

Spring 2021

## Do the Age and Drama Type of Individuals Affect Their Perceived Social Status?

Bradly A. McGinnis

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/etd>



Part of the [Personality and Social Contexts Commons](#), and the [Social Psychology Commons](#)

---

This thesis (open access) is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Studies, Jack N. Averitt College of at Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu).

DO THE AGE AND DRAMA TYPE OF INDIVIDUALS AFFECT THEIR PERCEIVED  
SOCIAL STATUS?

by

BRADLY A. MCGINNIS

(Under the Direction of Major Professor Nicholas Holtzman)

ABSTRACT

Drama is a type of performative, interpersonal conflict where traditional victim/aggressor dynamics seen in most types of bullying do not always appear. Different personalities display different types of drama, which may have different levels of usefulness across development. I am interested in discovering whether the level of target social status changes for different drama types across the lifespan. This interaction between target social status and drama type was analyzed by a 2 x 3 design with an expected 2 x 2 interaction. Overall, there were non-significant main effects and a non-significant interaction in the 2 x 3 between subjects ANOVA. Because of this, a 2 x 2 ANOVA was not conducted, as this would be insignificant as well. It should be noted that there was a lack of participants and therefore, power was not reached. It is difficult to draw conclusions based on this study; however, data collection is still active so that conclusions may be formed in later analyses.

INDEX WORDS: Drama, Perceived social status, Interpersonal manipulation, Impulsive outspokenness, Persistent perceived victimhood.

DO THE AGE AND DRAMA TYPE OF INDIVIDUALS AFFECT THEIR PERCEIVED  
SOCIAL STATUS?

by

BRADLY A. MCGINNIS

B.S., Columbus State University, 2019

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Georgia Southern University  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

© 2021

BRADLY A. MCGINNIS

All Rights Reserved

DO THE AGE AND DRAMA TYPE OF INDIVIDUALS AFFECT THEIR PERCEIVED  
SOCIAL STATUS?

by

BRADLY A. MCGINNIS

Major Professor:  
Committee:

Nicholas Holtzman  
Amy Hackney  
Michael Nielsen

Electronic Version Approved:  
May 2021

## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Judy McGinnis, who imbued me with the willpower to work harder than ever before, and to my grandmother, Joyce Nelson, who has never stopped giving me the strength to succeed. Thank you both for showing me the unyielding love and support that I needed in order to complete this thesis.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the members of my committee, Dr. Amy Hackney and Dr. Michael Nielsen. Your support has helped shape this thesis to be what it is today. I would also like to thank every single faculty member of the Psychology Department at Georgia Southern University for preparing me to write this thesis. I could not have come this far without your support along the way. Every class that I was taught, every helping hand I received was an incredible aid to me.

I would like to thank Dr. Nicholas Holtzman for giving me this opportunity to explore my research interests and provide invaluable guidance to me. He has taught me the methodology needed to conduct the best research possible and has motivated me to push harder than I ever have before. It has been a great privilege to work and study with him, and I am extremely grateful for every opportunity he has offered me. I would also like to thank him for his tireless efforts in helping me complete this thesis, his patience, and his high expectations he had set for me to conquer. I would not be the student I am today without him. Thank you Dr. Holtzman.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	3
LIST OF FIGURES.....	5
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION.....	7
Hypothesized Results.....	11
2 METHODOLOGY, MATERIALS, AND PROCEDURE.....	14
Methods.....	14
Materials.....	15
Procedure.....	18
3 RESULTS.....	20
4 DISCUSSION.....	23
Limitations.....	24
Future Directions.....	25
Conclusion.....	26
 REFERENCES .....	 27
APPENDICES	
DRAMA VIGNETTES.....	31
ATTENTION CHECK QUESTION PRESENTED AFTER THE VIGNETTE.....	32



## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1: Expected Results for Interaction Effect.....	13
Figure 2: Results for Nonsignificant Interaction Effect using the $2 \times 3$ .....	21

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations .....	22
Table 2: $2 \times 3$ Between Subjects ANOVA.....	22

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Dramatic personalities can be seen in both the real world and pop culture as well. A famous case would be of Regina George from *Mean Girls*; a high-school popular girl character who manipulates her friends in order to pit them against each other. Through this, Regina George is able to attain social status in her high school and make major decisions for her group, such as where to go or who to be around. Another example is Donald Trump, who is likely highly dramatic, but successfully became president, thus achieving social status. Overall, dramatic personality types in real life have some connection to their social status.

Personalities vary in how dramatic they are, and some types of drama may be more useful than others overall (e.g., in helping the individual achieve status). Additionally, different types of drama may be useful at different points in development, as some types of drama may be associated with social benefits or may result in no social benefits. The purpose of this manuscript is to explore these possibilities in an online psychology experiment.

Drama has been described as a performative, interpersonal conflict in which the aggressor is removed from the victim, in some occasions taking place in public in front of an active and engaged audience (Marwick & Boyd, 2014). One way in which drama separates the aggressor and the victim is via computer-mediated communication, such as texting or social media (Fox et al., 2013; Marshall et al., 2015). This has been conceptualized and measured using a scale that contains three facets (which are positively intercorrelated; correlations range from .34 to .48; see section 5.3.1 Frankowski et al., 2016) The three facets are Interpersonal Manipulation, Impulsive Outspokenness, and Persistent Perceived Victimhood. Interpersonal Manipulation refers to “a trait that is characterized by a person’s willingness to influence other

people to behave in a manner serving of the manipulator's goals."(Frankowski et al., 2016, p. 193); an example of Interpersonal Manipulation is a school bully telling a peer that another student said something cruel about the peer, even if that statement is false. Impulsive Outspokenness refers to "a person's compulsion to speak out and share opinions, even when inappropriate and without regard to social consequences." (Frankowski et al., 2016, p. 193); an example of Impulsive Outspokenness is a coworker blurting out how much they dislike what another coworker is wearing that day. Persistent Perceived Victimhood refers to "the propensity to constantly perceive oneself as a victim of everyday life circumstances that many people would dismiss as benign." (Frankowski et al., 2016, p. 193); an example of Persistent Perceived Victimhood is a classmate feeling as though their friends are talking behind their back, thus experiencing victimization from their friends, even though they were not doing so. The most important distinction for this paper is the distinction between Interpersonal Manipulation and Persistent Perceived Victimhood, as these two drama types are the main focus of the hypothesis. These traits are positively correlated ( $r = .41$ ; see section 5.3.1 in Frankowski et al., 2016). However, they can be conceptually differentiated: Whereas Interpersonal Manipulation involves manipulating others in a way that benefits the manipulator and their goals, Persistent Perceived Victimhood involves self-victimization behaviors in order to justify manipulative behaviors, as discussed by Frankowski and Colleagues (2016).

Because the drama literature is relatively new, it would likely be useful to draw upon neighboring literature referring to associated constructs. Two of these types of drama (Interpersonal Manipulation and Persistent Perceived Victimhood) have clear connections to the narcissism literature, specifically in the areas of grandiose narcissism and target social status (Berenson et al., 2017; Hill & Roberts, 2012; Miller et al., 2011; Wink, 1991), which in turn

provides unique hints about whether these drama types might be useful at various stages of development.

Because the narcissism literature contains clues about drama types, it is necessary to explain the linkage between these two literatures. In brief, Interpersonal Manipulation is similar to grandiose narcissism, a type of narcissism defined by aggressive, dominant personality traits; Persistent Perceived Victimhood is akin to vulnerable narcissism, a type of narcissism defined by feelings of neuroticism and shame. This is evident in the Big 5 profiles for these two traits. Grandiose narcissism is associated with the Big 5 as follows: (O = .13, C = .05, E = .46, A = -.57, N = -.13; see Table 3 in Miller et al., 2011); this maps on to the profile for Interpersonal Manipulation (O = -.08, C = -.35, E = .11, A = -.25, N = .25; see Table 6 in Frankowski et al., 2016) The profile correlation between these two vectors of Pearson correlations is  $r = .34$  (Frankowski et al., 2016). Vulnerable narcissism is associated with the Big Five as follows: (O = .04, C = .16, E = -.18, A = -.24, N = .65; see Table 3 in Miller, 2011); this maps on well to the profile for Persistent Perceived Victimhood (O = -.06, C = -.23, E = -.14, A = -.03, N = .57; see Table 6 in Frankowski et al., 2016); the profile correlation between these two vectors of Pearson correlations is  $r = .790$ . Put bluntly, and for the sake of parsimony, I am equating Interpersonal Manipulation and grandiose narcissism; likewise, I am relating Persistent Perceived Victimhood and vulnerable narcissism to each other. The reason we can make this relationship is through the profile correlations described by Frankowski and colleagues. By establishing the similarity in the nomological networks for these constructs, it becomes feasible to capitalize on, and ultimately combine the strengths of, these literatures that have remained relatively distinct until now.

In particular, based on the grandiose narcissism literature (Hill & Roberts, 2012; Smith & Lilienfeld, 2013; Wilson & Sibley, 2011), and our tenet that Interpersonal Manipulation is a

proxy for grandiose narcissism, it seems that Interpersonal Manipulation may have certain advantages when people are young, but not when people are old. Based on the vulnerable narcissism literature and its ties to the Big Five, and our tenet that vulnerable narcissism is a proxy for Persistent Perceived Victimhood, it seems that Persistent Perceived Victimhood may not be particularly advantageous at any point. However, it seems likely that Persistent Perceived Victimhood is particularly problematic at young ages, when Persistent Perceived Victimhood is likely to be associated with increased victimization due to being bullied (Craig & Pepler, 2003). One possibility is that Persistent Perceived Victimhood is so negatively associated with advantages at young ages that things can only get better as people high in Persistent Perceived Victimhood age (Turanovic, 2015). In sum, whereas Interpersonal Manipulation is associated with disadvantages in later adulthood, persistent Perceived Victimhood seems rather disadvantageous across development (although there might be a slight relative increase in benefits at age 50 for those high in Persistent Perceived Victimhood). The ages of 18 and 50 were chosen due to the current literature on perceptions of age, where age near 18 can be considered “young” and “old” as anywhere from 55-64 (Hummert, 1993). Next, we will hone in on one particular type of advantage, namely, social status.

Indeed, one key indicator of social success is social status, and that is the dependent measure of interest in the current study. Social status involves the “rank order of individuals or groups on a valued social dimension” (Magee & Galinsky, 2008). Ranking within this social dimension determines the person’s ability to make major decisions or act within a group such as allocating resources or facilitating coordination with groups on tasks (Ronay et al., 2012). Previous research by Gumpel and Wiesenthal (2015) shows that grandiose narcissistic personality types are more likely to be perceived by others as having high leadership,

authoritativeness, and social status within their peer group. Cheng and colleagues (2013) also note that grandiose narcissists will adopt dominance routes, such as using force or intimidation to induce fear, in order to attain this high social status. Overall, the current research notes that attainment of higher social status is a desirable outcome for individuals, especially those individuals with grandiose narcissistic personality traits.

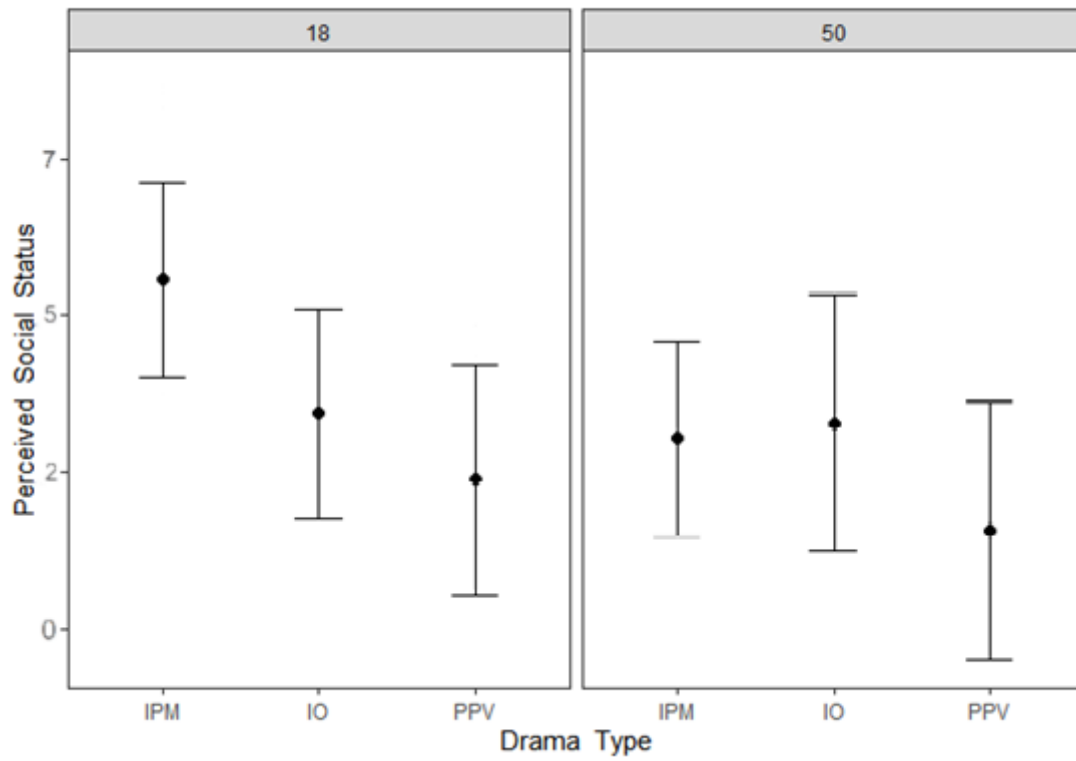
Research has found that perceptions of social status of grandiose style narcissism, which maps onto Interpersonal Manipulation, are higher for younger individuals than older individuals (Berenson et al., 2017). Therefore, I can expect to see younger individuals who rate high in Interpersonal Manipulation to also be rated positively at younger ages rather than older ages. I can make this assumption considering the traits of grandiose narcissism map highly onto the traits of Interpersonal Manipulation, as discussed by the relationship between the two using the Big Five in the original article (Frankowski et al., 2016). While there is no definitive research on the subject, Persistent Perceived Victimhood aligns with vulnerable narcissism, and previous research in victimization and quality of life points towards life outcomes getting better as individuals age (Turanovic, 2015). Therefore, I can expect to see that individuals high in IPM traits will attain more social status at a younger age, while individuals high in PPV traits will attain higher social status at older ages.

I hypothesize that people will perceive Interpersonal Manipulation to be positively associated with social status at young but not older ages. I hypothesize that people will perceive Persistent Perceived Victimhood to be negatively associated with social status across younger and older ages. In this 3 x 2 design (which assesses perceptions of all three drama types), I expect to find a significant 2 x 2 interaction between Age (18, 50) and Drama Type

(Interpersonal Manipulation, Persistent Perceived Victimhood) in the prediction of perceived social status. Figure 1 below demonstrates the expected interaction.

Participants read a vignette describing the different drama types in the original Frankowski and colleagues (2016) article. These vignettes were displayed as being either of a person at age 18 or a person at age 50 in order to investigate the differences between drama at perceived “young age” and “older age.” Participants then rated their feelings towards the target, and more specifically, the target’s perceived social status. This social status is imperative to the study, as it hinges on whether or not these individuals with drama are perceived to be leader figures within groups. Therefore, comparisons could be made to see if perceived social status changes across the lifespan for individuals portraying certain drama types.





*Figure 1.* Expected Results for Interaction Effect. IPM = Interpersonal Manipulation; IO = Impulsive Outspokenness; PPV = Persistent Perceived Victimhood.

## CHAPTER 2

### METHOD

#### **Open Science Practices**

In accord with open science practices (Hales et al., 2018), this study has been pre-registered at <https://osf.io/7qszc/>, using the OSF template provided by the OSF. I report how I determined the sample size, all data exclusions, all manipulations, and all measures in the study (Simmons et al., 2012).

#### **Participants**

Undergraduate students (total  $N = 45$ , including invalid responses;  $n = 13$  valid responses) participated for course credit, while attending a large, public, rural, comprehensive university in the southeastern United States; they had to be 18 or older to participate. Participants were recruited via the Georgia Southern University SONA system, where many students enrolled in psychology courses are given the option to participate in research. Participants also identified themselves as 13.3% male, 80.1% female, 0% nonbinary, 0% other, and 6.6% preferred not to answer. I excluded participants from the study if the participant completed the study under 5 minutes ( $n = 31$  were excluded for this reason). The 5 minute criterion was specifically chosen after running a short test between 12 individuals who completed the test as practice. The average amount of time taken to complete the survey was approximately 9 minutes. Because of this, participants who completed the study under 5 minutes were flagged as random respondents. Other random respondents, who were identified with an attention check question, See Appendix B, after presentation of the vignette, were also removed ( $n = 1$  excluded for this reason). Overall, 32 participants were removed from the study, resulting in a somewhat smaller sample (valid  $n =$

13;  $M_{\text{age}} = 20.46$ ;  $SD_{\text{age}} = 5.63$ ; 30.7% male; 61.6% female; 0% nonbinary; 0% other; 7.7% preferred not to answer).

## **Power Analysis**

To determine the sample size necessary to have a good chance of finding an interaction if there is one in the population, I ran a power analysis (Cohen, 1988); I completed this analysis in R, using the package WebPower (Zhang & Yuan, 2018). I selected the kanova option within this package because this design entails a two-way (i.e.,  $k$ -way) ANOVA. I used the code snippet “n = NULL” in order to get the program to extract the appropriate sample size, and I used an “ng” of 6, as there are 6 cells (groups) in which participants were to be placed (see Design for explanation of the cells). I used an alpha level of 0.05, which is standard for minimizing Type I errors. I used an  $f = .10$ , which is the smallest effect size of interest (Lakens et al., 2018); effects smaller than this are unlikely to be practically significant in this research context. Finally, I used power of .80 in order to minimize Type II errors. Overall, 966 participants were needed. Due to time and resource constraints, I collected data until the 5<sup>th</sup> of February 2021 and then stopped data collection for the thesis; however, I am continuing to collect data thereafter for publication purposes as specified in the pre-registration. This will allow me to meet university deadlines while giving me the chance to get a suitable sample for publication. I vow to not publish unless I collect data until the pre-registered stop date.

## **Materials**

### ***Drama Vignettes***

The vignettes presented to the participant were adapted from a series of three facets of drama: Interpersonal Manipulation, Impulsive Outspokenness, and Persistent Perceived

Victimhood. These vignettes were based on the types of drama examined in Frankowski et al. (2016) as part of the Need for Drama scale. The vignettes were reviewed by the original authors of the Need for Drama scale to ensure that the measures mapped onto the original scale (B. Smith, personal communication, February 6, 2020). The name of the target individual remains constant across vignettes, “Patrick”. See Appendix A for full vignettes.

### ***Social Status Survey***

Guided by the rigorous literature review by Cheng et al. (2014), I decided to use a scale measuring perceived target social status that was created by Berenson et al. (2017). The Target Social Status Survey is an eight-item scale used to measure perceptions of the target vignette’s overall social status across various domains. The scale uses a 1-7 Likert scale, with 1 being “*Strongly Disagree*” and 7 being “*Strongly Agree*”. Example items on this survey include “Patrick is weak” (which is reverse scored) and “Patrick is considered physically attractive” (which is forward scored). Overall, the Target Social Status survey cited by Berenson and colleagues has an alpha of  $\alpha = .94$  in the original Berenson article. The Cronbach’s alpha for this survey within this study was 0.84, which was found by analyzing the means of all cell’s Cronbach’s alpha and averaging them. It should be noted that the Cronbach’s alpha for both impulsive outspokenness cells, 18 and 50, were not analyzed due to there being only one participant per each of the two cells.

### ***Liking Scale***

A one-item liking scale was used to measure participant liking of the target vignette. The question “Patrick’s description makes me think I would like Patrick” on a 1-7 Likert scale, with 1 being “*Strongly Disagree*” and 7 being “*Strongly Agree*.”

### ***Perceived Warmth, Competence, and Economic Status Scale***

Brambilla et al., 2010, developed a scale which measures warmth, competence, and social status which I wanted to use as well. The scales are used to measure target warmth, competence, and social status. Minor modifications were made to the scale, shifting attention from the article's interest of psychologists and engineers to the name of the target in our vignette, Patrick. The Warmth and Competence scale uses a 1-5 Likert Scale with 1 being "*Extremely Unlikely*" and 5 being "*Extremely Likely*." The Economic Status scale uses a 1-5 Likert Scale with 1 being "*Extremely Unprestigious*" and 5 being "*Extremely Prestigious*." Example items from the warmth scale include "How likely is it that Patrick is warm?" and "How likely is it that Patrick is kind?". Example items from the competence scale include "How likely is it that Patrick is competent?" and "How likely is it that Patrick is capable?" An example item from the economic status scale is: "How economically successful is Patrick?" The scale for competence has a Cronbach's alpha of  $\alpha = .88$ . The scale for warmth has a Cronbach's alpha of  $\alpha = .85$ . Finally, the scale for economic status has a Cronbach's alpha of  $\alpha = .86$  in the original research.

### ***Dominance and Prestige Scale***

Guided again by another rigorous literature review by Cheng et al. (2014), I decided to use a dominance and prestige scale developed by Cheng et al. (2010) to assess target dominance and prestige as an exploratory measure. The dominance and prestige scales are two 8 and 9 question scales respectively, used to measure a target individuals' level of dominance and prestige. Example questions from the dominance scale include "He enjoys having control over others" and "Some people are afraid of him." Example questions from the prestige scale include

“Members of your group respect him” and “Others seek his advice on a variety of matters.”

Dominance:  $\alpha = .83$ , Prestige:  $\alpha = .80$ . Both Cronbach’s alphas are from the original research.

## **Design**

With the vignettes, I created a 2×3 between-subjects design in which participants were randomly assigned to one of the six cells. There are three levels of drama type—Interpersonal Manipulation, Impulsive Outspokenness, and Persistent Perceived Victimhood (Frankowski et al, 2016). I used two ages: age 18 and age 50. Ultimately, I ran a factorial fully between-subjects ANOVA to determine (a) the effect of age, (b) the effect of drama type, and—most importantly—(c) the interaction between the two, all using the dependent measure, namely, perceived social status based upon the drama type for the vignette target.

## **Procedure**

With the approval of Georgia Southern University’s Institutional Review Board, the research occurred on Georgia Southern University’s SONA system via Qualtrics. Participants completed the survey online wherever they wished. Once the participants completed the informed consent form, they were randomly assigned in Qualtrics to one of six cells (see Design section). After being assigned to one of the six cells and then reading the vignette, participants were given a check question asking them the age of the target. Then, they rated how much they perceived that the drama type confers social status for the target (using the adapted version of the Target Social Status Survey). Next, participants completed the one-item liking question which asks participants to rate how much they would like the individual described in the vignette. Participants then completed a warmth, competence, and social status scale, which asks participants to rate the vignette upon the measures of warmth, competence, and social status. Finally, participants completed a dominance and prestige scale, which asks participants to rate

the target on scales of dominance and prestige. Upon completion of the experiment, participants completed a demographics (age, gender identity, race, and ethnicity) survey, and viewed the debriefing. They received one credit via SONA. The entire process lasted approximately nine minutes.

## CHAPTER 3

## RESULTS

A  $2 \times 3$  between-subjects design ANOVA was conducted that examined the effect of drama type (having three levels: interpersonal manipulation, impulsive outspokenness, and persistent perceived victimhood), and age level (having two levels: 18 and 50) on target social status. There was not a statistically significant main effect for drama type  $F(2, 10) = 0.90$ ,  $p = .36$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .15$ , including interpersonal manipulation ( $M = 2.54$ ,  $SD = 0.64$ ), impulsive outspokenness ( $M = 2.43$ ,  $SD = 1.14$ ), or persistent perceived victimhood ( $M = 2.10$ ,  $SD = 0.46$ ). The main effect for age level was also nonsignificant,  $F(1, 11) = 4.01$ ,  $p = .07$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .37$ , of age 18 ( $M = 2.00$ ,  $SD = 0.50$ ) or age 50 ( $M = 2.57$ ,  $SD = 0.62$ ). Finally, there was not an interaction between drama type and age level on target social status,  $F(2, 7) = 0.003$ ,  $p = .95$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .20$ , indicating that age level and drama type did not have an effect on target social status. Due to the insignificant  $2 \times 3$  between-subjects design ANOVA, a  $2 \times 2$  between-subjects design ANOVA was not conducted, as this would also necessarily be nonsignificant as well.

Figure 2 shows the nonsignificant effect between drama type and age level on target social status. Overall, the majority of participants rated the vignettes neutrally on the one-item liking scale. ( $M = 3.61$ ). Further exploratory analyses were not conducted due to the small sample size.



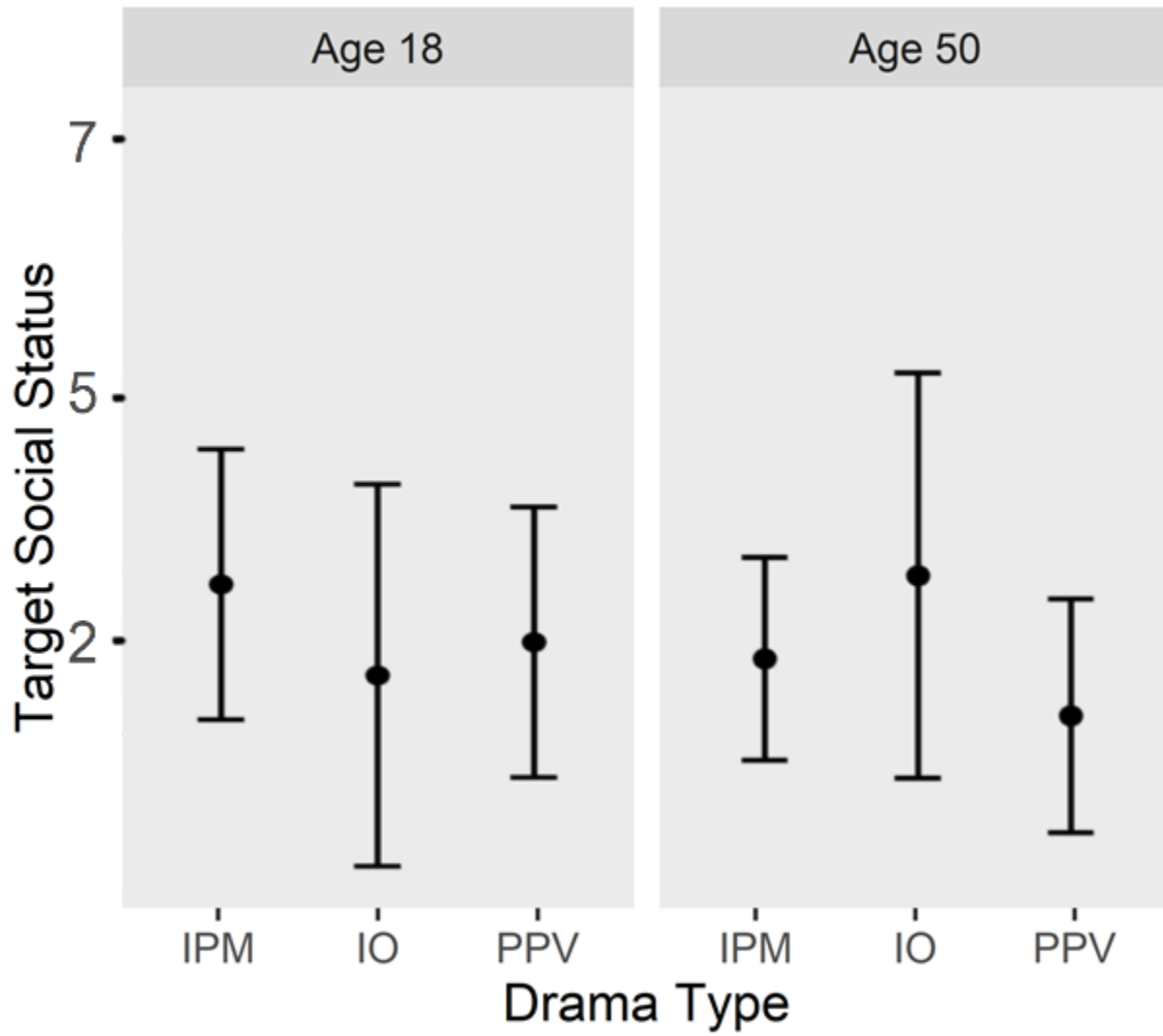


Figure 2. Results for Nonsignificant Interaction Effect using the  $2 \times 3$ . IPM = Interpersonal Manipulation; IO = Impulsive Outspokenness; PPV = Persistent Perceived Victimhood.

*Table 1**Means and Standard Deviations*

Drama Type/Age on					
Target Social Status	<i>n</i>	Min.	Max.	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
IPM, 18	2	1.75	2.87	2.31	.79
IPM, 50	4	1.75	3.25	2.66	.65
IO, 18	1	1.62	1.62	1.62	N/A
IO, 50	1	3.25	3.25	3.25	N/A
PPV, 18	2	1.75	2.00	1.87	.18
PPV, 50	3	1.75	2.87	2.25	.57
Valid N	13				

*Table 2**2 × 3 Between Subjects ANOVA*

Predictor	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	$\eta_p^2$
Drama Type	2	0.90	0.36	0.15
Age Level	1	4.01	0.07	0.37
Age Level × Drama Type	2	0.003	0.95	0.20

## CHAPTER 4

## DISCUSSION

The findings of the study, so far, have not provided enough evidence to show a relationship between the independent variables of age and drama type and the dependent variable of target social status. However, this finding is due to a low sample size, and thus having low power as well. Considering our findings, we can say that there is not enough evidence to say that the age and drama type of a target affect the targets perceived social status, as we were not able to find a significant interaction between age and drama type. According to these results, there appears to be no differences between perceptions of social status for individuals who display interpersonal manipulation drama, who also tend to rate highly on scales of grandiose narcissism.

This finding is inconsistent with the current literature (Berenson, 2017; Gumpel et al., 2015; Turanovic, 2015; Hills, 2012; Miller 2011), which states that individuals who rate highly on scales of grandiose narcissism are more likely to be rated positively on scales of target social status, especially at younger ages (Cheng, 2013). The results of the analysis are also unable to add to the current literature on persistent perceived victimhood, though this is primarily due to the low sample size of this study. Previous research has shown that individuals who self-victimize tend to be bullied more than others, and thus there might be no differences in social status for individuals high in persistent perceived victimhood across the lifespan (Craig & Pepler, 2003). However, it is still worthy to note that the findings of this study should not be considered in opposition to the literature, as our low sample size does not allow us to make generalizations about the current literature.

In the analysis, many participants were considered to be invalid respondents, dropping down our N from 45 to 13 at the time of data analysis. One of the main reasons for this was the 5-minute cut off time for participants to be considered a valid response, as well as ensuring that all participants passed a check question as well. Participants who completed the survey faster than 5 minutes, or took less than 300 seconds to complete the survey, were considered to be taking the survey too quickly, and thus their data would not be considered for analysis. Participants were also required to pass a check question as well, which asked them to correctly identify the age of the target in the drama vignette. With both of these requirements, our N dropped significantly, which explains why so many participants were considered invalid respondents.

Another point to mention is the placement of these valid 13 participants in cells. Overall, two cells, age 18 impulsive outspokenness and age 50 impulsive outspokenness, only were assigned one participant per cell. This made it difficult to construct true confidence intervals for the final data analysis of the  $2 \times 3$  between subjects ANOVA. However, impulsive outspokenness was hypothesized to not show any change, and analysis of the  $2 \times 2$ , which avoids using the two impulsive outspokenness cells better matches the goals of the hypothesis, which is to see a change between interpersonal manipulation and persistent perceived victimhood.

### **Limitations**

These are at least two potential limitations concerning the results of this study. The first, and most obvious limitation in this study is the low sample size. This low sample size severely affected our ability to make conclusions based on the analyses that were run. However, given the event that we will achieve the number of participants necessary to complete data analysis, there

are other limitations worth noting. Firstly, is the sample pool that the study was drawing from. Using a sample of college age (18 – 24) students in a rural area does not allow us to have the most representative sample for a general target population for us to use, and thus can affect the outcomes of the study (Ferguson et al., 2004). Finally, the sample size was severely cut, around two-thirds by the exclusion criteria of needing to complete the study over 5 minutes. Because of this, many participants who could have been used as data who simply completed the study quicker than others ended up being discarded. This 5-minute mark may be reduced in future studies, as explained in the future directions subsection of this thesis.

Another limitation to this study is that we are using only college-age participants to rate the target social status across the ages. Originally, this study was thought to be best conducted using Amazon M-Turk, as having a wide range of ages could allow for more perceptions across an entire lifespan's worth of individuals. Using only college-age participants reduces us to students usually between the ages of 18 and 24, who might not realize how much such traits, such as interpersonal manipulation or persistent perceived victimhood affect social status. Therefore, their perceptions might be biased, simply due to lack of knowledge around the subject of someone's social status at the age of 50, as shown by previous research in the subject of age perceptions across the lifespan (William et al., 2018).

### **Future Directions**

For future research, the activation occurring in the vignettes should be looked at closer. While our vignettes were approved by one of the original authors of the Need for Drama scale, in the social psychological field, there might be a problem occurring with the activation of thoughts and feelings about the vignette. There might not be enough information in the vignettes to activate a person's feelings about the target, and therefore, an introduction of more information

about the target might be necessary. An example might be having a situation occur between the target and another person, or the target and the reader. Expanding upon these vignettes might be necessary in order to capture a fuller context, and thus, more activation in the participant.

## **Conclusion**

Despite these limitations, this research is one of the first steps towards understanding how drama can be viewed through the lens of target social status. I hope that the current research can both continue with its collection of data and further stimulate new investigation into this area of research. Sadly, the lack of power in this analysis has left us without much to say about the final results of this analysis. Any final conclusions, as of now, cannot be made with the current amount of data that was analyzed for this thesis.

However, with data analysis still in progress, we can hope to see more cells added to the analysis, and thus we might start to see more changes in the differences between the three drama types across the ages. My hope is that, with more data, we might be able to see the differences that were hypothesized, and the differences that the current literature points to. Need for drama, and its relationship to the well-established Big Five literature could reveal more information about perceptions of both grandiose and vulnerable narcissism through interpersonal manipulation and persistent perceived victimhood. Until then, I will be collecting more data for further analysis.

## REFERENCES

- Berenson, K. R., Ellison, W. D., & Clasing, R. (2017). Age differences in the desirability of narcissism. *Journal of Individual Differences, 38*(4), 230-240.  
<https://doi.org/10.1027/1614-0001/a000240>
- Brambilla, M., Sacchi, S., Castellini, F., & Riva, P. (2010). The effects of status on perceived warmth and competence. *Social Psychology, 41*, 82-87. <https://doi.org/10.1027/1864-9335/a000012>
- Cheng, J. T., Tracy, J. L., Foulsham, T., Kingstone, A., & Henrich, J. (2013). Two ways to the top: Evidence that dominance and prestige are distinct yet viable avenues to social rank and influence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 104*(1), 103-125.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/a0030398>
- Chopik WJ, Bremner RH, Johnson DJ, Giasson HL. Age differences in age perceptions and developmental transitions. *Front Psychol.* 2018 Feb 1;9:67.  
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00067>
- Cohen, J. (1977). CHAPTER 1 - The Concepts of Power Analysis. In J. Cohen (Ed.), *Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences* (pp. 1-17). Academic Press.  
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-179060-8.50006-2>
- Craig, W. M., & Pepler, D. J. (2003). Identifying and targeting risk for involvement in bullying and victimization. *Can J Psychiatry, 48*(9), 577-582.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/070674370304800903>
- Ferguson, L. M., Yonge, O., & Myrick, F. (2004). Students' involvement in faculty research: ethical and methodological issues. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 56*-68.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690400300405>

- Fox, J., Warber, K., & Makstaller, D. (2013). The role of Facebook in romantic relationship development: An exploration of Knapp's relational stage model. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 30*, 771-794. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407512468370>
- Frankowski, S., Lupo, A. K., Smith, B. A., Dane'El, M., Ramos, C., & Morera, O. F. (2016). Developing and testing a scale to measure need for drama. *Personality and Individual Differences, 89*, 192-201. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2015.10.009>
- Gumpel, T. P., Wiesenthal, V., & Söderberg, P. (2015). Narcissism, perceived social status, and social cognition and their influence on aggression. *Behavioral Disorders, 40*(2), 138-156. <https://doi.org/10.17988/BD-13-33.1>
- Hales, A., Wesselmann, E., & Hilgard, J. (2018). Improving psychological science through transparency and openness: an overview. *Perspectives on Behavior Science, 42*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40614-018-00186-8>
- Hill, P., & Roberts, B. (2012). Narcissism, well-being, and observer-rated personality across the lifespan. *Social Psychological and Personality Science, 3*, 216-223. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550611415867>
- Hummert, M. L. (1993). Age and typicality judgments of stereotypes of the elderly: Perceptions of elderly vs young adults. *The International Journal of Aging & Human Development, 37*(3), 217-226. <https://doi.org/10.2190/L01P-V960-8P17-PL56>
- Lakens, D., Scheel, A. M., & Isager, P. M. (2018). Equivalence testing for psychological research: a tutorial. *1*(2), 259-269. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2515245918770963>
- Magee, J. C., & Galinsky, A. D. (2008). Social hierarchy: The self-reinforcing nature of power and status. *The Academy of Management Annals, 2*(1), 351-398. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19416520802211628>



- Marshall, T. C., Lefringhausen, K., & Ferenczi, N. (2015). The Big Five, self-esteem, and narcissism as predictors of the topics people write about in Facebook status updates. *Personality and Individual Differences, 85*, 35-40.  
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2015.04.039>
- Marwick, A., & Boyd, D. (2014). 'It's just drama': teen perspectives on conflict and aggression in a networked era. *Journal of Youth Studies, 17*(9), 1187-1204.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2014.901493>
- Miller, J. D., Hoffman, B. J., Gaughan, E. T., Gentile, B., Maples, J., & Keith Campbell, W. (2011). Grandiose and vulnerable narcissism: a nomological network analysis. *J Pers, 79*(5), 1013-1042. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.2010.00711.x>
- The psychology of social status*. (2014). [doi:10.1007/978-1-4939-0867-7]. Springer Science + Business Media. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4939-0867-7>
- Ronay, R., Greenaway, K., Anicich, E. M., & Galinsky, A. D. (2012). The path to glory is paved with hierarchy: When hierarchical differentiation increases group effectiveness. *Psychological Science, 23*(6), 669-677. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797611433876>
- Simmons, Joseph P. and Nelson, Leif D. and Simonsohn, Uri, A 21 Word Solution (October 14, 2012). Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2160588> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2160588>
- Smith, S. F., & Lilienfeld, S. O. (2013). Psychopathy in the workplace: The knowns and unknowns. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 18*(2), 204-218.  
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2012.11.007>
- Turanovic, J. (2015). *The Age-Graded Consequences of Victimization* [Dissertation, Arizona State University].

- Wilson, M., & Sibley, C. (2011). Narcissism creep?: Evidence for age-related differences in narcissism in the New Zealand general population. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, *40*, 89-95.
- Wink, P. (1991). Two faces of narcissism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *61*(4), 590-597. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.61.4.590>
- Zhang, Z., & Yuan, K.-H. (2018). *Practical Statistical Power Analysis Using Webpower and R*.

APPENDIX A  
DRAMA VIGNETTES

**Interpersonal Manipulation (IPM)**

Patrick (Age 50/18) has an interesting personality. Patrick likes to get the people Patrick knows riled up just to see how they react. Patrick also spreads rumors about people. Patrick even pits folks against each other in order to try to get ahead in life.

**Impulsive Outspokenness (IO)**

Patrick (Age 50/18) has an interesting personality. Even when what Patrick has to say is inappropriate, Patrick likes to say it anyways. Patrick never waits before giving opinions.

**Persistent Perceived Victimhood (PPV)**

Patrick (Age 50/18) has an interesting personality. Patrick feels like people are spreading rumors that hurt Patrick. Patrick thinks that people have engaged in wrongdoing, and Patrick doesn't know why such crazy things happen to Patrick, even if Patrick is truly the reason why these crazy things happen.

## APPENDIX B

## ATTENTION CHECK QUESTION PRESENTED AFTER THE VIGNETTE

“How old is Patrick?”

(18)

(25)

(40)

(50)