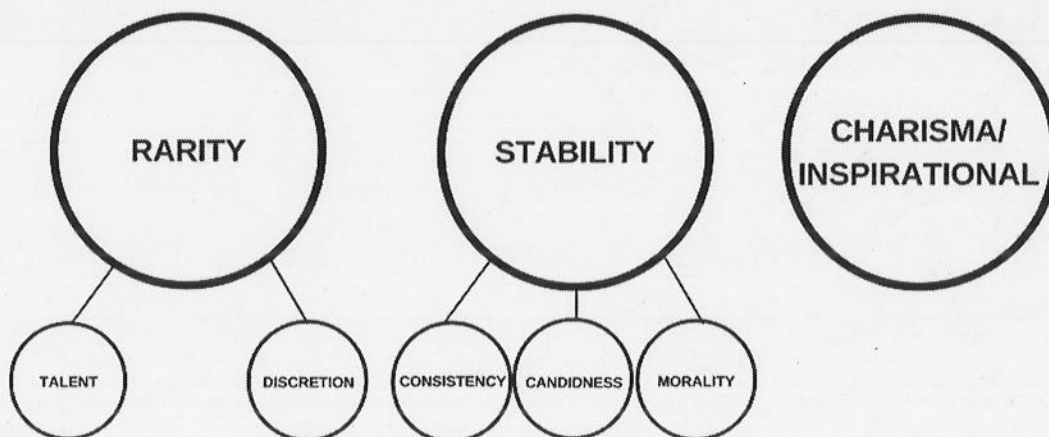
Research Question 1: What qualities or characteristics do college-aged students view as authentic among politicians?

The participants' responses generated 970 reasons concerning what makes a politician authentic or inauthentic. 495 reasons regarded what characteristics make a politician authentic, and 475 reasons regarded what characteristics make a politician inauthentic. The three higher-order theoretical constructs are rarity, stability and charisma/inspirational leadership. Rarity and stability are pulled from Moulard et. al's (2015) theoretical constructs on celebrity authenticity.

Table 6 shows the three higher-order theoretical constructs of political authenticity:

Table 6

Model of Political Authenticity



In Moulard et. al's study, rarity is made up of three sub-categories: talent, originality and discretion. In our findings, originality did not present as a factor that was relevant or important to political authenticity. For our research, rarity is made up of two sub-categories: talent and discretion. As defined by Moulard et. al, talent is defined by the perception that an individual demonstrates skill in his or her chosen field (Moulard et. al, 2015). As supported in our research, talent was identified in politicians that were perceived to be knowledgeable, educated or experienced. One participant said that they found politicians to be authentic when "they talk about issues and seem to fully understand the issue and the possible outcomes, while finding a solution." Another described authentic politicians as those who have "a solid knowledge and background of politics." Other participants said similar phrases regarding talent, like "very educated" and "knows what he is talking about." On the flip side, politicians who were perceived to be unknowledgeable, inexperience or uneducated were considered inauthentic. Participants noted a "lack of experience in politics" and "lack of education in fields like law, political science or history" to be some indicators of inauthenticity.

Moulard et. al described discretion as the perception that an individual guards their personal life (2015). Our research found discretion to relate to politicians who uphold a strong personal and family life. This idea can be shown through one participant's thoughts on Jeb Bush as an authentic politician. The participant wrote, "Instead of just being a mouth piece for policy, he showed that politicians are people just like us with families, concerns and problems." Similar thoughts expressed authentic politicians having a "strong family background" and "clear family values."

Stability is made up of three sub-categories: consistency, candidness and morality. These sub-categories are consistent with those regarding celebrity authenticity. Stability is the

perception that one remains unwavering (Moulard et. al, 2015). Consistency refers to being unchanging throughout one's career. As found in our research, consistency is one of the most important factors in determining political authenticity. Thoughts on consistency revolved around a politician being consistent in his/her voting record and platform. Regarding consistency, many participants – both liberal and conservative – credited Bernie Sanders (D). Here are a few thoughts regarding consistency:

- “While I do not agree with all of [Sanders'] policies I tip my hat to him for having the courage to stick to his guns. A lot of times you see politicians change their opinions/stances when pressured by people, but Bernie stands by what he says/believes.”
- “When he promised his supporters he would do something, he stuck to his word... Personally I think his policies are a little too left but I commend him for standing up for what he believes in, even when people have tried to shift his stances on certain issues.”

Politicians were considered inauthentic when they were perceived as being inconsistent. This included thoughts like, “he has changed parties” and “he doesn't stick with his policies.” One participant echoed these thoughts when describing Donald Trump as an inauthentic politician. The participant wrote, “[Trump] has changed his political beliefs so much it is hard to believe him.”

Candidness refers to the perception that one's spoken words reflect their true feelings (Moulard et. al, 2015). In our findings, candidness refers to politicians being genuine, saying what they believe and having an un-crafted and unfiltered message. One participant described an authentic politician as being “a very honest candidate who has no issue speaking up for what he believes in.” One said, “Trump tweets like he talks. You know he is the one tweeting it. If I wanted something formal, I would read a press release.” Another said, “Sanders says what he

believes and it seems to come from him and not a staff worker.” Many mirrored this thought, referring to politicians from both parties. In contrast, politicians were perceived as inauthentic when seeming ingenuine, having a crafted message and not saying what they believe. One participant said, “Hillary Clinton seems ingenuine to me. The way she delivers political speeches gave me the feeling of inauthenticity. Everything seemed scripted.”

Morality was defined by upholding ideals, values and standards (Moulard et. al, 2015). Our research supported that political authenticity was influenced by a politician’s morality, integrity, honesty and trustworthiness. Some thoughts regarding morality include, “I feel he is a good person from the heart,” and “I believe in their decisions, I trust them.” One participant said that an authentic politician provides them with a “sense of trust. Makes me feel like they actually have my best interest in mind.” Conversely, politicians perceived as inauthentic displayed a lack of morality. This included being perceived as corrupt, dishonest and untrustworthy. Participants said things like, “I feel I cannot trust them” and “they lie.” Participants described inauthentic politicians as having “been caught up in a lot of scandal.”

When coding the data, a growing number of responses did not align with the six theoretical constructs or the two higher-order factors that fit celebrity authenticity – instead, an emerging number of responses seemed to coincide with qualities that a leader would possess. To identify a third higher-order theoretical construct, the researchers turned to literature on leadership, to determine if leadership qualities were key components in the perception of authentic politicians. After extensive research on authentic leadership, transformational leadership and transactional leadership, a third higher-order theoretical construct emerged based upon the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, denoted in Avolio, Bass & Jung’s “Re-examining the components of transformational and transactional leadership using the Multifactor

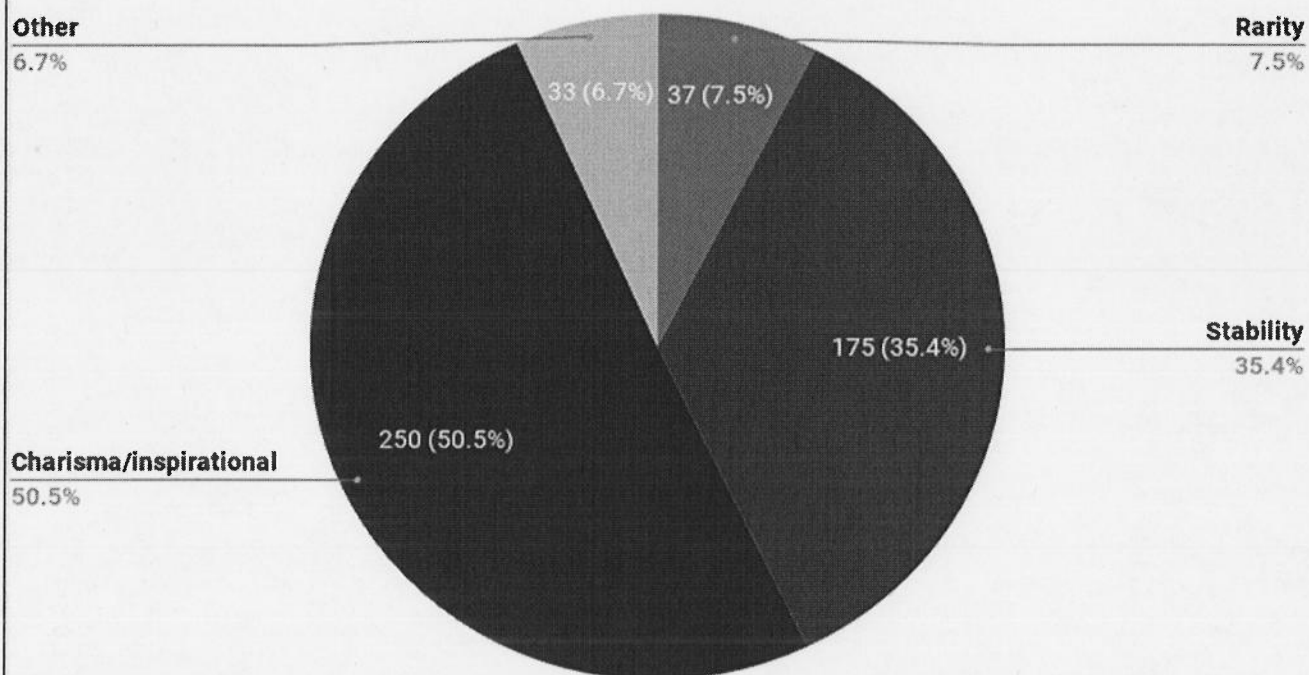
Leadership Questionnaire” (1999). Of the six factors that determine transformational and transactional leadership, charisma/inspirational leadership aligned with the remaining responses on political authenticity, and became the third higher-order theoretical construct in this research.

Charisma/inspirational leadership is defined as a leader who “provides followers with a clear sense of purpose that is energizing, is a role model for ethical conduct and builds identification with the leader and his or her articulated vision” (Avolio, Bass & Jung, 1999, p. 444). Some indicators of charisma/inspirational leadership that emerged in our research included, “cares for the country as a whole,” “uniting,” “relatable” and “articulate.” One participant described Barack Obama as an authentic politician whose actions reflected charisma/inspirational leadership. The participant said, “He fought for people to have more. He cared about the wellbeing of underprivileged citizens. His speeches touched me.” One participant who found Bernie Sanders to be authentic said, “Based on his social media posts, I feel like he genuinely cares about the country and how decisions the government makes will effect Americans.” One participant described Donald Trump as authentic because, “he cares about America, our jobs, the military, and the people.” Another described an authentic politician as someone who “genuinely cares about the voters and the issues facing everyday people. Genuinely cares about the country.” Inauthentic politicians were perceived as divisive, unrelatable, selfish and egotistical. “They only care about themselves and they make that clear. They don’t care about the state of the country or the citizens,” one participant said. Participants also expressed the impression that inauthentic politicians “are just in politics so that they can hold power.” Another thought that was voiced was inauthentic politicians being unable to “relate to the average American person.”

Rarity accounted for 57 total responses (37 regarding authenticity, 20 regarding inauthenticity), stability accounted for 346 total responses (175 regarding authenticity, 171 regarding inauthenticity) and charisma/inspirational leadership accounted for 439 responses (250 regarding authenticity, 189 regarding inauthenticity). 128 responses were coded as “other” and did not fit with the three higher-order constructs. In response to RQ1, the data suggests that the most important quality or characteristic in determining political authenticity is charisma/inspirational leadership, accounting for 50.5% of responses, followed by stability, which made up 35.4% of responses. Rarity was a significantly less important factor, only making up 7.5% of responses, while 6.7% of responses were coded as “other.” Table 7 reflects the breakdown between the three higher-order theoretical constructs – rarity, stability and charisma/inspirational leadership.

Table 7

What Are Important Characteristics of an Authentic Politician?



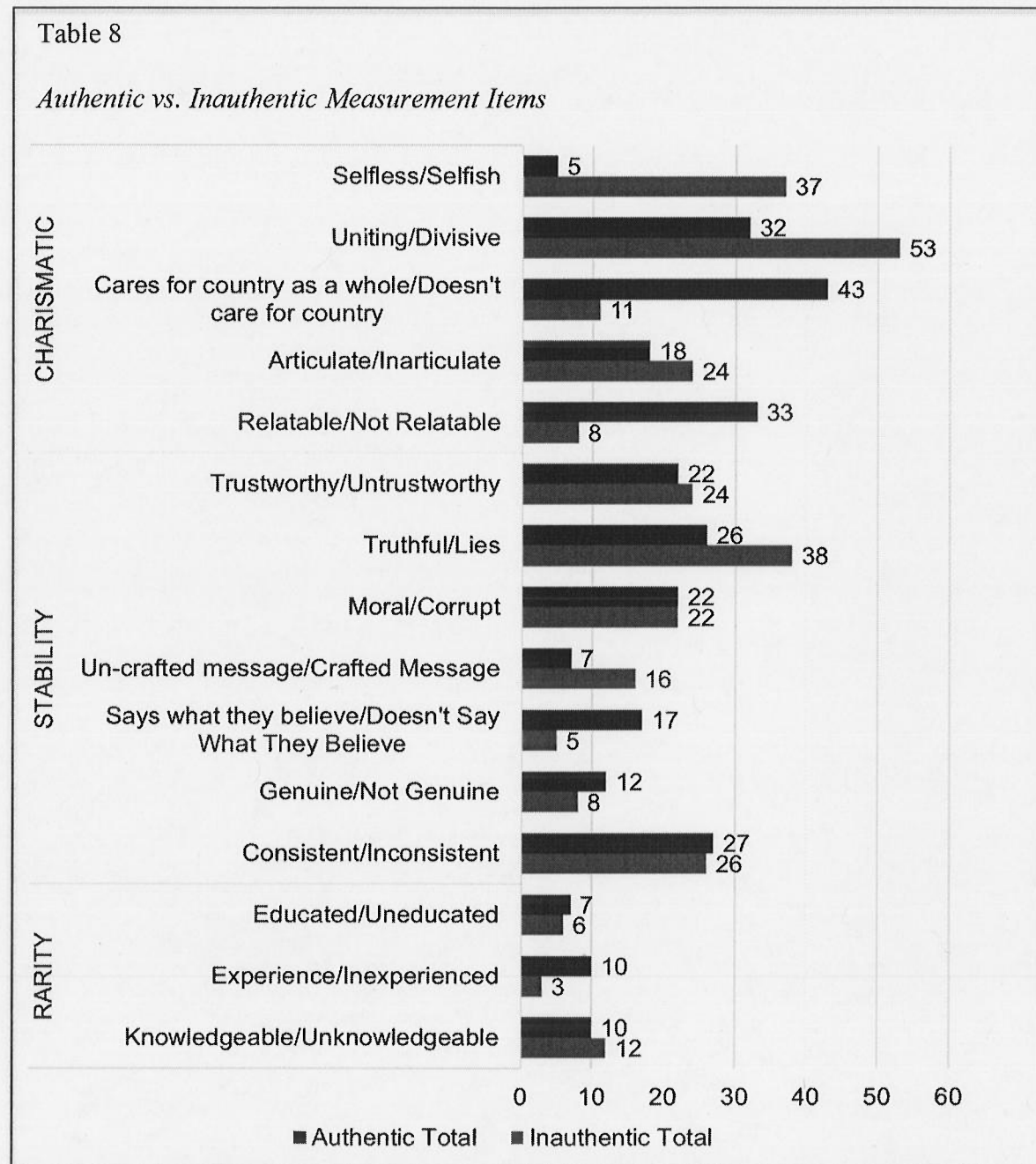
Research Question 2: How do authentic politicians differ from authentic celebrities?

In Moulard et. al's (2015) study, the younger group of participants found rarity to have a stronger effect on celebrity authenticity. Contrary to Moulard et. al's findings, the young-adults in our study considered stability to have a stronger effect on political authenticity, revealing the differences in political and celebrity authenticity, and resolving RQ2. Additionally, rarity in celebrity authenticity was made up of three sub-categories: talent, originality and discretion. When applied to politicians, only talent and discretion were factors that appeared in determining political authenticity. Another difference between celebrity and political authenticity was the prevalence of responses regarding inauthenticity. In Moulard et. al's study, the researchers originally considered both authentic and inauthentic descriptions when developing the codes and theoretical constructs. But the researchers collapsed the responses by comparing authentic responses with inauthentic responses that were the direct opposite (Moulard et. al, 2015). The final set of theoretical constructs only reflected authenticity in celebrities. In our findings, inauthenticity was just as essential as authenticity – as shown in the almost equal number of responses regarding authenticity and inauthenticity. While Moulard et. al focused their analysis on authenticity, we found it imperative to analyze both what makes a politician authentic and inauthentic. These are a few differences between authentic politicians and authentic celebrities, as found through comparing our findings with Moulard et. al's research.

Research Question 3: Is leadership a central factor in the perception of political authenticity?

With more than 50% of responses indicating that charisma/inspirational leadership is an important characteristic of an authentic politician, it is evident that leadership is a central factor of political authenticity, answering RQ3. Of the 40 total categories, the graph on the following

page reflects the most prevalent categories, and the higher-order theoretical constructs that they coincide with. Table 8 reflects responses on authenticity and inauthenticity.

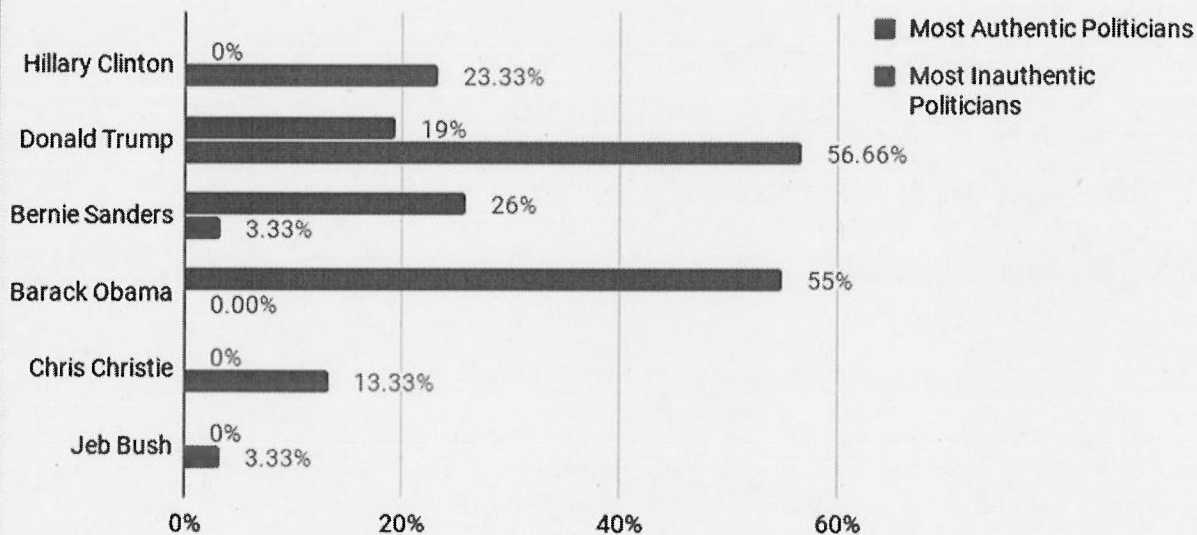


Authentic and Inauthentic Politicians

Participants were also asked to choose the most authentic and most inauthentic politicians from a given list, which included Jeb Bush (R), Chris Christie (R), Hillary Clinton (D), Barack Obama (D), Bernie Sanders (D) and Donald Trump (R). Table 9 reflects the most authentic and inauthentic politicians chosen by participants.

Table 9

Most Authentic and Inauthentic Politicians Chosen from Provided List



Participants had the option to write in additional politicians whom they considered to be authentic or inauthentic. Authentic politicians mentioned who were not in the provided list included Gary Johnson, and inauthentic politicians mentioned who were not in the provided list included Scott Walker. Participants were also asked to elaborate why they considered the politicians authentic or inauthentic. Here are a few participants' thoughts on authentic and inauthentic politicians (more direct quotes can be found in appendix E.):

- “Bernie Sanders is someone I have always felt is 100% authentic, even when faced with pressure to change his views Bernie stayed the course and stood strong for what he believed in.”
- “[Hillary Clinton]’s formal and doesn’t relate to the audience. She seems very arrogant and not genuine.”
- “[Donald Trump] is inauthentic because he constantly divides the nation as commander and chief. It is fine to pick a side on controversial issues but he does it to cause conflict between different races and political parties.”
- “[Barack Obama] is friendly and willing to work with other people within his party, as well as Republicans. He is never negative, he is charismatic and he has a solid knowledge and background of politics.”

Discussion

This research provides a deeper analysis of perceived authenticity as it relates to politicians. While research has been done regarding self-authenticity, there is less research on one’s perceptions of another individual’s authenticity. Moulard et. al’s research on celebrity authenticity set an important first step in measuring authenticity of another individual. This research sought to expand upon this area by looking into perceived authenticity of politicians. The results suggest that the most important characteristics in determining political authenticity are rarity, stability and charisma/inspirational leadership. Charisma/inspirational leadership proved to be the most important factor, followed by stability and rarity. This finding is interesting, as it compares to antecedents of celebrity authenticity. In celebrity authenticity, rarity was a more important factor than stability for the younger group of participants. In contrast, our

pool of 18- to 24-year-old participants found stability to be more important than rarity in determining political authenticity.

The findings in this research also provide insight into the nation's current political climate. The biggest factors in determining political authenticity include honesty, consistency, being uniting and caring for the country as a whole. The main factors in determining inauthenticity include dishonesty, inconsistency and divisiveness. These factors reflect what qualities young-adult voters consider most important in authentic politicians. This comes at a time when anxiety about the political climate is at a record high, according to a 2017 study done by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2017). The study found that 63 percent of Americans feel significant stress about the future of the nation (APA, 2017). Furthermore, trust in government has reached an all-time low of 18 percent (Silvergate, 2017). This stress and uncertainty could also support why participants expressed an even number of responses on authenticity and inauthenticity.

Additionally, this study contributes to the emerging research on politicians using social media as a campaign platform. These findings add insight into how politicians can effectively portray themselves on social media to engage and attract young-adult voters. The findings show that politicians with seemingly un-crafted and unfiltered message are perceived to be more authentic. Politicians and political candidates can use the findings in this research as a guide to appeal to young-adult voters and develop a better understanding of how political authenticity is perceived.

Limitations

The most prominent limitation in this research was the small sample size. Because of the time-consuming nature of coding and analyzing qualitative data, and because this was a year-

long undergraduate research project, the researchers were limited to using a small sample size. This research should be replicated with a larger sample size to improve the reliability of results.

Another factor that could have impacted results was that participants were not completely representative of the typical 18-to-24-year-old. Participants were all college students enrolled in a political science course, and the majority were political science students. This was beneficial to the content and quality of responses, but could have skewed results by relying on the views of a knowledgeable, politically-inclined group. The majority of participants were white, which is reflective of the demographics of the university in which the study was conducted. While other demographics, like gender and political ideology, were fairly evenly represented, a larger group of participants would allow comparison among these demographic differences.

This research is also unique in that the results are, in part, a reflection of the political climate. The perception of what makes a politician authentic is ever-evolving with the changing political climate. When conducting this research, the researchers asked how responses would differ a few months down the line, and how they would differ if this study were to be conducted five years from now. These are important questions to ask in continually exploring the role of perceived authenticity in politicians and analyzing how these perceptions change overtime. Still, this research offers insight into political authenticity by establishing initial steps in defining the term and setting a framework for measuring it.

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Appendix A IRB Approval

Salisbury

A Maryland University of National Distinction

Salisbury University
Institutional Review Board
Committee on Human Research
Phone: (410) 548-3549
Fax: (410) 677-0052
Email: humanresearch@salisbury.edu

IRB Research Protocol Approval Notification

Date: 01/18/18

To: K. Passyn

RE: Protocol #50

Type of Submission: Expedited

Type of IRB Review: Expedited

Protocol is scheduled to begin 12/17 and end 05/18.

Approval for this project is valid from 01/18/18 to 05/31/18.

CONGRATULATIONS.

This letter serves to notify Dr. Kirsten Passyn that the Salisbury University (SU) Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the above referenced protocol entitled, Social Media and the Youth Vote on January 18, 2018.

Pursuant to Federal regulations 21 CFR 56.109, the IRB has determined that this protocol qualifies for Expedited review.

Federal regulation 45 CFR 46.103 (b)(4)(iii) requires Primary Investigators (PI), except when a subject is in immediate danger, to assure any change to an approved protocol is not initiated prior to IRB review and approval. Additionally, the PI must also inform the IRB of unanticipated problems involving risks to participants.

These same federal regulations require continuing review of research be conducted by the IRB at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk. Your research is scheduled to begin 12/17 and end 05/18. When necessary, the PI will receive a continuing review reminder notice prior to the date protocol approval ends; however, it is the PI's responsibility to submit continuing review reports in a timely manner (at least 3 weeks prior to scheduled end date on the protocol approval).

The SU IRB is organized and operated according to guidelines of the United States Office for Human Research Protections and the United States Code of Federal Regulations and under Federal Wide Assurance No. FWA00020237.

If you have any questions about this review or questions, concerns, and/or suggestions regarding this process, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of Graduate Studies and Research at 410-548-3549 or humanresearch@salisbury.edu.


Chair, IRB Committee on Human Research

Appendix B

The chart below shows the 40 authentic and inauthentic categories that the researcher's coded:

Authentic Measurement Items		Inauthentic Measurement Items	
	TOTAL		TOTAL
1 Knowledgeable		10 Unknowledgeable/unintelligent	12
2 Experience		10 Inexperienced	3
3 Educated		7 Uneducated	6
4 Family values		7 Lack of family values	0
5 Separates personal life and politics		3 Does not separate personal life and politics	0
6 Disciplined		4 Not Disciplined	0
7 Consistent	21	Inconsistent	26
8 Responsible	2	Irresponsible	0
9 Sincere	4	Insincere	2
10 Genuine	12	Not genuine	8
11 Speak their mind	7	Doesn't speak their mind	0
12 Unexaggerated	2	Overexaggerated	10
13 Says what they believe	17	Does not say what they believe	5
14 Colloquial/informal	5	Formal	5
15 Un-crafted message/unfiltered	7	Crafted message	16
16 Moral/Integrity	22	Corrupt	22
17 Truthful/honest	26	Lies/dishonest	38
18 Trustworthy	22	Distrust/untrustworthy	24
19 Respect	19	Disrespect	14
20 Grace	5	Ungraceful	1
21 Charismatic	5	Dull/boring	5
22 Uplifting	12	Not uplifting	2
23 Inspiring	7	Not inspiring	0
24 Relatable	33	Unrelatable	8
25 Effective communicator/articulate	18	Ineffective speaker/not proper/informal	24
26 Hardworking	6	Not hardworking	0
27 Cares for the country as a whole/country loyalty	43	Doesn't care for the country as a whole	11
28 Clear map of improvements	9	Not trying to make real improvements	13
29 Uniting	32	Insulting/attacking/divisive	53
30 Good leader	10	Bad leader	13
31 Positive	9	Negative	6
32 Issue-centric	14	Not issue-centric	4
33 Fact-based	4	Not fact-based	3
34 Strong	5	Weak	0
35 Passionate	4	Unpassionate	4
36 Empathetic	11	Not empathetic	0
37 Selfless	5	Selfish/Egotistical	37
38 Personal/personable	8	Not personal/personable	2
39 Action (proactive)	15	Inaction/not proactive	4
40 OTHER	33	OTHER	95

Appendix C
Questionnaire – Version 1
Authentic Political Candidates and Politicians

Thanks for taking the time to participate in this research!

This research is about authenticity. For instance, who are some authentic political candidates? What makes them authentic in your mind?

Please answer the questions on the next few pages. There are no “correct” or “incorrect” answers. Just provide the first thoughts that come to mind.

Your participation is completely voluntary and the survey can be stopped at any time.

PART I: Authentic Politicians

First, we want to know what you think about authentic and inauthentic politicians or political candidates.
Please think of a politician or political candidate that you think is fake or *inauthentic*.

1. What characteristics does this person have that make them inauthentic?

2. What sort of beliefs and feelings do you have toward this person because he/she is inauthentic?

Now, please think of a politician or political candidate that you think is authentic, real, or genuine.

3. What characteristics does this person have that make them authentic?

4. What sort of beliefs and feelings do you have toward this person because he/she is authentic?

PART II: Authentic Politicians (Version 2)

Next, we want to know what you think about *authentic* and *inauthentic* political candidates. Below is a list of a few political candidates that you may recognize. Please take a moment to look through them.

Hillary Clinton (D)

Donald Trump (R)

Bernie Sanders (D)

Barack Obama (D)

Chris Christie (R)

Jeb Bush (R)

Please **circle ONE** political candidate above that you think is the most authentic.

1. What characteristics does this political candidate have that make him/her authentic?







2. What sort of beliefs and feelings do you have toward this political candidate because he/she is authentic?

Now, underline ONE political candidate above that you think is the most inauthentic or fake.

3. What characteristics does this political candidate have that make him/her inauthentic?

4. What sort of beliefs and feelings do you have toward this political candidate because he/she is inauthentic?

Next, we would like you to take a moment to look at examples from two 2016 presidential candidate's Twitter accounts.

Jeb Bush (R)	Bernie Sanders (D)
 Jeb Bush ● @JebBush <p>As the grandfather of two precious girls, I find that no apology can excuse away Donald Trump's reprehensible comments degrading women.</p> <p>10/7/16, 19:05</p> <p>61.1K Retweets 146K Likes</p>	 Bernie Sanders ● @SenSanders <p>The Republican budget is disgraceful. Millions will lose health care and thousands will die in order to give tax breaks to billionaires.</p> <p>10/26/17, 15:28</p> <p>13.1K Retweets 34.8K Likes</p>
 Jeb Bush ● @JebBush <p>We need people marching in the streets for #edreform. I'll be marching, and I hope you'll join me.</p> <p>@ConstitutionCtr #AmericasTownHall</p> <p>10/2/17, 19:25</p> <p>39 Retweets 156 Likes</p>	 Bernie Sanders ● @SenSanders <p>People who can't afford health care don't deserve to die. It's crazy that we even have to say that.</p> <p>9/21/17, 10:24</p> <p>61.2K Retweets 167K Likes</p>
 Jeb Bush ● @JebBush <p>The white supremacists and their bigotry do not represent our great country. All Americans should condemn this vile hatred.</p> <p>#Charlottesville</p> <p>8/12/17, 16:05</p> <p>21.1K Retweets 69.5K Likes</p>	 Bernie Sanders ● @SenSanders <p>We are the wealthiest country in the history of the world. How is it possible that 2 months after Hurricane Maria half the people of Puerto Rico don't have electricity?</p> <p>11/14/17, 11:24</p> <p>27.7K Retweets 81.4K Likes</p>

Please **circle** the political candidate above that you perceive to be more **authentic** based on their posts on social media.

5. What elements of this political candidate's social media presence make him/her seem authentic?







6. What sort of beliefs and feelings do you have toward this political candidate based on his/her social media posts?

Please **underline** the political candidate above that you perceive to be more **inauthentic** based on their posts on social media.

7. What elements of this political candidate's social media presence make him/her seem inauthentic?

8. What sort of beliefs and feelings do you have toward this political candidate based on his/her social media posts?

Next, we would like you to take a moment to look at examples from the two 2016 presidential nominees' Twitter accounts.

Donald Trump (R)	Hillary Clinton (D)
 <p>Donald J. Trump ✓ @realDonaldTrump</p> <p>It is actually hard to believe how naive (or dumb) the Failing @nytimes is when it comes to foreign policy...weak and ineffective!</p> <p>11/15/17, 11:52</p> <p>15.5K Retweets 73.3K Likes</p>	 <p>Hillary Clinton ✓ @HillaryClinton</p> <p>A historic mistake. The world is moving forward together on climate change. Paris withdrawal leaves American workers & families behind.</p> <p>6/1/17, 19:38</p> <p>59.2K Retweets 223K Likes</p>
 <p>Donald J. Trump ✓ @realDonaldTrump</p> <p>Why would Kim Jong-un insult me by calling me "old," when I would NEVER call him "short and fat?" Oh well, I try so hard to be his friend - and maybe someday that will happen!</p> <p>11/11/17, 19:48 from Vietnam</p> <p>220K Retweets 479K Likes</p>	 <p>Hillary Clinton ✓ @HillaryClinton</p> <p>Thanks for standing, speaking & marching for our values @womensmarch. Important as ever. I truly believe we're always Stronger Together.</p> <p>1/21/17, 10:07</p> <p>118K Retweets 444K Likes</p>
 <p>Donald J. Trump ✓ @realDonaldTrump</p> <p>Crooked Hillary Clinton is the worst (and biggest) loser of all time. She just can't stop, which is so good for the Republican Party. Hillary, get on with your life and give it another try in three years!</p> <p>11/18/17, 08:31</p> <p>51K Retweets 190K Likes</p>	 <p>Hillary Clinton ✓ @HillaryClinton</p> <p>The last few months, I've been reflecting, spending time with family —and, yes, taking walks in the woods.</p> <p>5/15/17, 16:12</p> <p>10.2K Retweets 79.8K Likes</p>

Please **circle** the political candidate above that you perceive to be more **authentic** based on their posts on social media.

9. What elements of this political candidate's social media presence make him/her seem authentic?

10. What sort of beliefs and feelings do you have toward this political candidate based on his/her social media posts?

Please **underline** the political candidate above that you perceive to be more ***inauthentic*** based on their posts on social media.

11. What elements of this political candidate's social media presence make him/her seem inauthentic?

12. What sort of beliefs and feelings do you have toward this political candidate based on his/her social media posts?

QUESTIONNAIRE – PART III: Information about yourself

1. What is your gender? Male Female Other/Choose not to disclose

2. What is your age? 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

3. Which of the following social media tools do you use? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Facebook
☐ Twitter
☐ Snapchat
☐ Instagram
☐ LinkedIn
☐ Tumblr
☐ Google+
☐ Pinterest

4. Which one of the tools listed above do you use MOST often? (Please check ONE)

- ☐ Facebook
☐ Twitter
☐ Snapchat
☐ Instagram
☐ LinkedIn

- ☐ Tumblr
- ☐ Google+
- ☐ Pinterest

5. How would you describe your political views? (Please circle one)

Very conservative Conservative Moderate Liberal Very Liberal

6. What is your political affiliation?

- ☐ Democrat
- ☐ Republican
- ☐ Independent
- ☐ None
- ☐ Rather not say
- ☐ Other (specify) _____

7. Did you vote in the 2016 presidential election?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

(Continue to next page...)

8. How likely are you to vote in the next presidential election? (Circle one)

Definitely will not Probably will not May or may not Probably will Definitely will

9. How do you get your news about national politics? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Print (newspapers, magazines, etc.)
- ☐ Online newspaper
- ☐ Television
- ☐ Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, etc.)
- ☐ Radio
- ☐ Internet blog
- ☐ Word-of-mouth
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

10. How reliable do you think the news you see on social media is? (Circle one)

Very unreliable Somewhat unreliable Neutral Somewhat reliable Very reliable

11. Do you feel as though you're well informed about current national politics? (Circle one)

Not interested in politics Very uninformed Somewhat uninformed Neutral Somewhat informed Very informed

12. Do you follow any political figures on social media? (President, senators, members of congress, political candidates, etc.)

☐ Yes

☐ No

13. If you answered yes to the previous question, how many political figures do you follow on social media?

☐ 1-2

☐ 3-5

☐ 6-9

☐ 10 or more

14. Please specify your ethnicity:

☐ White

☐ Hispanic or Latino

☐ Black or African American

☐ Native American or American Indian

☐ Asian / Pacific Islander

☐ Other

15. Please indicate your major(s): _____

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix D
Questionnaire – Version 2
Authentic Political Candidates and Politicians

Thanks for taking the time to participate in this research!

This research is about authenticity. For instance, who are some authentic political candidates? What makes them authentic in your mind?

Please answer the questions on the next few pages. There are no “correct” or “incorrect” answers. Just provide the first thoughts that come to mind.

Your participation is completely voluntary and the survey can be stopped at any time.

PART I: Authentic Politicians

First, we want to know what you think about authentic and inauthentic politicians or political candidates.

*Please think of a politician or political candidate that you think is fake or **inauthentic**.*

1. What characteristics does this person have that make them inauthentic?

2. What sort of beliefs and feelings do you have toward this person because he/she is inauthentic?

Now, please think of a politician or political candidate that you think is authentic, real, or genuine.

3. What characteristics does this person have that make them authentic?

4. What sort of beliefs and feelings do you have toward this person because he/she is authentic?

PART II: Authentic Politicians (Version 2)

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Hillary Clinton (D)

Donald Trump (R)

Bernie Sanders (D)

Barack Obama (D)

Chris Christie (R)

Jeb Bush (R)

*Please **circle** ONE political candidate above that you think is the most authentic.*

5. What characteristics does this political candidate have that make him/her authentic?

6. What sort of beliefs and feelings do you have toward this political candidate because he/she is authentic?

*Now, **underline** ONE political candidate above that you think is the most **inauthentic** or fake.*

7. What characteristics does this political candidate have that make him/her inauthentic?

8. What sort of beliefs and feelings do you have toward this political candidate because he/she is inauthentic?

Next, we would like you to take a moment to look at examples from two political candidate's Twitter accounts.

Political Candidate #1	Political Candidate #2
<p>As the grandfather of two precious girls, I find that no apology can excuse away Donald Trump's reprehensible comments degrading women.</p> <p>10/7/16, 19:05</p> <p>We need people marching in the streets for #edreform. I'll be marching, and I hope you'll join me.</p> <p>@ConstitutionCtr #AmericasTownHall</p> <p>10/2/17, 19:25</p> <p>The white supremacists and their bigotry do not represent our great country. All Americans should condemn this vile hatred.</p> <p>#Charlottesville</p> <p>8/12/17, 16:05</p>	<p>The Republican budget is disgraceful. Millions will lose health care and thousands will die in order to give tax breaks to billionaires.</p> <p>10/26/17, 15:28</p> <p>People who can't afford health care don't deserve to die. It's crazy that we even have to say that.</p> <p>9/21/17, 10:24</p> <p>We are the wealthiest country in the history of the world. How is it possible that 2 months after Hurricane Maria half the people of Puerto Rico don't have electricity?</p> <p>11/14/17, 11:24</p>

Please **circle** the political candidate above that you perceive to be more **authentic** based on their posts on social media.

9. What elements of this political candidate's social media presence make him/her seem authentic?







10. What sort of beliefs and feelings do you have toward this political candidate based on his/her social media posts?

Please **underline** the political candidate above that you perceive to be more ***inauthentic*** based on their posts on social media.

11. What elements of this political candidate's social media presence make him/her seem inauthentic?

12. What sort of beliefs and feelings do you have toward this political candidate based on his/her social media posts?

Next, we would like you to take a moment to look at examples from the two 2016 presidential nominees' Twitter accounts.

Donald Trump (R)	Hillary Clinton (D)
 Donald J. Trump ● @realDonaldTrump <p>It is actually hard to believe how naive (or dumb) the Failing @nytimes is when it comes to foreign policy...weak and ineffective!</p> <p>11/15/17, 11:52</p> <p>15.5K Retweets 73.3K Likes</p>	 Hillary Clinton ● @HillaryClinton <p>A historic mistake. The world is moving forward together on climate change. Paris withdrawal leaves American workers & families behind.</p> <p>6/1/17, 19:38</p> <p>69.2K Retweets 223K Likes</p>
 Donald J. Trump ● @realDonaldTrump <p>Why would Kim Jong-un insult me by calling me "old," when I would NEVER call him "short and fat?" Oh well, I try so hard to be his friend - and maybe someday that will happen!</p> <p>11/11/17, 10:48 from Vietnam</p> <p>220K Retweets 479K Likes</p>	 Hillary Clinton ● @HillaryClinton <p>Thanks for standing, speaking & marching for our values @womensmarch. Important as ever. I truly believe we're always Stronger Together.</p> <p>1/21/17, 10:07</p> <p>118K Retweets 444K Likes</p>
 Donald J. Trump ● @realDonaldTrump <p>Crooked Hillary Clinton is the worst (and biggest) loser of all time. She just can't stop, which is so good for the Republican Party. Hillary, get on with your life and give it another try in three years!</p> <p>11/18/17, 08:31</p> <p>61K Retweets 190K Likes</p>	 Hillary Clinton ● @HillaryClinton <p>The last few months, I've been reflecting, spending time with family —and, yes, taking walks in the woods.</p> <p>5/15/17, 16:12</p> <p>10.2K Retweets 79.8K Likes</p>

Please **circle** the political candidate above that you perceive to be more **authentic** based on their posts on social media.

13. What elements of this political candidate's social media presence make him/her seem authentic?

14. What sort of beliefs and feelings do you have toward this political candidate based on his/her social media posts?

Please **underline** the political candidate above that you perceive to be more **inauthentic** based on their posts on social media.

15. What elements of this political candidate's social media presence make him/her seem inauthentic?

16. What sort of beliefs and feelings do you have toward this political candidate based on his/her social media posts?

QUESTIONNAIRE – PART III: Information about yourself

1. What is your gender? Male Female Other/Choose not to disclose

2. What is your age? 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

3. Which of the following social media tools do you use? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Facebook
☐ Twitter
☐ Snapchat
☐ Instagram
☐ LinkedIn
☐ Tumblr
☐ Google+
☐ Pinterest

4. Which one of the tools listed above do you use MOST often? (Please check ONE)

- ☐ Facebook
☐ Twitter

- ☐ Snapchat
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ Tumblr
- ☐ Google+
- ☐ Pinterest

5. How would you describe your political views? (Please circle one)

Very conservative Conservative Moderate Liberal Very Liberal

6. What is your political affiliation?

- ☐ Democrat
- ☐ Republican
- ☐ Independent
- ☐ None
- ☐ Rather not say
- ☐ Other (specify) _____

7. Did you vote in the 2016 presidential election?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

(Continue to next page...)

8. How likely are you to vote in the next presidential election? (Circle one)

Definitely will not Probably will not May or may not Probably will Definitely will

9. How do you get your news about national politics? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Print (newspapers, magazines, etc.)
- ☐ Online newspaper
- ☐ Television
- ☐ Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, etc.)
- ☐ Radio
- ☐ Internet blog
- ☐ Word-of-mouth
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

10. How reliable do you think the news you see on social media is? (Circle one)

Very unreliable Somewhat unreliable Neutral Somewhat reliable Very reliable

11. Do you feel as though you're well informed about current national politics? (Circle one)

Not interested in politics Very uninformed Somewhat uninformed Neutral Somewhat informed Very informed

12. Do you follow any political figures on social media? (President, senators, members of congress, political candidates, etc.)

- ☐ Yes

☐ No

13. If you answered yes to the previous question, how many political figures do you follow on social media?

☐ 1-2

☐ 3-5

☐ 6-9

☐ 10 or more

14. Please specify your ethnicity:

☐ White

☐ Hispanic or Latino

☐ Black or African American

☐ Native American or American Indian

☐ Asian / Pacific Islander

☐ Other

15. Please indicate your major(s): _____

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix E

Direct Quotes by Category

AUTHENTIC QUOTES

Rarity:

Talent

- Knowledgeable, experienced, educated
 - “When they talk about issues and seem to fully understand the issue and the possible outcomes while finding a solution.”
 - “He is friendly and willing to work with other people within his party, as well as Republicans. He is never negative, he is charismatic and he has a solid knowledge and background of politics.”
 - “Great speaker. Very educated and knows what he is talking about”

Discretion

- Family values
 - “Jeb made personal connections in two of his tweets, instead of just being a mouth piece for policy he showed that politicians are people just like us with families, concerns and problems.”
 - “Relatable/ isn't just rich and famous. Has a strong family background. Shows genuine emotion. Pushes Different Agendas and not just their party's agenda or their own.”
 - “Clear family values, good education, shows emotion when appropriate.”

Stability:

Consistency

- Consistent
 - “I believe she is authentic in her advocacy for the poor and underserved of this country. She has been consistent in her voting record, which I respect.”
 - “A record showing consistent efforts showing their beliefs of civil injustice, passion, accountability.”
 - “While I do not agree with all of his policies I tip my hat to him for having the courage to stick to his guns. A lot of times you see politicians change their opinions/stances when pressured by people but Bernie stands by what he says/believes.”
 - “Bernie Sanders is someone I have always felt is 100% authentic, even when faced with pressure to change his views Bernie stayed the course and stood strong for what he believed in. When he promised his supporters he would do something, he stuck to his word... Personally I think his policies are a little too left but I commend him for standing up for what he believes in even when people have tried to shift his stances on certain issues.”

Candidness

- Genuine
 - “He is genuine and speaks his mind. Though it might not always be politically correct he speaks what he thinks. I believe he has a clear set of improvements he's making as well as a clear map for it. Even if I didn't vote for him I'm happy with what he's doing.”
 - “He is genuine, but I disagree with a lot of his message.”
- Says what they believe
 - “I believe he is a very honest candidate who has no issue speaking up for what he believes in.”
 - “He's a republican yet he's not afraid to stand against other republicans.”

- "He tweets what he actually believes, regardless of how others may see him and regardless of most of the country disliking his policies."
- Un-crafted message/unfiltered
 - "Trump tweets like he talks. You know he is the one tweeting it. If I wanted something formal I would read a press release. Even though sometimes he tweets things that are untrue sometimes you know he's not always going to be factual because he's being informal."
 - "Sanders says what he beliefs and it seems to come from him and not a staff worker."
 - "I hate to say it but Donald's tweets are more authentic because I think they show that he really is a 4-year-old throwing a temper tantrum trapped in an older mans' body. You would like to think someone that sits in the most powerful seat in the world would act with more grace."
 - "I hate to say this but Hillary's are obviously better messages but as far as authentic goes I'd say Trumps' are more authentic since they're clearly from him, not reviewed 100 times or advised by others."

Morality

- Moral/integrity
 - "I feel that he is a good person from the heart who did everything he could to make Americans across the nation comfortable and determined to achieve the American dream."
 - "I feel that I can trust this person because he/she is authentic. I also feel like this person will honor their duties."
 - "I feel that Jeb Bush is a good man even though I disagree with him on political issues. It is easy to tell that he is fair."
- Truthful/honest
 - "I believe he is a very honest candidate who has no issue speaking up for what he believes in."
- Trustworthy
 - "I believe in their decisions, I trust them, I believe they are positive."
 - "Sense of trust, makes me feel like they actually have my best interest in mind."

Charisma/inspirational:

- Relatable
 - "Well-spoken, comedic, I want to get a beer with him."
 - "They match my political party and agree with my ideas."
 - "Supporter, love their ideas, trust."
- Effective communicator/well-spoken/articulate
 - "Great speaker. Very educated and knows what he is talking about."
 - "She is an exceptional politician who knows how to speak to people while obtaining an intellectual basis."
 - "Empathy for people in need, responsible, not reckless with words, calm, able to answer tough questions in a thoughtful way."
- Cares for the country as a whole/country loyalty
 - "He fought for people to have more. He cared about the wellbeing of underprivileged citizens. His speeches touched me. It seemed like he was honest."
 - "Genuinely cares about the voters and the issues facing everyday people. Genuinely cares about the country. Speaks their mind whether their ideas are popular."

- "He cares about America, our jobs, the military, and the people."
- "Based on his social media posts, I feel like he genuinely cares about the country and how decisions the government makes will effect Americans."
- **Uniting**
 - "He is friendly and willing to work with other people within his party, as well as Republicans. He is never negative, he is charismatic and he has a solid knowledge and background of politics."
 - "Feels strongly about their policies and have reasonable ways to promote this change if elected, positivity toward the future, believes in equality in some form, is faithful to their party and can work well in a bipartisanship."
 - "Spreads info that is real with the purpose to provide information to ALL people (not republican/democratic based). Speaks with maturity/grace."
- **Selfless**
 - "He wanted to make positive changes for the country. He tried to separate his political and personal life which shows him as a real person. He didn't just want power. He cares for the people."
 - "They seem more respectable and intelligent - not just in it for attention or applause."

INAUTHENTIC QUOTES

Rarity:

Talent

- **Unknowledgeable/unintelligent, inexperienced, uneducated**
 - "Lack of experience in politics. Inability to perform political duties. Lying."
 - "Lack of education in fields like law, political science or history."

Stability:

Consistency

- **Inconsistent**
 - "Hillary is one of the most entitled, flip-floppy human being I have ever seen. Time and time again Hillary has gone with wherever the wind blows on policy often changing more than once."
 - "He lies to the people, he is negative towards anyone who disagrees with him, he won't work with his own party or democrats, he is rude, he is too confident, he has no political background, he has changed parties, he doesn't stick with his policies and if he does his goals are unrealistic."
 - "He says things that he doesn't have the power to do. Has changed his political beliefs so much it is hard to believe him."
 - "Scott Walker the Governor of Wisconsin, has time and again gone on national TV saying he would turn the economy around or would bring jobs back but when you look at his track record in his own state he has managed to bankrupt a state that had a pretty large surplus when he took office...says one thing but does the opposite."

Candidness

- **Not genuine**
 - "Hillary Clinton seems ingenuine to me. The way she delivers political speeches gave me the feeling of inauthenticity. Everything seemed scripted."
 - "Scandal, Clinton's want power, she's ingenuine."
- **Does not say what they believe**

- “They lie, tell person one thing and then tell another person another thing. They conform to other's beliefs instead of their own. They attack one another aggressively.”
- Crafted message
 - “I believe she does not say what she wants to say, people control her every move.”
 - “The tweets from Bernie just seem so robotic and lack a personal touch. They seem like anyone could have written them or maybe that they came from a robot.”
 - “This isn't her tweeting, it is someone from her campaign.”
 - “At least with Trump, you can tell it's him. With Hillary, her tweets look like they've been done by a group of volunteers at the DNH (Democratic National Headquarters).”

Morality

- Corrupt
 - “Scandal, Clinton's want power, she's ingenuine.”
 - “Bad past, one that doesn't match what they say and do now. Has been caught up in a lot of scandal. Long history in politics (what is their real motives?). Don't relate to the general public/their public.”
 - “Only wanted to be president to have power and push her political agenda. Money/fame hungry. Would have ruined the country.”
 - “They are just in politics so that they can hold power. They want to pass laws that will only somehow benefit them. They have ulterior motives.”
- Lies/dishonest
 - “They lie, has a lot of false statements. Shady.”
 - “Corrupt, untrustworthy, liar.”
- Distrust/untrustworthy
 - “Makes me dislike them because I feel I cannot trust them.”
 - “I believe that an inauthentic person cannot relate to me or my struggles. I also feel like an inauthentic person cannot be trusted.”
 - “I don't trust him, he will be the political and economic downfall of the country.”

Charisma/inspirational:

- Unrelatable
 - “She's formal and doesn't relate to the audience. She seems very arrogant and not genuine.”
 - “Being born into a multi-million-dollar family. He cannot relate to the average American person.”
- Ineffective speaker/not proper/informal
 - “Attacking other people. Only mentioning one specific person. Sounds like a middle school student tweeting.”
 - “Tweets like a 5-year-old that got his candy taken away.”
 - “Donald Trump's constant rambling over nonsense doesn't do anything to help the American people.”
 - “Bernie's tweets sound more inauthentic. Even though I agree with his viewpoint towards that specific issues he needs to sound less angry and more upfront.”
- Doesn't care for the country as a whole
 - “Doesn't care about the voters and will do anything to get ahead and further his own agenda.”
 - “I think Trump's a liar, idiot and a genuinely terrible person who does not care about the American people and never did. Trump just wants attention.”

- “They only care about themselves and they make that clear. They don't care about the state of the country or the citizens. They use tragedies to further their own personal agenda.”
- Divisive/insulting/attacking
 - “He is making personal attacks and using social media like it's a diary instead of taking a stand on real issues.”
 - “I feel as if the standards should be higher to become president. The use of vulgar language as president should not be tolerated.”
 - “He is inauthentic because he constantly divides the nation as commander and chief. It is fine to pick a side on controversial issues but he does it to cause conflict between different races and political parties.”
- Selfish
 - “His tweets have nothing to do with American people, only protecting his ego.”
 - “They are just in politics so that they can hold power. They want to pass laws that will only somehow benefit them. They have ulterior motives.”
 - “I believe that they're running for office for power rather than to better their country.”