Title

A Dual-Identity Model of Responses to Deviance in Online Groups: Integrating Social Identity
Theory and Expectancy Violations Theory

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Abstract
Several theories have sought to address responses to such deviant behavior, but have done so with a focus either on group-level or on individual-level behavior. Yet, due to some characteristics of online contexts, identities can be salient at both a group and/or individual level, creating a more complex set of influences on responding to deviance. The paper explores responses to online communicative deviance by integrating social identity approaches (a group-level perspective) and expectancy violations theory (an individual-level perspective). Social identity emphasizes the role of group identification in responding to deviance, especially relevant in anonymous online contexts, while expectancy violations theory notes how individuals respond to ambiguous deviance through assessing the reward value of the deviant.

Keywords:
Computer-mediated communication, Expectancy violations, Identity salience, Online communicative deviance, Social identity

**A Dual-Identity Model of Responses to Deviance in Online Groups:
Integrating Social Identity Theory and Expectancy Violations Theory**
        Similar to offline groups, online groups can create and maintain social norms and a sense of community (Katz, Rice, Acord, Dasgupta, & David, 2004) as well as foster and promote interpersonal relationships (Walther, 1992). Nonetheless, online deviance is widespread and a topic of media and public concerns (Denegri-Knott & Taylor, 2005). Much of the concern regarding online deviance has to do with amoral or maladaptive behavior (e.g., online pedophilia, stalking, cyberbullying). However, we consider normative deviance within a particular online group or entity, which does not necessarily have to be amoral behavior in the larger society. Members of online groups may respond in various ways to such deviant or counter-normative behavior (Mikal, Rice, Kent, & Uchino, 2014), which may threaten the group, or violate expectations. Two questions, then, are 1) what most powerfully influences how online group members respond to deviant behavior – group norms or individual expectations – and 2) what conditions affect those influences and their relation to the responses?
        Norms and expectations are highly related concepts, with expectations often based on norms. This is especially true in group settings, where the formation of group-specific norms sets influences what is expected and tolerated in the group itself, both offline and online, whether explicit or implicit. However, norms and expectations can be independent. For instance, if a group member consistently violates norms of behavior within a group, the expectation would be for that individual group member to violate future norms as well. This distinction between group

norms and individual expectations is theoretically important, as often theories favor one perspective over, or at the expense of, the other.

Katz et al. (2004) review conceptualizations and characteristics of physical and online communities. As these are fundamentally continuous dimensions, many aspects appear in both. Though many see Rousseau's concept of the *general will* as representing the common interests and values of a community extendable to the online realm, others still feel that community resides in physical local and interaction. Crucial to the notion of community, then, is a sense of identification with something greater than the individual. Katz and Rice's (2002) Syntopian view argues that people's multidimensional sets of relationships increasingly integrate across offline and online contexts, so that communities can develop and thrive in, and across, both spaces.

Online communities often function as groups and rely on members' group identities. It is important to note a lack of precision and definitional clarity in terminology relating to online group interactions. Researchers use the terms "online communities" and "online groups" somewhat interchangeably, with little discussion as to the differences (if any) between the two. In a thorough review of virtual (i.e., online) communities, Hercheui (2011) concludes that a community must have *boundaries* to differentiate itself from other communities, as well as a *common interest*, *rules*, and *voluntary membership*. Similarly, Howard (2014) conceptualizes online groups as "three or more people who perceive a membership in some common social identity and whose dominant form of interaction is through computer-mediated communication (CMC)" (p. 123). Howard also adds there are many different types of groups that serve different purposes, which parallels Hercheui's discussion of a common interest and boundaries for virtual communities.

This definitional ambiguity presents a problem for researchers, and the resolution of such ambiguity, while an important contribution to this literature, is beyond the scope of this manuscript. However, for the remainder of the paper we will refer to online communities as the largest entity of group membership for this theoretical framework. It is certainly possible that sub-groups form within an online community to maintain a distinct group identity as the size of the community increases (cf. Brewer, 1991). Thus, the term "online group" can refer to not only independent online entities, but also any group that is within an online community and exists as a distinct social identity for its members. Because both online communities and online groups can foster group identification and, therefore, responses to deviance, we refer throughout to "online groups" to cover the continuum from individual online groups up to online communities.

These definitional constraints necessarily omit common types of internet communication from our theoretical framework, such as YouTube or news site comments. Since these sites do not typically elicit a strong group identification (e.g., "I'm a news site commenter"), there is a lack of agreed-upon norms and, thus, no deviant behavior at a group norm level. Social networking sites (SNS) can emphasize preoccupation with the self (such as narcissism) with attendant anti-social behavior (Carpenter, 2012). Online group members can establish interpersonal relationships and ties with other members, which may supersede group-related goals (Sassenberg, 2002; Wang, Walther, & Hancock, 2009). And Beniger's (1987) *pseudocommunities* can arise in both physical and online settings. However, even very large, anonymous online sites allowing only short comments and images can foster at least some sense of group identity (Mikal, Rice, Kent, & Uchino, 2015), and SNS enable collective action (Obar, Zube, & Lampe, 2012).

Aspects of computer-mediated communication (CMC) can affect how people respond to deviant behavior. For example, the potential for anonymous online interactions would suggest that personal identities may not be as salient in mediated contexts (Christopherson, 2007). Other online features (such as photographs) can increase salience of personal identity (Reicher, Spears, & Postmes, 1995) and may allow for responses based on individual concerns as opposed to more group related factors.

Given this fluidity in identity salience online, analyzing deviance from either group or individual perspectives separately does not allow the most complete analysis of evaluations of and responses to deviant online behaviors. Thus the online context serves as an interesting opportunity to integrate two theories that both analyze deviant behavior, but from the perspective of the group (social identity approach, or SIA) or the individual (expectancy violations theory, or EVT).

The following section summarizes online deviance. The second explains social identity-related approaches to studying deviance in general, and in CMC contexts. The third explains expectancy violations approaches to dealing with deviant and unexpected behavior in interpersonal communication, and also in CMC contexts. The fourth addresses CMC characteristics that may affect the response to deviance in online groups. The final section presents a model for analyzing responses to communicative deviance from both group and individual identities in online contexts.

Online Deviance

Relatively early in the era of the public Internet, Suler and Phillips (1998) developed a typology of online deviance, including (with some updated examples) mild deviance (e.g., new user behavior, mischievous comments); offensive online visual representations (avatars); unacceptable language (flaming, trolling); expressions of complex social problems (e.g., excessive self-disclosure, cyberbullying); and cybercrime (e.g., cyberstalking, malicious code, identity theft) (see also Fichman & Sanfilippo, 2015; O'Sullivan & Flanagin, 2003; Smith, McLaughlin, & Osborne, 1998; Vandebosch & Cleemput, 2009). Users may perform these without awareness of their deviance, as attempts to work through their problems, or, as intentional behaviors. Denegri-Knott and Taylor (2005) distinguished two levels of deviance: macro (cybercultural processes) and micro (CMC processes). Others debate whether the Internet and online contexts foster new and more deviant behaviors or whether they facilitate existing human (social and psychological) tendencies, or they analyze motivations for online deviance (Denegri-Kott & Taylor, 2005).

Suler and Phillips (1998) categorized responses to such online deviance as preventative (attempting to impose standards, password-protected sites, etc.) or remedial (interpersonal, technological, automated responses and filters, and governance/moderation). Here, we consider only individual (micro)-level and remedial responses to low to moderate levels of online communicative deviance in contexts with at least some established norms, what Sternberg (2012) generally refers to as breaking online environment conduct rules. We agree with Denegri-Knott and Taylor's (2005) emphasis on Foucault's premise that both acceptable and deviant behavior are constituted through discursive action (here, online posts and responses). Other scholars have echoed this perspective, arguing that norms (and, by extension, deviance from those norms) are inherently a communicative phenomenon (Hogg & Reid, 2006; Rimal & Lapinski, 2015).

Social Identity Approach

The social identity approach (SIA), is an amalgamation of multiple theories, most notably social identity theory (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and self-categorization theory (SCT; Turner,

Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). Its key tenet is that "people derive a part of their self-concept from the social groups and categories they belong to" (Hogg & Reid, 2006, p. 9). One's behavior, thoughts, and responses are filtered through the group and/or category to which they belong. People use easily accessible categories as references, and search for a group categorization that has the best fit for their perceived identity in a given context (Hogg & Reid, 2006; Turner et al., 1987).

Group Identification

In order for a behavior to be affected by SIA, a person must first believe they are a part of the relevant group. Group identification is, in part, based on how much people in the group believe they are similar (or dissimilar) to the prototypes for the group (discussed below). Those who are not as identified to the group are less likely to conform to group norms of behavior (Rimal & Real, 2005; Spears, Doosje, & Ellemers, 1997). Further, the extent to which an individual is identified with the group predicates behavior to defend the group that has been threatened and to sanction others for their deviant behavior, in an attempt to maintain a positive social identity (Marques & Paez, 1994).

Additionally, while interpersonal factors may influence group formation (Hogg & Turner, 1985), SIA makes a distinction between social and personal identity. Indeed, SIA presumes that only one identity can be more or less salient at any given time (i.e., *functional antagonism*: when salience of one identity increases, salience of other identities decreases). If one's social identity is salient, then the person will react in accordance with that group's norms and goals and, consequently, depersonalize from their personal identity. However, if social identity is not as salient, then people will react on the basis of other factors not related to the group, such as personal identity (see below). This effect can persist even across conditions where goals of a salient group are at odds with personal goals (Zdanuk & Levine, 2001). DeCremer and Van Vugt (1999, p. 887) suggest that this is a result of a transformation of motivation, in which group identity salience shifts pro-self goals to a pro-group goal. A negative interpretation of and subsequent response to deviant behavior (a group goal) may be more important than a personal reward.

Group Prototypicality

Group prototypes are "attributes that define one group and distinguish it from other groups" (Hogg & Reid, 2006, p. 10). Members who are more prototypical are seen as more desirable and liked, and given more status, by the other group members. What is considered normative behavior is based on a shared conceptualization of a group prototype. Additionally, prototypes serve as a reference point for group members when analyzing the behavior of both themselves as well as others in both in-group and out-group situations.

Somewhat paradoxically, more prototypical members are able to commit minor deviations more freely than are less prototypical members (Hogg & Reid, 2006; Hornsey & Imani, 2004), but are also judged more harshly if the deviant act is threatening to the group. The social influence model of leadership (Hogg, 2001) specifically focuses on how leader prototypicality affects interpretations of and reactions to supervisory behavior, and how prototypical leaders receive more leeway in evaluations of unfavorable or somewhat deviant decisions. Prototypical group members also have an impact on the behavior of those group members who are newer and likely to respond to a deviant act only if they are aware that higher status members are watching them (Jetten, Hornsey, Spears, Haslam, & Cowell, 2010). This is likely to solidify their place in the group and indicate to the more senior members that they are

aware of and understand how the group functions, the correct response for deviant behavior, and standards of conduct.

While group identification and prototypicality are often highly correlated, they are distinct concepts. Level of group identification is something that is (relatively) under the control of the individual. Conversely, other group members determine one's prototypicality on how well one "fits" with the group and its relevant prototypes (Ellemers & Jetten, 2013).

Deviance in a Group

Deviance, or the violation of group norms, is tied to the content of the norm that is salient as well as the context in which the deviant behavior is enacted (Jetten & Hornsey, 2014). Members often perceive deviant behavior as threatening to the group identity, and therefore address the deviance in order to mitigate the threat. Jetten and Hornsey (2014) explain five main reasons for responding to group deviance: helping to restore threatened group positivity, cohesion, distinctiveness, locomotion, and threatened self-image. With the exception of threatened self-image (which would invoke individual identity), all of these rationales are related to restoring threatened aspects of the group, and by extension downplay the role of individual motivations for responding to deviance. This would, by necessity, minimize the relevance of any interpersonal reward for choosing to respond (or not) to deviant behavior, as the most important feature from a SIA perspective is the group itself. We note that deviant behavior is not always perceived as negative (Hutchison, Jetten, & Gutierrez, 2011), and can in fact play a role in confirming norms, affirming group values, and allowing for fluidity and change within group structure (Jetten & Hornsey, 2014).

The existence of both negative and positive deviance leads to questions about how group members respond to behavior that would be deviant but *ambiguous* in nature. In regards to political groups, Morton, Postmes, and Jetten (2007) found that competing normative behaviors solicited different perceptions of deviance that, from one party's perspective or the other, would be clearly negative or positive. This ambiguity arose, they argued, from the "strategic communication" that politicians employ when positioning themselves both within a political party as well as within a broader context of public opinion on issues. Another study found that group variability (the extent to which groups are tolerant of other viewpoints) influenced perceptions of deviance, with heterogeneous groups having more positive evaluations of "deviant" viewpoints than homogeneous groups (Hutchinson et al., 2011). Both formal and informal online norms and expectancies may run counter to different users' conceptualization of their rights and responsibilities (Dutton, 1996). These and other kinds of deviance ambiguity may stimulate one to look to other cues in the environment outside of group factors, such as interpersonal factors (e.g., EVT).

Other factors can also affect how deviance is perceived. SIA argues those who are not identified with the group (out-group members) are treated differently than those who are identified (in-group members). In particular, deviance is perceived as more threatening from in-group members than from out-group members. Research into this *black sheep* effect (Marques & Yzerbyt, 1988) supports this claim, also noting that deviant in-group members are judged more harshly (but prototypical members less so) as a result. Further, in-group members who are repeat offenders are judged more harshly than those who have only committed deviant behavior occasionally, as greater frequency increases the threat to the group identity (Gollwitzer & Keller, 2010). Groups, whether online or offline, may even dispel deviant members (Birchmeier, Joinson & Dietz-Uhler, 2005). New or marginal members of the group who commit deviant acts are judged less harshly, presumably as they pose less of a threat, or perhaps at they are not

expected as much to know and perform the norms (Pinto, Marques, Levine, & Abrams, 2010). In these situations, responses can be seen not as sanctioning behavior but a form of "socialization" (Dino, Reysen, & Branscombe, 2008). Established members, however, should already be aware of the rules, so such deviance poses more of a threat to group identity (Pinto et al., 2010).

Providing some final SIA-related factors to consider when evaluating and responding to deviance, Frings, Hurst, Cleveland, Blascovich, and Abrams (2012) concluded that members will only confront in-group deviants when they feel able to do so. Because responding to group members who transgress may be seen as aggressive or confrontational itself, members who are unsure they are able to successfully confront the deviant may choose instead to remain silent, or, in the extreme, de-identify with or leave the group (see also Eidelman & Biernat, 2003). The efficacy of their responding correctly is a function of the resources (e.g., group rulebook, supporting evidence, corroboration with other members) available to ensure their response is accurate and will not itself be seen as deviant or damaging to the group. Table 1 summarizes SIA predictions about evaluations of deviance under these conditions.

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SIA Online: SIDE

Much of the focus of SIA has been on face-to-face groups. However, some factors more specific to CMC may affect the way that groups behave and interact. Online groups can function similarly to offline groups in fostering group identification (Howard & Magee, 2013) and communicating normative standards (Mikal et al., 2014). One application of SIA specific to online contexts is the social identity model of deindividuation effects (SIDE; Postmes, Spears, & Lea, 2000; Reicher et al., 1995). The model was developed in response to research that was concerned with the anonymous nature of the Internet, and the supposed consequent tendency to produce interactions that were socially unregulated, or uncivil in nature (e.g., flaming in online messaging boards). Contrary to those findings, SIDE suggests that because individuating information is less available online, especially in anonymous contexts, those who engage in online discussions are actually *more* prone to follow specific group norms (and thus less likely to engage in unregulated or uncivil behavior) (Lea & Spears, 1991) and increase group identity, *if* group norms are salient. However, SIDE notes that if the group identity is *not* salient in this online anonymous context, people will behave in ways that are consistent with their personal identities (or are less constrained by their public personal identities).

Some contrary results suggest that interpersonal factors can be more readily salient than group factors in an online context, especially when dealing with unlikable group members (e.g., Wang, Walther, & Hancock, 2009). Recent research has challenged the *functional antagonism* concept in SIA (only one group identity can be salient at a time), suggesting that multiple identities and perceptions of both in-group and out-group members can be more or less salient (e.g., Baray, Postmes, & Jetten, 2009), especially when the strength of social cues is introduced as a moderating factor (Carr, Vitak, & McLaughlin, 2011). This has led to *identity fusion* research (e.g., Swann, Jetten, Gomez, Whitehouse, & Bastian, 2012), which posits that some social identities become so strong that boundaries between personal and social self become permeable. This concept might be especially applicable to immersive activities like massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGs) (see, for example, Bessière, Seay, & Kiesler, 2007). In general, though, SIA argues that group-related effects often take precedence over interpersonal goals (De Cremer & Van Vugt, 1999; Zdanuk & Levine, 2001), which is especially true given the anonymity of the participants in many online groups. Even ambiguous

deviance can activate group-identity, as online group members may respond to ambiguous deviance differently by referencing different group prototypes (Birchmeier, Joinson, & Dietz-Uhler, 2005).

<div align="center">**Expectancy Violations Theory**</div>

It may well be that a group identity is not the best fit for certain interactions, or not salient for some users or some online sites. In those contexts, SIA or SIDE will not likely explain how online group members respond to communicative deviance.   Expectancy violations theory (EVT) can provide additional insight into the evaluative processes of and responses to counter-normative deviance when personal identity is the most salient and accessible identity, and especially when deviance is ambiguous. EVT (Burgoon, 1978; Burgoon, 1993; Burgoon & Hale, 1988) was developed initially to explain reactions to nonverbal proxemic distance violations (i.e., standing too close to or far away from another person). Further research using this theory has included other behaviors such as nonverbal immediacy (Burgoon & Walther, 1990), emotional communication (Burgoon, 1993), relational communication (Afifi & Metts, 1998), modality switching between online and offline contexts (Ramirez & Wang, 2008), self-presentation on SNS (van der Hyde, D'Angelo, & Shumaker, 2012), privacy settings on Facebook (Strutzman & Kramer-Duffield, 2010), and deceptive messages on Twitter (Beck, 2011). Central EVT concepts are expectancies, violation, violation valence, reward values, and responses to expectancy violation. As with SIA, the online context provides new testing grounds for EVT.

Expectancies

EVT focuses on how people form and react to expectancies about interactions. Expectancies are formed on the basis of social norms and anticipated behavior. They may be general (i.e., applicable to all behavior) or idiosyncratic (i.e., related to a particular behavior or person). Burgoon and Walther (1990) summarized communication expectancies as "cognitions about the anticipated communicative behavior of specific others, as embedded within and shaped by the social norms for the contemporaneous roles, relationships, and contexts" (p. 236).

Three main sets of characteristics influence these expectations: the communicator, the relationship, and the context in which the interaction occurs (Burgoon, 1993). *Communicator characteristics* are the features of the interactants that are salient during the conversation, such as physical appearance, personality, demographics, and others. *Relationship characteristics* highlight the relationship itself and not the individual actors, such as degree of familiarity, liking, attraction, or status. Finally, *context characteristics* incorporate any environmental cues (e.g., privacy, formality) that influence certain interaction behaviors.

These factors combine to produce two types of expectancies that occur in any given encounter: *predictive* (often called descriptive) and *prescriptive* expectancies. Predictive expectancies are what people anticipate to occur, whereas prescriptive expectancies are the outcome that is desired or preferred (i.e., what people expect *will* occur as opposed to what *should* occur). While in many cases the two expectancies are similar, they can diverge if there is prior knowledge, context, or relationship between the interactants. Interestingly, while this notion of predictive and prescriptive expectancies would appear to influence perceptions of violation valence, there is little in the way of direct empirical tests of such effects. It seems likely that past interactions would play a larger role in determining the expectations about and, subsequently, violations of that interaction, leading to the use of predictive expectancies. However, if there is no past relationship, the expectancies would be derived from social norms; thus prescriptive expectancies would be more prevalent.

Violations and Violation Valence

Once these expectations are formed, the theory then begins to explain what happens when a violation occurs. A violation is "any recognizable deviation" from an expectation in an interaction (Burgoon, 1978, p. 130). While this definition has not changed through iterations of the theory, the nature of the violation has been expanded, as noted above, from proxemic violations to a myriad of other violations that are more relational in nature (Afifi & Metts, 1999). Further research using these relational violations has expanded to include online behavior as well, such as being "unfriended" on Facebook as an expectancy violation that is moderated by the relationship with the person who initiated the termination (Bevan, Ang, & Fearns, 2014).

Central to how one responds to a violation is its *valence*: the extent to which a violation is perceived as positive or negative. Drawing on the three expectancy characteristics above (communicator, relationship, context), as well as the predictive or prescriptive nature of the expectancy that has been violated, the observer assesses the nature and valence of the violation. The nature and valence affects how the person responding to the violation behaviorally reacts to the instigator. However, empirical tests of this behavioral response have generated mixed results that occasionally refute the theory's predictions (discussed below).

Some violations, such as a rude hand gesture in traffic, a kind smile from a stranger, or a profanity-filled online response, carry an inherent meaning that is clearly positively or negatively valenced. Violations that are more ambiguous in nature (e.g., email response latency, references to other groups or contexts, proxemic distance) require an additional "interpretation and evaluation" process, referencing communicator reward value, to determine meaning (Burgoon, 1993; Burgoon & Hale, 1988).

Reward Value

A communicator's reward value (or *communicator reward valence*) is the perceived ability of the violator in an interaction to make the interaction rewarding or pleasurable, often associated with the violator's attractiveness or likeability (Burgoon, 1978). Particularly relevant for the online context, relational and contextual characteristics (discussed above) may play an important role in how rewarding an individual is perceived. For instance, a romantic partner on Facebook may carry more reward value than a business acquaintance, but that business acquaintance may be perceived as more "rewarding" on LinkedIn—a professional development SNS. Or, a highly-ranked guild leader provides many potential rewards for less experienced members of an online game team. While empirical examples of reward value are limited in online EVT research (discussed below), other factors such as socioeconomic status, task competence, and tangible rewards have been used for reward value in offline studies (see Burgoon & Hale, 1988). This punishment/reward characteristic of the violator is then the most salient aspect of the response to the ambiguous violation. Table 2 summarizes primary factors affecting violation evaluation from an EVT perspective.

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Interactional Responses to Violations

Aside from analyzing the respondent's perceived valence of a violation itself, EVT predicts two types of response behaviors: *reciprocal* and *compensatory*. Reciprocal behavior would match cues by the violator, such as increasing immediacy behaviors (Hale & Burgoon, 1984), rate of speech, conversational involvement (Coker & Burgoon, 1987), etc., largely due to social norms (Burgoon, Stern, & Dillman, 1993). Compensatory behaviors, conversely, try and make up for a (lack of) behavior, such as increasing conversational involvement when another is decreasing (Coker & Burgoon, 1987), or stepping away when someone gets too close. (Thus to

some extent, EVT overlaps with communication accommodation theory; Giles, 2008). As Burgoon et al. (1993) suggest, EVT's use of both inherent valence of violations as well as reward value of the violator provides some interesting effects (see Table 3) that occasionally refute the theory's behavioral predictions. For example, in the context of a positively valenced violation, if the *violation* is more salient it would produce a reciprocity interactional response; however, if the *violator* is more salient it would produce a compensatory interactional response.

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EVT Online

Online communication can foster formation and maintenance of interpersonal relationships (Walther, 1992), and occasionally be even *more* influential than face-to-face contexts (Walther, 1996). However, applications of EVT in online contexts are relatively sparse, as it was developed initially to test proxemics distance violations, which are not as readily applicable in most online contexts (though exceptions may be found in online virtual communities with avatars, such as Second Life; see Yee, Bailenson, Urbanek, Chang, & Merget, 2007). One study concluded that the reward value of a hypothetical job candidate moderated the effect of email response latency on applicant evaluation, credibility, and attractiveness such that job candidates who were shown as more impressive (high reward value) who took longer to respond were evaluated more negatively than were less impressive job candidates (Kalman & Rafaeli, 2010), which seems to contradict EVT predictions. This result, however, may be an artifact of the stimulus used (the evaluation of an applicant from a hiring perspective, and not from a job-search perspective), and perhaps a too-negative response latency, and not a refutation of the theory. This study highlights the necessity of the potential moderating effect of reward value in ambiguous violations (see Burgoon & Hale, 1988).

An exploratory study by McLaughlin and Vitak (2011) utilized focus groups to determine how people react to violations on Facebook. Interestingly, this study does distinguish between norm violations (SIA) and expectancy violations (EVT). It argues that norm violations are more general, while expectancy violations are more specific, based on prior interactions (echoing the distinction between prescriptive and predictive expectancies). Here, the reward value of the communicator was primarily a function of the type of relationship with the "friend," such as a weak tie (low reward value) or close personal acquaintance (high reward value). They also suggested that when the violation is not directly affecting behaviors on Facebook (e.g., finding out that group members were out partying instead of working), positively valenced friends tended to be met with more confrontation on Facebook, presumably due to relational closeness. Additionally, "responses to a violation may be a product of the context and the goals that are threatened by such a violation" (p. 312), as, interestingly, work-related acquaintances who committed a violation were met with compensation for their behavior as opposed to the reciprocation behavior predicted by EVT.

Online Contexts

Here we more carefully consider the characteristics unique to the mediated communication context that would affect responses to deviance. The following sections describe six relevant characteristics of many online groups: size and extent of use, lack of nonverbal cues, anonymity, warranting, communication record, and community type.

Size and Extent of Use

The larger the online group, the more diverse the behaviors and users, and the more difficult it may be to establish clear norms and expectancies. With larger groups, the usual skewed participation levels of members (Matei, Bruno & Morris, 2015; Zipf, 1949) may be

extended even further, with many more occasional and new users, who are less likely to be identified by their behaviors, not know about the norms, and have little group identification. Thus there would be less group salience, fewer consistent expectations, and thus both more deviance but also less strong responses to deviance. New media users frequently engage in media multitasking, what Xu, Wang and David (2016) define as an involvement in two or more tasks, with one or more involving media, and possibly multiple tasks within one medium. Smartphones and tablets allow users to keep multiple windows open while on the go, allowing for continuous interaction with and awareness of multiple individuals and groups (Rice & Hagen, 2010). This development increases the possibilities for more rapid and frequent switching between (even multiple) group and individual (dual) identities. This may collapse contexts (whether by collusion or collision; Davis & Jurgenson, 2014), blur identities, and generate more ambiguous or habitual responses.

Extent of Nonverbal Cues

Some early CMC research presumed that mediated (specifically text-based, and asynchronous) communication was inherently impersonal, cold, lacking in social presence or richness, and generally inferior to face-to-face communication. Studies began to find, however, considerable emotional content online (Rice & Love, 1987). Further, Walther's (1992) social information processing theory (SIPT) proposed an alternative view that users of online media compensate for the cue deficiency through various electronic paralinguistic means, and through experience with online partners and with the medium over time, although the process of relational development will take longer.   So the lack of (many) nonverbal cues in online contexts may foster initial unregulated behavior, misunderstandings, or perceptions of deviance, but those effects likely diminish or change over time and through more interactions, and are likely less prevalent with newer online media such as SNS that offer cue-rich profiles, avatars, photos, audio, synchronous chat, and video.

Anonymity

A major characteristic of online communication with regard to SIA in SIDE (Reicher et al., 1995) is anonymity. Early CMC researchers proposed that the anonymous nature of much Internet communication fostered a disinhibiting effect on the users of such communities in regards to polite and/or prosocial behavior. The example of "flaming" online was frequently used as an edifying fulcrum for this theory (Denegri-Knott & Taylor, 2005). However, as noted above, SIDE refuted this claim, providing evidence that anonymity actually fosters *more* conformity to group and socially normative behavior, *when* group norms and membership are salient. Anonymity may still play a role when interpreting more interpersonal factors, such as reward value in EVT. Though EVT is robust regarding various levels of relational attachment – the original study (Burgoon, 1978), for example, used strangers as confederates – CMC research utilizing the EVT framework have typically operationalized reward value as the strength of a tie in a SNS context (Bevan et al., 2014; McLaughlin & Vitak, 2011). Thus, the impact of anonymity with regards to users' evaluating other forms of reward value in an online context has yet to be explored.

The Web 2.0 environment often eschews anonymous interactions in favor of personally identifiable interactions. This is not to say that anonymous interactions do not exist online in the current media landscape—certainly a number of popular online communities have anonymous or pseudononymous users. But addressing the increasing number of identifiable media is an important discussion for the scope of this theory. SNS, in particular, are typically interpersonally-oriented (i.e., intentional and direct communication with networked others), but

also may invoke a group membership identity and response. For instance, Facebook users typically communicate with individuals they have networked with or "friended," but may also participate in "groups" on Facebook that have their own norms.

As an example, Fernandez, Giurcanu, Bowers, and Neely (2010) analyzed political Facebook groups that supported Obama or McCain during the 2008 presidential election. They found, unsurprisingly, that the posts on a particular candidate's group were overwhelmingly positive for that candidate—less than 1% of the posts were critical of the candidate. Those posts that criticized the candidate in their own Facebook group would presumably be considered deviant for that group. Hypothetically, then, a member of that group who posts "I disagree with the candidate's policies on immigration," may be considered deviant by other group members who come across the posting. However, those who are interpersonally linked ("friends") with the deviant member may recognize the immigration issue as an exception for that particular member, and not consider the post deviant *for that member*. The member is still violating a group norm (i.e., considered deviant), but the response to that violation would be moderated by the extent of prior interaction: those that know the member interpersonally would respond interpersonally, while those that did not would respond based on group sanctioning behaviors. The interpersonal response would also be moderated by the extent of prior positive or negative interaction—a frequent troll may still be considered negatively deviant and sanctioned.

Thus, while anonymous interactions may foster more group identification according to the SIDE model, SNS should encourage more interpersonally oriented (i.e., EVT) responses to deviance. However, if the group identification within a particular SNS group is strong enough, group level responses may take over, especially when the deviant members are not directly linked to the respondent (i.e., they are not "following" or "friends" of the respondent). This theoretical framework, then, is robust for different types of interactions—both anonymous and identifiable—in the Web 2.0 environment.

Warranting

As CMC, especially anonymous, contexts provide the ability to easily manipulate identifying information, warranting theory (Walther & Parks, 2002) may nicely support the concept of reward value online. The theory suggests that people assess information that is more difficult to change as authenticating or legitimizing self-presentation (DeAndrea, 2014). The less the information is perceived to be controllable by the person it represents, the more weight it will carry in shaping impressions about that person. (This is conceptually similar to the evolutionary concept of costly signaling; see Connelly, Certo, Ireland, & Reutzel, 2011, for a management review, and Wiley, 1983, for an animal communication review.) Warranting theory applications have also shown that identifiability decreases the production of misleading self-presentations (Walther & Parks, 2002) (Indeed, personal and institutional identity was one of the primary initial design features of Facebook; Zhao, Grasmuck, & Martin, 2008.) However, other factors may also allow people to authenticate or legitimize information. Instead of looking to information posted by the user, for example, other participants may weight more heavily information that may constrain the poster's ability to mislead, such as audience knowledge of the individual, usage and ratings (e.g., tenure on site, number of posts, credibility ratings over multiple transactions or contributions, etc.), and anticipation of future interaction (see DeAndrea, 2014). Based on these diverse sources, the perceived warranting value of an individual may have a pronounced impact on perceptions of prototypicality in SIA, or on expectancies and reward value in EVT, and thus indirectly on others' responses to communicative deviance.

Communication Record

Generally, norms (both injunctive and descriptive) are learned through direct communication with and observation of group members (Kincaid, 2004; Lapinski & Rimal, 2005). This communicative action serves to specify and explicate appropriate behavior for groups, as well as warn what will happen if people deviate from the group norms. Online contexts can provide formal written policies, or a haphazard and complex accumulation of rules over time (Dutton, 1996).

However, an online context can also provide (depending on the online platform and system settings) a record of normative behavior through prior communication records (Mikal et al., 2014; Walther et al., 2010), or a statement of netiquette and principles for the site (Strawbridge, 2006). This communication record, as well as the ability to "lurk" – observe and consume content without contributing to the production of that content or having any noticeable presence – (Lampe, Wash, Velasquez & Ozkaya, 2010; Nonnecke & Preece, 2000), suggests that low-level and even lurking users can become aware of and familiar with normative behaviors, despite not identifying with, or actively participating in, the group itself.

The ability to see a fellow group member's former posts through a record of their communication (such as conversational threads, or searches for a given poster's username) might influence a person's preinteractional (predictive) expectancies. However, as many online forums and groups are anonymous or pseudo-anonymous, there is less of a chance users would have such expectancies about group members that differ from the online site's social and group norms. Yet, even within a so-called "anonymous" group where real identities are hidden, members may still develop preinteractional expectations of certain users based on their pseudonyms, avatars, and other recurring online identities, which may influence expectancies about and attributions toward others (Hayne, Pollard, & Rice, 2003). Thus, in an online context the ability to access a record of communication and normative behaviors may affect perceptions of and thus responses to communicative deviance while not necessarily increasing identification with a group.

Type of Community

Online communities and groups very widely in their functions, features, and goals (Katz et al., 2004). SIA is, indeed, founded on the idea that people belong to one social group over another, and compare themselves to both in-group prototypes as well as relevant out-groups. In online contexts, variation in the mediated nature of the group also plays a role in how those comparisons are made. Echoing previous offline SIA research, Sassenberg (2002), for example, draws a distinction between *common-bond* and *common-identity* groups online. Common-bond groups are predominately groups that are formed via attachment to other people within the group. Common-identity groups are formed as an attachment to the group itself (e.g., because of the group's topic or resources). Online communities, then, may tend to function more as common-identity rather than common-bond groups. Members of large groups such as Imgur self-identify as online communities and show evidence of attachment to the group itself (cf. Mikal et al., 2014), as opposed to individual members. Sassenberg found that people conformed to norms more in common-identity than in common-bond groups, likely as a result of the decreased level of interpersonal attachment between members in the common-identity context and thus increased group identity (without SIA or SIDE theory, this might seem fairly paradoxical). Since common-bond groups necessitate an interpersonal connection, it would appear that anonymous online sites are more likely to be common-identity groups and thus facilitate SIDE predictions of increased group-normative behavior.

More recently, Howard (2014) analyzed a typology of online groups, categorized by their primary function. He found that these four groups (*stigma, support, avocation,* and *organization*) behave quite differently in regards to a large number of variables, particularly group identity, perceived social support, and self-disclosure. As an example, support (based on rare illness) and stigma (based on potentially dangerous or negatively perceived characteristics) groups elicited a stronger group identity than avocation groups, which are primarily based on some sort of hobby or activity. Thus there may be an effect of online group type, through both group and interpersonal factors, on perceptions of and responses to deviance. For instance, members of stigmatized online groups may provide stronger reactions to deviance than do members of avocation groups, due to the increased identification with the group.

These analyses echo, though not explicitly, Altheide's (2013) work on media logic and its relevance to online communication. While he specifically focuses on the features of each medium, as well as the format of the message, his framework supports the notion of differences among groups online, especially when it comes to an ecology of communication (i.e., the linkage between technology, communication format, and social activities).

A Dual-Identity Model of Responses to Deviance in Online Communities

Figure 1 summarizes the above discussion by integrating the social identity approach and expectancy violations theory to explain responses to perceived online communicative deviance. It identifies the primary concepts, their major indicators, and the fundamental moderating influences on the relationship between the presentation of, and responses to, online deviance/expectancy violations. Table 4 provides notes on some of the more specific implications of the model components, from the perspective of SIA/SIDE and EVT.

--- Figure 1 and Table 4 Go Here ---

Integrating these group and interpersonal perspectives provides a more nuanced understanding of the mechanisms generating responses to communicative deviance by other online group members. Both perspectives bring an important aspect of understanding deviance to light, but often separately fail to take into account key factors that may play a role in the online context. Particularly, the preinteractional expectancies of members play competing roles in SIA and EVT, with SIA arguing for more negative evaluation and EVT arguing for less negative evaluation. This would, of course, be predicated upon the knowledge, by the responding user, of the group member as an individual actor.

As information can be more easily manipulated in the online context (though deception, manipulation, and mistaken identities are not unknown in face-to-face contexts!), perceptions of rewardingness in groups with interpersonal ties may be moderated by the type of cue and warranting value associated with the reward. This rewardingness is not discussed from a SIA approach, and should be taken into account when dealing with online groups—particularly those that create strong interpersonal ties.

The six online community factors can each play a direct, moderating, or mediating role in how online users perceive and respond to deviant behavior. For instance, warranting theory may predict an adverse effect of anonymity on the perceived reward value of the user, especially in small- to moderate-sized groups because there are few bases for assessing the credibility or authenticity of the user's communication behaviors and content. But large groups, with more use and users over time, would generate a more detailed communication record, allowing for the possibility of more informed evaluation of reward value and justified responses to online deviance. Further, as the different types of online groups foster different bonds (Sassenberg, 2002) and levels of group identification (Howard, 2014), there should be a difference in

perceptions of deviant behavior amongst these groups, especially when it comes to members who interact frequently.

Conclusion

The integration of SIA and EVT helps explain evaluation of and responses to communicative deviance online. When group identities are salient, people will judge the deviant action based on group factors from SIA such as group identification of the deviant, prototypicality, and others mentioned above. However, when group identity is not salient, EVT predicts that if the deviation (expectancy violation) is inherently positive or negative it will be seen as such; however, if the deviation is ambiguous, the reward value will mediate the perceptions of the deviation. These basic relationships vary by various SIA and EVT factors, as well as by characteristics of the online context.

Given the Internet's ability to foster both group and personal identity salience (depending on the community), assessing deviance from the perspective of one or the other is circumventing important issues with regard to identity and behavior in an online context. The proposed combination of group-related and interpersonal responses to deviance allows for a more holistic understanding of how deviance online is assessed and addressed.

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Table 1

Evaluations of Deviance Predicted by a Social Identity Approach

Contexts	Levels	Positive	Ambiguous	Negative	Highly negative
			Type of Deviance		
Group identification	Salient	*positive*	*neutral*	*negative*	*highly negative*
	Not salient	*neutral*	*neutral*	*neutral*	*neutral*
Proto-typicality	High	*positive*	--	*neutral*	*highly negative*
	Low	*positive*	--	*negative*	*negative*
Tenure in group	Established	*positive*	--	*negative*	*highly negative*
	Newcomer	*positive*	--	*neutral*	*neutral*
Repeat offender	Yes	--	--	*highly negative*	*highly negative*
	No	--	--	*negative*	*highly negative*
Efficacy	High	*response*	*response*	*response*	*response*
	Low	*no response*	*no response*	*no response*	*no response*

Table 2

Perceptions of Violations Predicted by Expectancy Violations Theory

	Level	Positive	Ambiguous	Negative
			Inherent violation valence	
Reward value	High	*positive*	*positive*	*negative*
	Low	*positive*	*neutral/ negative*	*negative*

Table 3

Interaction Behavioral Outcomes Predicted by Expectancy Violations Theory

		Positive	Negative
		Inherent violation valence	
Reward value	High	*reciprocation*	*compensation*
	Low	*reciprocation/ compensation (depends on salience of behavior or reward valence)*	*reciprocation*

Table 4

Model Components with Basic Implications from Social Identity Approach / Social Identity
Model of Deindividuation Effects and from Expectancy Violations Theory

Model Component	SIA/SIDE	EVT
Online Deviance		
Extent and valence: Mild, language, social problem, cybercrime Group threat, support Positive, ambiguous, negative	Counter-normative behavior threatens group identity when group norms salient; positive deviance possible for norms supporting diversity, tolerance	Violations of expectancies; If violation ambiguous, then reward value of violator becomes salient
Deviant Poster		
Group membership Prototypicality Tenure Deviance history Reward value	In-group deviance greater threat; less harsh if shorter tenure, more prototypical; may have multiple prototypes	Prior deviance and relational history affects expectancies; reward value of violator moderates response
Group		
Norms Salience Variability	Deviance relative to group norms and salience; may have multiple and varying norms	Norms may influence expectations
Responder to Deviance		
Group membership Group identification Relative status Efficacy Relational history	In-group member more relevant; more likely response if group identification; more response if visible to others with more status, prototypicality, if have more efficacy	Relational history helps establish expectancies
Characteristics of Online Context		
Size and extent of use Extent of nonverbal cues Anonymity Warranting of user or content: informational cues, trust Communication record Type of community: common bond, common identity; stigma, support, avocation, organization	Larger size, more skewed use, less group identification; anonymity with salient group norms increases group identification; common identity increases group identification and thus norm conformity; stigma and support more group identification, thus more norm conformity, stronger responses to deviance	Larger size, more use, more diverse relations and thus expectancies; reward value affected by warranting cues; refer to communication record for prior behaviors and relational context; common bond increases
Expectancies		
Communication, relationship, context		Predictive may generate less harsh responses to

Predictive, prescriptive		expectancy violations; prescriptive more likely with no relational history
Response to Online Deviance		
Ignore/neutral Censure Socialization Decrease identification Reciprocal, compensating	Less online group tenure or more prototypical more likely to receive socialization or less harsh response; counter-normative deviance, may lower group identification	Group norm might influence whether reciprocal or compensatory response appropriate to expectancy violation

Deviant Poster	**Group**	**Responder to Deviance**
Group membership	Norms	Group membership
Prototypicality	Salience	Group identification
Tenure	Variability	Relative status
Deviance history		Tenure
Reward value		Efficacy
		Relational history

Online Deviance		**Response to Online Deviance**
Extent and valence:		Ignore/neutral
Mild, language,		Censure
social problem,		Socialization
cybercrime		Decrease group
Group threat,		identification
support		Reciprocal,
Positive,		compensating
ambiguous,		
negative		

Online Context
Size and extent of use
Extent of nonverbal cues
Anonymity
Warranting of user or content:
informational cues, trust
Communication record
Type of community:
common bond, common identity; stigma,
support, avocation, organization

Expectancies
Communication,
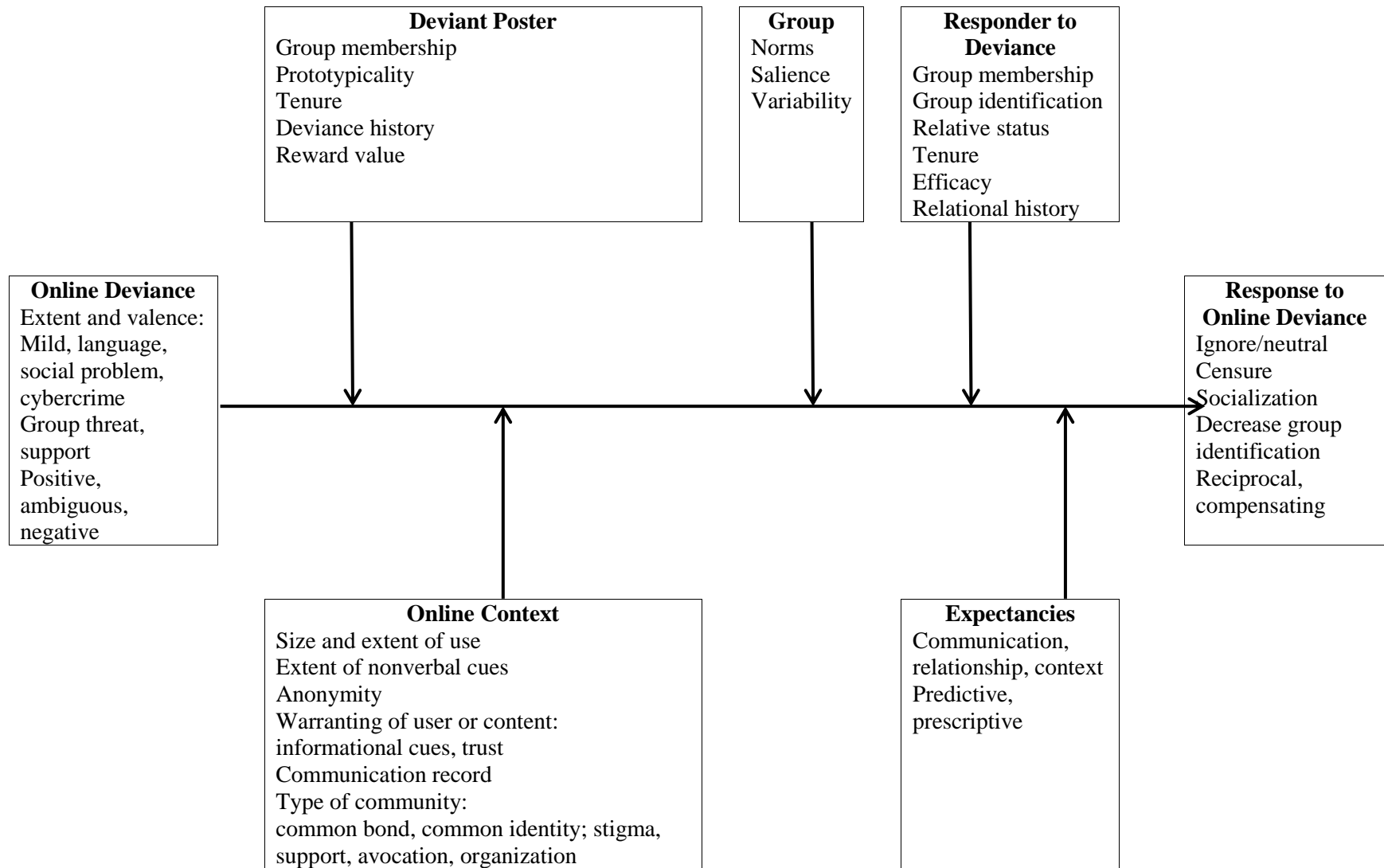relationship, context
Predictive,
prescriptive

Figure 1. *Basic model relating Social Identity Approach, Expectancy Violations Theory, and online context to responses to online communicative deviance.*