

JAMES M. BRADLEY JR., Ph.D.

Staff UX Researcher — Mixed Methods, Research Operations, AI-Augmented Research

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SUMMARY

Mixed-methods UX researcher with 12+ years across product research, applied behavioral science, and institutional analytics, and a PhD in social psychology. Sole researcher for the sportsbook product line at Fanatics Betting & Gaming, operating at staff scope on a continuously shipping real-money product. I pair rigorous qualitative and quantitative work with a social-psychology lens, and I build the practice around the research: consolidated two teams' work into a governed knowledge base of 2,100+ documents, then built a self-serve Slack agent that answers product teams' research questions with cited evidence, an AI intake agent that scores product concepts for executive prioritization, and an automated research-ops pipeline that keeps the corpus current. Hands-on technical practice: SQL against production warehouses, Python and R, and custom measurement infrastructure built to organizational scale. Track record of research that changed direction at the strategy level, not just the feature level.

Figures below are study-level (participants, rounds, documents, features); employer-specific financials and unreleased concepts are generalized on purpose. Every number is one I can walk through in detail.

EXPERIENCE

Staff User Researcher — Fanatics Betting & Gaming (Sportsbook) · Remote

Mar 2026 – Present

Promoted to Staff for strategic impact on product direction and organizational research maturity. Sole UX researcher for the sportsbook product line, covering the full app surface (navigation, event pages, live/in-play, bet slip, My Bets, promotions, player and stats surfaces).

Research operations, governance, and AI-augmented research

- Built and govern a consolidated research repository of 2,100+ documents across 32 product areas and 130+ study-level workstreams (March 2025–present), merging two research teams' corpora under one provenance model (source, product line, researcher) so cross-team findings stay attributable and comparable.
- Piloted a self-serve Slack research agent that answers product teams' questions directly from the governed repository, every answer carrying attributed customer verbatims, per-finding evidence dates, and links to canonical deliverables, with low-confidence flagging and researcher escalation on thin, decision-shaped questions.
- Built and own the Consumer Insights intake agent, the research "Step 0" in the sportsbook leadership prioritization process: scores incoming product concepts against the combined customer-evidence corpus, emitting an evidence-scoped priority and a separate confidence rating with every claim cited. Ten concept assessments delivered to date, including a cross-batch comparison across a six-concept intake.
- Built an opportunity-backlog role on the same repository: customer needs that surface outside a study's scope are extracted into a governed register that tracks each theme across studies (first said, last said, frequency) and deduplicates against the roadmap, giving product leadership a standing input grounded in what customers keep saying.
- Built the cross-study evidence case for personalization over two years: tracked the need as it surfaced unprompted in 17+ projects and 500+ participants (most designed to study something else), consolidated it in a research synthesis with a three-phase build roadmap and design brief (Mar 2026), validated the first phase with a survey of 527 customers (May 2026), and carried it until a first scoped step moved onto the roadmap with leadership aligned.
- Built an automated research-operations pipeline of seven scheduled workflows: voice-of-customer ingests (VIP host feedback, NPS verbatims), a cross-team portal scan, auto-ingest of completed work with hold-on-doubt gating, a guarded backup-parity check that blocks suspicious deletions rather than propagating them, and the scheduled runs on which the Slack Q&A agent (hourly, business hours) and the forum-prep role (weekly) operate.
- Established the governance layer that makes AI-assisted answers trustworthy: a versioned tagging taxonomy, evidence-recency standards, a PII handling and quarantine pipeline, and mandatory accuracy-audit gates targeting the two error classes that most damage research credibility (product-state claims asserted as current fact; single-participant perceptions generalized into findings).
- Codified the repeatable stages of qualitative research (session analysis, cross-participant synthesis, stakeholder communication) into governed, reusable AI workflows that cut the time from end of data collection to finished deliverable from weeks to 3–4 days while holding a fixed quality bar.

Strategic and foundational research

- Led a two-wave feature-prioritization program for promotions and rewards that ranked 13 candidate features from a cleaned sample of 503 respondents (636 raw; 20.9% straight-line responders removed before analysis), pairing the survey with in-person concept testing to give product an evidence-based roadmap input.
- Ran the multi-phase Design Excellence program evaluating core navigation and event-switching against live and prototype experiences across 76 participants (34 / 16 VIP / 26 across three phases), synthesized into readouts that reached the CEO level.
- Designed and run a standing "always-on" research program with the company's highest-value customer segment: moderated rounds every ~3 weeks, alternating post-launch evaluation, discovery, and concept review as product needs dictate (7–15 sessions per round; four rounds and 40+ sessions in the program's first three months), with a fixed runbook that turns a product team's Monday intake question into a customer-evidence readout inside two weeks. Cross-round mechanics (returning participants re-testing revised designs, a change ledger between rounds) let the team see whether design changes actually landed.
- Co-run a bi-weekly research and strategy prioritization forum with sportsbook product leadership, with the forum's materials prepared by a dedicated AI role (its own rule set over the same repository) from the period's completed research; research recommendations follow a two-tier format co-designed with senior product leadership so product can act on them directly.
- Mentor cross-functional partners on methodology, analysis, and translating insight into product action; raised org-wide research fluency through the self-serve repository and Slack agent.

Senior UX Researcher — Fanatics Betting & Gaming (Sportsbook) · Remote

Apr 2024 – Mar 2026

- Reframed a leadership request to validate a committed live-betting product bet into foundational discovery (contextual inquiry during live games, competitor walkthroughs, behavioral triangulation); findings redirected a committed Q1 engineering investment and became the org's model for high-stakes feature validation.
- Designed and analyzed an experimental unmoderated usability study for a bet slip promotion redesign across three prototype variants (n=62, 126 prototype exposures; within-subjects interaction test with Latin Square counterbalancing plus between-subjects think-aloud), identifying the one layout that performed on both tasks while structurally preventing accidental spends of rewards currency (0% harmful-error rate vs. 4.8% in the riskiest variant; 68.8% first-choice preference).
- Design and lead the sportsbook research within the company's recurring multi-day in-person research program (25+ moderated sessions per event, multiple moderators; an established program, not one I founded): discussion guides, testing topics, session plans, and moderation for the sportsbook track. Planned and moderated the October 2025 event (26 participants, 4 moderators), whose sessions became the shared source layer feeding downstream workstreams from promotions to social and personalization.
- Designed and ran in-person field observation of bettors in natural context during live games (the betting-journey field study), producing a ten-category impact × frequency framework that aligned three product teams on one priority order.
- Built standardized, KPI-linked measurement instruments (a desirability scale and a strategic-outcomes scale) reused across studies and product teams.
- Led roughly 20 end-to-end studies a year across discovery, evaluative, competitive, and strategic research, synthesizing qualitative and quantitative inputs into recommendations for senior leadership.
- Integrated Claude and other AI tools across the research workflow (synthesis, transcription, tagging, rapid prototyping), accelerating cycle time and unlocking analyses that were not previously feasible.
- Brought a social-psychology framing to motivation, habit and ritual formation, and responsible engagement; integrated a Responsible Gaming lens into research and concept assessment.

UX Researcher — PointsBet · Remote

Apr 2022 – Apr 2024

- Built the research practice from the ground up after joining as the organization's sole researcher following a six-month vacancy: re-established the repository, taxonomy, recruiting operations, stakeholder education, and research cadence.
- Defined and executed research strategy across product, marketing, CRM, and trading teams, scaling research from zero to a consistent input in product and design decisions.
- Built toolkits, templates, and standardized practices that enabled product managers, designers, and CRM partners to run foundational research independently.
- Delivered the practice's foundational studies (sign-up funnel usability, navigation redesign, persona development, a 30-day diary study, cross-sell promotion efficacy, churn research) that became standing inputs to product, CRM, and marketing decisions.

Director of Institutional Research & Effectiveness — Albright College · Reading, PA

Sep 2020 – Apr 2022

- Primary technical contributor on institutional data: wrote SQL directly against the data warehouse, built Tableau dashboards, and ran statistical analyses supporting strategic decisions across the institution.
- Advised the President, Provost, and Board of Trustees through mixed-methods research, program evaluation, and enrollment analytics.
- Identified the specific practices driving the majority (64%) of student attrition, delivering recommendations that shaped retention strategy.
- Redesigned the institution's survey methodology, improving response rates by 23% through optimized design, targeting, and distribution.
- Board Advisory Member; led the Data Definitions Team, establishing governance standards for institutional data across departments.

Director of Institutional Research | Assistant Professor of Psychology — Glenville State College · Glenville, WV

Aug 2018 – Sep 2020

- Built the reporting infrastructure and wrote queries directly against the data warehouse for academic, administrative, and compliance reporting.
- Established standardized data practices that reduced reporting burden by 15% and improved cross-functional data compliance by 60%.
- Designed mixed-methods research identifying barriers to student success, leading to interventions that improved retention by 12% within two semesters.
- Contributed research-backed proposals to securing U.S. Department of Education TRIO grant funding.

Lead Researcher | Adjunct Professor of Psychology — Rutgers University · Newark, NJ

Sep 2013 – Aug 2018

- Designed and led multi-year experimental and quasi-experimental research programs in social psychology, managing a lab of 30–40 undergraduate research assistants across concurrent studies.
- Mentored research assistants on study design, data collection, statistical analysis, and research ethics; supported multiple students through independent projects.
- Published peer-reviewed research in *The Journal of Social Psychology*; presented at academic and industry conferences.

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Social Psychology — Rutgers University, Newark, NJ

M.A., Experimental Psychology — University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

SKILLS & METHODS

Qualitative: moderated and unmoderated usability testing, in-depth interviews, think-aloud protocols, in-person field research, contextual inquiry, concept testing, standing/recurring research programs, diary studies, discussion-guide design.

Quantitative: survey design and analysis, feature prioritization, experimental and quasi-experimental design (within/between subjects, Latin Square counterbalancing), data-quality auditing, statistical analysis in Python and R.

Research operations & AI: repository architecture and governance, taxonomy and tagging, PII handling, AI agent design for research Q&A and concept assessment, AI-augmented synthesis workflows, responsible-AI standards for research, research-ops automation.

Technical: Python · R · SQL · Snowflake · Tableau · Qualtrics · UserTesting · Dovetail · Figma · Claude (advanced daily use; Cowork agents and automated workflows).

Domain lens: social psychology (motivation, habit and ritual formation), consumer behavior, responsible engagement.