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The Contaminating Effects of Building Instrumental Ties: How Networking Can Make Us Feel Dirty

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Abstract

In this paper, we examine the consequences of social networking for an individual's morality, arguing that the content and approach of networking have different implications for how a person feels during the development and maintenance of social ties. We focus in particular on professional-instrumental networking: the purposeful creation of social ties in support of task and professional goals. Unlike personal networking in pursuit of emotional support or friendship, and unlike social ties that emerge spontaneously, instrumental networking in pursuit of professional goals can impinge on an individual's moral purity—a psychological state that results from viewing the self as clean from a moral standpoint—and thus make an individual feel dirty. We theorize that such feelings of dirtiness decrease the frequency of instrumental networking and, as a result, work performance. We conducted four studies using both field and laboratory data from different populations to investigate the psychological consequences of networking behaviors. Two experiments provide support for a causal relationship between instrumental networking for professional goals, feeling dirty, and need for cleansing. A survey study of lawyers in a large North American business law firm offers correlational evidence that professionals who experience feelings of dirtiness from instrumental networking, relative to those who do not, tend to engage in it less frequently and have lower job performance. With regard to sources of variability in dirtiness from instrumental networking for professional goals, we document that when those who engage in such networking have high versus low power, they experience fewer feelings of dirtiness. An additional experimental study constructively replicates this finding.

Keywords: networking, morality, dirtiness, power, professional networking

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How social networks affect individual and collective outcomes can be construed along a continuum ranging from structural determinism to individual agency (Giddens, 1984; Bourdieu, 1990; Archer, 1995). Structural determinism assumes that people's positions in the social structure—their relatively stable patterns of social relationships—are a main determinant of their outcomes, such as access to resources, well-being, and performance. According to this view, the constraints and opportunities created by the social structure leave little room for individual choice in determining behavior. By contrast, the agency view of social behavior assumes that social actors play an active role in shaping their position in the social structure by choosing to engage in social interactions and purposefully creating social relationships.

The emergence of the lexicon of social *networking* (as opposed to *network*) as a lens to understand social behavior emphasizes the agentic nature of individual behavior in the social structure. Social networking refers to the building and nurturing of personal and professional relationships to create a system of information, contacts, and support thought to be crucial for career and personal success (Whiting and de Janasz, 2004). Such active networking is relevant to organizations, as networking within organizational boundaries (internal networking) or beyond them (external networking) can increase members' exposure and personal learning, which may in turn enhance their understanding of organizational practices, promote skill development, and provide role clarity (Lankau and Scandura, 2002). Moreover, research has documented that networking behaviors are essential to individuals' career success (e.g., Wolff and Moser, 2009). The advent of social media, which facilitates building one's social networks, has made the notion of networking central in popular culture and professional practice, with broad potential consequences for individual behavior and outcomes in organizations. As members and representatives of organizations, we build and live within webs of interactions. Nonetheless, the affective and cognitive repercussions of our purposeful social networking are not well understood.

In particular, it is unclear how the active pursuit of social relationships—as opposed to being the passive recipient of constraints and opportunities created by social structures—influences an individual's emotions, attitudes, and outcomes. It seems likely, however, that such effects will vary, depending on the nature of the relationship being formed. Social ties vary on two main dimensions: content, whether the ties are personal or professional, and approach, whether they are instrumental or spontaneous. With regard to network content, professional ties are part of the work-related dimension of an individual's social life and aid in task execution and professional success; personal ties are part of the personal dimension of an individual's life and provide friendship and emotional support (Lincoln and Miller, 1979; Ibarra, 1992). Professional and personal networks can overlap significantly, with task goals and personal goals coexisting within the same social relationships (Casciaro and Lobo, 2008), but these two forms of tie content are conceptually distinct, and their active pursuit could have different effects on individuals. Independent from tie content, the main motivation that underpins social ties may also differ. In some cases, the approach used to create a tie may be instrumental: the person initiating the social relationship may do so proactively and with a specific goal of obtaining benefits, such as advancement; in others, the approach may be spontaneous:

the social tie may emerge naturally, with no premeditated purpose, and may be initiated by another person (Bourdieu, 1985; Wellman and Berkowitz, 1988).

Drawing from moral psychology research, we posit that, unlike networking in pursuit of personal goals and unlike networking that emerges spontaneously, instrumental networking for professional goals can impinge on an individual's moral purity—a psychological state that results from a person's view of the self as clean from a moral standpoint and through which a person feels virtuous—and thus make him or her feel dirty.

HOW NETWORKING CAN MAKE US FEEL DIRTY

In both our personal and professional lives, we often engage in behaviors that help us develop new social ties or nurture existing ones. For instance, we may join prestigious professional associations, connect with highly visible people in our organizations, or participate in social events. These behaviors, known in the literature as networking behaviors (Welch, 1980; Forret and Dougherty, 2004), are individuals' attempts to create and maintain relationships with others who can assist them in their work or the development of their careers (Higgins and Kram, 2001; Higgins and Thomas, 2001). These behaviors often are proactive (Kram, 1985), are carried out with others both inside and outside one's own organization (Downey and Lahey, 1988; Higgins and Kram, 2001), and may lead to reciprocal relationships that facilitate access to personal and professional resources such as social support, strategic information, or career success.

Networking behaviors can be beneficial for improving various aspects of one's personal life through friendship and emotional support, a process we refer to as personal networking. When the primary purpose of networking behaviors is to gain career- or work-related benefits, we use the label professional networking. The labels we use for different types of social ties differ somewhat from those used in the network literature, which commonly employs the label ''instrumental ties'' to refer to relationships that arise in the course of one's work and involve the exchange of job-related resources, and ''expressive ties'' to refer to ties that primarily provide friendship and social support (Lincoln and Miller, 1979; Ibarra, 1992). Our choice of lexicon is driven by our distinction between content and approach; we label work-related ties as professional ties and those that provide friendship and social support as personal ties. When networking behaviors are proactive and carried out with the specific intention of benefiting the person who initiated them, we refer to them as instrumental ties. When such intentionality is missing, and the social tie emerges from the situation (due to interactions with others or the actions of another person who initiated them), we call them spontaneous ties. We use these labels to differentiate between the content and approach of network-related behaviors associated with building social capital.

To date, network research has been ambiguous about the purpose of the creation and maintenance of social ties (for critical perspectives, see Kilduff and Brass, 2010; Ahuja, Soda, and Zaheer, 2012). The distinction this literature typically makes between instrumental/task-related networks and expressive/personal networks concerns content, with no explicit consideration of approach. One notable exception is Kilduff and Tsai's (2003) network trajectory theory, which explains how networks change over time. Kilduff and Tsai (2003) distinguished between two types of networks: goal directed and serendipitous.

Goal-directed networks have a specific purpose, and members share a common goal and focus most of their activities on attaining it. Serendipitous network trajectories, in contrast, change haphazardly as a result of interactions with different people and organizations and are not formed to achieve a common goal or strategy.

Though organizational network scholars have paid little attention to the purposes behind individuals' creation and maintenance of ties in their networks, structural sociologists do debate the role of agency (purposeful) and structure (emergent) mechanisms in how social ties come about (Simmel, 1950; Bourdieu, 1977; Emirbayer and Goodwin, 1994) but without clearly attributing these mechanisms to expressive or instrumental content. Building on these literatures, we posit that the content and approach of network-related behaviors associated with building social capital (i.e., networking) influence the psychological experience of those engaging in them and that individuals' strategic behaviors on behalf of their self-interest and active pursuit of network ties for their own advantage rather than concern for others affect their sense of morality.

The Moral Self-justification of Networking

Self-perception theory suggests that people make inferences about themselves based on their choices and behavior (Bem, 1982). For instance, people who donate money to charity may use that information as a signal that they are compassionate, or they may observe themselves eating unhealthy food and think of themselves as lacking self-control. Thus the choices people make provide them with valuable information about their own character (Bodner and Prelec, 2001; Prelec and Bodner, 2003).

Generally, people wish to make choices that reflect positively on them. As decades of social psychology research have robustly demonstrated, people strive to maintain a positive self-concept both privately and publicly (Allport, 1955; Rosenberg, 1979), which depends on an individual's self-assessment across a number of domains, including being morally upright, worthy of love, and personally competent (Epstein, 1973). In this paper, we focus on people's perceptions of their own morality as a result of engaging in different networking behaviors. Morality is one of the two primary dimensions upon which individuals build their evaluations of both others and themselves (Cuddy, Fiske, and Glick, 2008), making it a fundamental aspect of self-conception. People evaluate their morality and attach either negative or positive labels to it based on cues from the social world and their own actions (Kernis and Goldman, 2003). Though people may vary in terms of how highly they value their moral selves in general (Aquino and Reed, 2002), they share a fairly universal desire to be moral (Dunning, 2007; Reed, Aquino, and Levy, 2007), at least in terms of self-perceptions (Mazar, Amir, and Ariely, 2008).

Developing and nurturing social ties entails networking behaviors that can provide different signals to people's moral self-concept. Networking behaviors may produce negative self-attributions when the behaviors are difficult to justify to oneself, induce guilt, or are not essential. In particular, professional networking could be more difficult than personal networking to justify to oneself, and instrumental networking could be more difficult than spontaneous networking to justify to oneself.

Personal networking is likely to be perceived as more justifiable to oneself than professional networking (and less likely to produce negative self-attributions), because the moral worth of an action is commensurate with its motivation to benefit others (Williams, 1973; Blum, 1980; Singer, 1995), and personal relationships tend to be animated by a concern for the other to a greater extent than professional relationships.[1] Concern for the other manifests itself through three features of personal ties: symmetry, lack of direct reciprocity, and a belonging motive.

First, people expect personal ties to be symmetric (Moreno, 1934; DeSoto, 1960; Newcomb, 1961; Bell, 1981; Wellman and Berkowitz, 1988; Krackhardt, 1992). Friendship is built on the assumption that affection and socio-emotional support will be mutual: if John is friends with Bob, Bob is assumed to be friends with John. Although, empirically, non-symmetrical friendships can occur (Carley and Krackhardt, 1996), the expectation of symmetry makes the pursuit of personal relationships easier to justify to oneself morally than the pursuit of professional ties, because symmetry presumes that benefits received come hand in hand with benefits given. Friendships are motivated by receiving warmth, emotional support, and well-being as much as by giving these benefits to others. By contrast, professional ties do not carry an expectation of symmetry: if John gives work advice to Bob, Bob is not expected or assumed to be able to do the same for John. When Bob cultivates a professional relationship with John, therefore, he does so knowing that he has more to gain from the relationship than to give. To the extent that professional relationships are motivated by self-interest more than altruism, they are more arduous to justify to oneself morally than personal ties.

While symmetry concerns the exchange of a specific resource within a relationship (e.g., John and Bob giving each other work advice), reciprocity concerns the exchange of any resource to equalize the relationship. John may give work advice to Bob, and Bob can reciprocate by inviting John to popular social events. The norms of reciprocity that regulate personal and professional relations differ. Personal ties are communal-affective relationships that presuppose a general obligation to care for the welfare of the other and thus a willingness to give benefits to please the other, even if doing so provides neither present nor future material rewards (Clark and Mills, 1979). By contrast, professional ties are exchange relationships in which no such obligation exists but there is an expectation of direct reciprocity: benefits are given with the expectation of receiving comparable benefits in return (Clark, 1984; Clark and Waddell, 1985). Because of this expectation of direct reciprocity, people may focus on the fact that they will be able to benefit others when they create a professional tie. But benefiting others is not sufficient to establish the moral worth of an action; the action has to be motivated by altruism rather than selfishness to be morally pure (Williams, 1973; Blum, 1980; Singer, 1995). This is ''the central reason why egoism is generally considered so unacceptable . . . it contradicts one of our most deeply held dogmas about morality'' (Rogers, 1997: 2). The purpose of creating a professional tie makes it salient to people that their intent is to personally benefit from the relationship. It is thus difficult to justify professional

[1] The thesis that morality is other-based, though not unchallenged, has been a key tenet of moral theories from Philo of Alexandria, to Hume, to neo-Kantian moral philosophy (Rogers, 1997).

ties to oneself morally as driven by a concern for another person's welfare. The motivation for creating a professional tie is what makes it morally impure.

Finally, while professional ties are motivated by personal gain and accomplishment, a belonging motive animates personal ties. When motivated by the need to belong to a group in the hope of gaining acceptance and avoiding rejection (Fiske, 2004), people tend to join networks of friendship and support (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). In the process of conforming to group norms, they sacrifice part of their individuality. Because personal ties have an outward focus on the social group, it is easier to justify them to oneself than self-focused professional ties.

These three reasons provide (possibly self-serving) justifications for individuals to convince themselves that their networking behavior is appropriate when it is personal rather than professional in content. This type of self-serving justification process is commonly used to explain self-interested or even immoral behavior (Snyder et al., 1979; Schweitzer, 2002; Shalvi et al., 2011; Gino and Ariely, 2012). As Kunda (1990: 480) noted, the ability of people to reach the conclusions they want to reach ''is constrained by their ability to construct seemingly reasonable justifications for these conclusions.'' As a result, when justifications for one's questionable behavior are available, there is no need to negatively update one's moral self-concept (Moore and Gino, 2013). But when such self-serving justifications are difficult to generate, one is more likely to recognize the problematic nature of particular types of networking behaviors and experience them as immoral.

Self-serving justifications are also more difficult to generate for instrumental networking than for spontaneous networking, because individuals' reactions to another person's behavior often are based more on their construals of the person's motives than on the behavior's objective impact (Deutsch, 1973; Reeder et al., 2002). For example, individuals' perceptions of the degree to which another person intended to harm them generally predict their reactions, including their desire for retribution, more strongly than the degree to which they are actually harmed (Epstein and Taylor, 1967; Batson et al., 2000). Even when another person's behavior does not notably affect them in any tangible way, people nonetheless react strongly to the violation of norms of politeness and respect (Lind and Tyler, 1988; Greenberg, 1994; Allen and Leary, 2010). Similarly, people react negatively to selfish intentions, even when these intentions drive pro-social behaviors, such as donating money to charity (Lin-Healy and Small, 2012). Instrumental networking clearly has a selfish intent, because the person initiating the relationship is doing so to obtain certain benefits. Because this intent is clear to the initiator, but perhaps not to the other person, the initiator may feel guilty about this form of deception. This intent may be more salient in instrumental networking, which involves actively creating or nurturing a relationship, than in spontaneous networking. Thus we propose that instrumental networking feels more morally compromising than spontaneous networking and is thus less justifiable to oneself, especially in the case of professional networking.

Moral psychology research has demonstrated that people think about morality in terms of cleanliness. Zhong and Liljenquist (2006) found that people who had been asked to recall past immoral behavior they had engaged in were more likely to feel dirty and expressed greater preference for cleansing products than those who recalled their own moral behavior (see also Lee and Schwarz, 2010).

In fact, the simple exposure to physical dirtiness influences third-party observers' evaluations of others' moral transgressions (Schnall et al., 2008). Moral threats activate the need to cleanse oneself physically, make words related to cleanliness more likely to enter into one's mind, and influence attitudinal preferences for cleansing products (Zhong and Liljenquist, 2006). After experiencing moral threats that result from violating their moral values, individuals are thus likely to engage in either symbolic or literal cleansing to reaffirm their core values and purify their contaminated consciences (Tetlock et al., 2000). We suggest that engaging in instrumental networking for professional goals leads people to feel dirty and thus to experience an increased desire for cleansing:

Hypothesis 1a (H1a): Professional networking, as compared with personal networking, increases feelings of dirtiness and need for cleansing.

Hypothesis 1b (H1b): Instrumental networking, as compared with spontaneous networking, increases feelings of dirtiness and need for cleansing.

Hypothesis 1c (H1c): The extent to which instrumental networking increases feelings of dirtiness and need for cleansing as compared with spontaneous networking is greater for professional networking than for personal networking.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Feeling dirty mediates the relationship between professional-instrumental networking and need for cleansing.

Feeling Dirty, Professional-instrumental Networking Frequency, and Performance

People vary in their likelihood of engaging in networking behavior. Forret and Dougherty (2001) identified five types of networking behavior—maintaining contacts, socializing, engaging in professional activities, participating in community, and increasing internal visibility—and showed that gender, socioeconomic background, extroversion, self-esteem, and attitudes toward workplace politics were related to the networking behavior of managers and professionals. Similarly, Wanberg, Kanfer, and Banas (2000) found extroversion and conscientiousness to predict networking intensity.

We focus here on feelings of dirtiness from networking, which could also predict the frequency with which people engage in instrumental networking for professional goals. Azrin and Besalel (1982) first introduced the notion that attitudinal differences toward networking may inhibit the intensity with which people activate and develop their networks to find a job, with some people feeling more uncomfortable than others about asking for help or imposing on friendships. Building on this insight, Wanberg, Kanfer, and Banas (2000) developed the construct of ''networking comfort'' to denote the relative discomfort and embarrassment of asking for job leads or advice. The concept of dirtiness from instrumental networking further specifies this construct by identifying feelings of moral impurity as the psychological force underlying networking discomfort. Evidence linking networking comfort to networking intensity (Wanberg, Kanfer, and Banas, 2000), as well as the basic notion that motivation is rooted in approach toward pleasant stimuli and avoidance of unpleasant ones (for a review, see Higgins, 2006), suggests that people who experience higher levels of dirtiness from instrumental networking will tend to engage in it with lower frequency.

In turn, theory and empirical evidence suggest that networking frequency should be positively related to individual job performance. A fundamental principle of network theory is that an individual's social relationships provide potential access to resources, information, and opportunities (Lin, 2001). Consistent with this principle, network size and diversity are well-documented correlates of individual performance (Papa, 1990; Mehra, Kilduff, and Brass, 2001; Sparrowe et al., 2001; Cross and Cummings, 2004). As a means of building and developing social relationships, networking behavior has been shown to positively affect objective and subjective career-related outcomes, including performance evaluation, compensation, and promotion (Forret and Dougherty, 2001, 2004; Wolff and Moser, 2009). We expect, therefore, that those who engage in more frequent instrumental networking will increase their chances of accessing valuable information, resources, and opportunities, and thus improve their job performance. Thus:

Hypothesis 3 (H3): The extent to which people experience instrumental networking as dirty is negatively associated with the frequency with which they engage in instrumental networking.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): The frequency with which people engage in instrumental networking is positively related to their job performance.

Hypothesis 5 (H5): The relationship between the extent to which people experience instrumental networking as dirty and their job performance is mediated by the frequency with which people engage in instrumental networking.

Who Feels Dirty? Power and Instrumental Networking

Individuals differ in their likelihood of engaging in networking behaviors. And even when engaging in the same set of behaviors, they can perceive networking differently. As noted earlier, Wanberg, Kanfer, and Banas (2000) found that both extroversion and conscientiousness, as well as individual differences in comfort with networking, influenced networking intensity. But actors' perceptions of the dirtiness of networking may also be affected by the extent to which they occupy a power position. Power—both objective power and the subjective experience of it—could affect the experience of moral impurity from instrumental-professional networking. Power, which is commonly defined in both the psychology and management literatures as control over other people or overvalued resources in social relations (Magee and Galinksy, 2008), has been found to influence a variety of outcomes, including making decisions (Anderson and Galinsky, 2006; Inesi, 2010), taking action (Galinsky, Gruenfeld, and Magee, 2003), focusing on personal goals (Gruenfeld et al., 2008), and resisting both persuasion and conformity (Briñol et al., 2007; Galinsky et al., 2008; Tost, Gino, and Larrick, 2012).

There are two reasons that individuals who objectively have power or simply subjectively experience it may perceive professional-instrumental networking as more justifiable and feel less sullied by it as compared with less powerful people. First, the powerful tend to dehumanize and objectify others (Gruenfeld et al., 2008). Feelings of power motivate personal goal pursuit (Keltner, Gruenfeld, and Anderson, 2003), which encourages a more instrumental treatment of others whereby others are viewed as mere tools or obstacles between

the individual feeling powerful and his or her goals (Gruenfeld et al., 2008). Additionally, power makes people feel self-sufficient, free from dependency, and capable of achieving personal goals without aid from others. Consequently, the powerful will not feel as dirty as the powerless when they approach others because, in their minds, others are not as instrumental to their goals.

Second, consistent with the notion that direct reciprocity is a main reason that some forms of networking are perceived as more justifiable than others and thus do not produce negative self-attributions, powerful people by definition have more to give and are less dependent on others (e.g., in terms of resources) than less-powerful people (Emerson, 1962; Cook and Emerson, 1978). As a result, the powerful are more likely to reciprocate help, favors, or support, and their networking tends to yield more balanced relationships, with the powerful potentially giving as much as or more than they take from others. The greater capacity for reciprocated and balanced exchanges should make the power-advantaged feel less dirty about instrumental networking. For these reasons, we expect a negative correlation between power and dirtiness from instrumental networking:

Hypothesis 6 (H6): Individuals with high power experience fewer feelings of dirtiness from instrumental networking as compared with individuals with low power.

Overview of Studies

We conducted four studies—a survey of a business organization and three laboratory experiments—to test our theory. In Studies 1 and 2, we tested hypotheses 1a, 1b, 1c, and 2 using two laboratory experiments employing different measures. In Study 3, we tested hypotheses 3, 4, 5, and 6 with data on professional-instrumental networking from a survey of lawyers in a large North American law firm. Finally, in Study 4, we used a laboratory experiment to constructively replicate the test of hypotheses 1a, 2, and 6.

STUDY 1

In our first study, we investigated the effects of instrumental networking for professional goals on feelings of dirtiness by using an implicit measure of feeling dirty, namely a word-completion task that included words related to cleanliness. We recruited 306 people (54 percent male; mean age = 31.7, s.d. = 8.9) from Amazon's Mechanical Turk to participate in this study in exchange for $1. Study 1 employed a 2 (content: personal vs. professional) by 2 (approach: instrumental vs. spontaneous) between-subjects design.

Procedure

We randomly assigned participants to one of the four conditions.[2] The instructions informed them that the researchers were interested in studying how people remember and reflect on events from their past. In each condition, we

[2] Prior to being randomly assigned to conditions, participants answered two questions used as attention checks. Participants who did not answer these questions correctly were automatically redirected to a page that indicated they could not proceed with the study based on their answers. Thus their data were not recorded.

asked participants to recall a certain event from their past and then write about it for about five minutes.

Participants in the *professional* [or *personal*], *instrumental* conditions received the following instructions:

> Please recall a time in your *professional* [or *social*] life where you did something with the intention of building and nurturing a *professional* [or *personal*] relationship. We are interested in a situation where you tried to create or maintain connections *that would aid the execution of work tasks and your professional success* [or *for emotional support and friendship*].
>
> Other people engaging in this type of introspective task frequently write about instances where they accept invitations for receptions and drinks because they want to meet potential *clients* [or *friends*].

Participants in the *professional* [or *personal*], *spontaneous* conditions read:

> Please recall a time in your *professional* [or *personal*] life where you found yourself interacting with people at a social event, such as a party. We are interested in a situation where connections *that would aid the execution of work tasks and your professional success developed for you professionally* [or *for emotional support and friendship developed for you personally*].
>
> Other people engaging in this type of introspective task frequently write about instances where they attended one of their *coworker's* [or *friend's*] birthday party, or *an office* [or *a*] Christmas party.

Across all conditions, we asked participants to describe such a situation, what it was like to experience it, and what thoughts and feelings they had during it. We also asked them to provide as many details as possible such that a person reading the entry would understand the situation and how they felt.

Participants then completed a word-completion task to measure cleansing accessibility (adapted from Zhong and Liljenquist, 2006). The task involved turning word fragments into meaningful words using the first word that came to mind. We provided participants with six word fragments, three of which (W _ _ H, S H _ _ E R, and S _ _ P) could be completed as cleansing-related words (wash, shower, and soap) or as unrelated, neutral words (e.g., wish, shaker, and step). We also had three word fragments (F _ O _, B _ _ K, and P A _ _ R) that could be completed only as unrelated, neutral words (e.g., food, book, and paper).

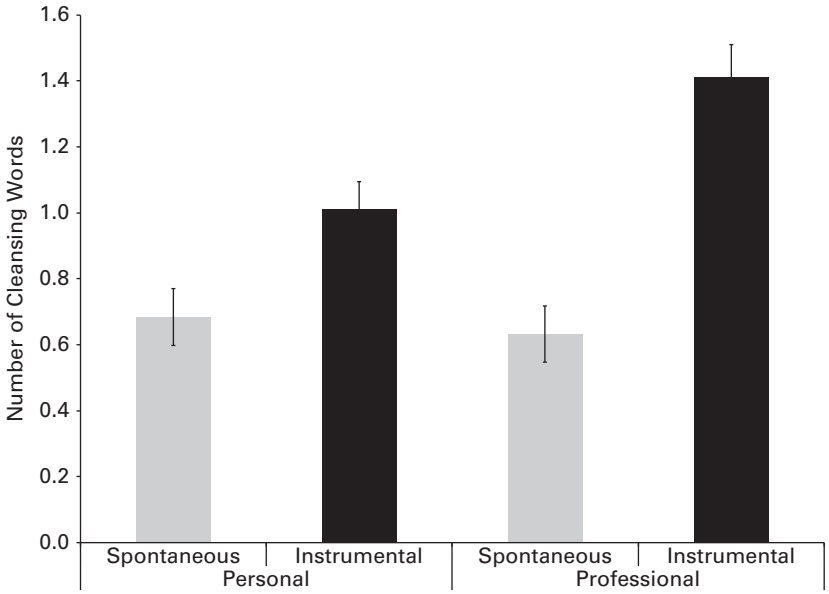
Results and Discussion

Description coding. To gain a better understanding of the type and variety of events people recalled, we coded their written descriptions. Two independent coders blind to hypotheses and conditions read the descriptions and categorized the participants' descriptions into a few basic categories. The results in table 1 show that in the spontaneous-professional condition, most descriptions concerned office holiday parties or work-related events and gatherings. Those in the instrumental-professional condition most often recalled inviting colleagues or friends for drinks or engaging in extra-role activities directed at others at work. Those participants in the spontaneous-personal condition wrote most often about attending parties and social gatherings with their friends and

Table 1. Percentage of Descriptions Used by Participants in Their Essay by Condition, Study 1

Category	Instrumental-professional	Instrumental-personal	Spontaneous-professional	Spontaneous-personal	Percentage across conditions
1. Attending work-related events and gatherings	15.1%	6.4%	28.9%	7.6%	14.4%
2. Attending office holiday party	5.5%	0.0%	43.4%	7.6%	14.1%
3. Attending conferences or networking events	12.3%	7.7%	5.3%	0.0%	6.2%
4. Inviting colleagues or old friends for drinks	34.2%	33.3%	5.3%	7.6%	19.9%
5. Engaging in extra-role activities directed at others at work	21.9%	5.1%	1.3%	0.0%	6.9%
6. Attending friend's party	1.4%	7.7%	5.3%	27.8%	10.8%
7. Accompanying someone to parties/gatherings	0.0%	3.8%	0.0%	8.9%	3.3%
8. Attending alumni events	2.7%	9.0%	2.6%	22.8%	9.5%
9. Joining clubs or signing in for special events	1.4%	9.0%	1.3%	2.5%	3.6%
10. Hosting a party	1.4%	3.8%	0.0%	6.3%	2.9%
11. Other	4.1%	14.1%	6.6%	8.9%	8.5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Figure 1. Accessibility of cleansing-related words, Study 1.*



* Error bars represent standard errors.

family, while those in the instrumental-personal condition wrote about inviting others for drinks.

Accessibility of cleansing-related words. A 2 (content: personal vs. professional) by 2 (approach: instrumental vs. spontaneous) between-subjects

ANOVA revealed a significant main effect of approach, $F(1,302) = 39.97$, $p < .001$, such that participants who recalled an instrumental networking experience generated more cleansing-related words (mean = 1.21, s.d. = .80) than did those who recalled a spontaneous networking experience (mean = .66, s.d. = .75). The main effect of content was also significant, $F(1,302) = 3.90$, $p = .049$: participants who recalled professional networking generated more cleansing-related words (mean = 1.01, s.d. = .89) than did those who recalled personal networking (mean = .85, s.d. = .75). Importantly, as we predicted, the interaction of content and approach was also significant, $F(1,302) = 6.59$, $p = .011$, such that the difference in the number of cleansing-related words participants generated in the instrumental-networking condition versus the spontaneous-networking condition was larger for professional networking than it was for personal networking. Figure 1 depicts the results.

Together, these results provide initial support for hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c, and they suggest that instrumental-professional networking in particular may result in a moral self-threat and feelings of dirtiness.

STUDY 2

To strengthen causal inferences, rule out alternative explanations, and establish causal mechanisms, we conducted a second laboratory experiment in which we asked participants to imagine making connections either instrumentally in a professional context or spontaneously in a personal context. By randomly assigning participants to different experiences rather than relying on their choice of their own past experiences, we could test whether instrumental networking in a professional context directly increases feelings of dirtiness, which, in turn, increase one's need for cleansing (as suggested by hypothesis 2). Moreover, we ruled out potential alternative explanations by showing that feelings of dirtiness—and not negative or positive affect—explain the link between instrumental-professional networking and the increased desire for cleanliness. Furthermore, to test the robustness of our results, we used different outcome measures.

Eighty-five students (mean age = 22.95, s.d. = 3.92, 48.1 percent male) from local universities in a city in the northeastern United States completed the study for pay. We randomly assigned participants to one of two conditions: instrumental-professional networking or spontaneous-personal networking.

Procedure

Participants read one of two short stories (see Online Appendix A, http://asq.sagepub.com/supplemental), depending on the condition to which they had been randomly assigned. We asked participants to take a first-person perspective and put themselves in the shoes of the main character. In each story, participants imagined receiving an invitation to attend an event at which they used the time to socialize with others. In the instrumental-professional condition, the story described the main character as actively and intentionally pursuing professional connections with the belief that connections are important for future professional success. By contrast, in the spontaneous-personal condition, the main character was excited to make friends, get to know a lot of people, and enjoy the party. The story indicated that the person found herself or himself

making connections and knows that making friends is important to one's social life and well-being.

Feelings of dirtiness. After reading the story, using the Positive and Negative Affectivity Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark and Tellegen, 1988), we asked participants to indicate the extent to which they experienced different positive and negative emotions on a 5-point scale (1 = very slightly or not at all, 5 = extremely). Participants also used the same scale to indicate the extent to which they felt dirty, inauthentic, and uncomfortable. We averaged these three items to create a composite measure of feelings of dirtiness (α = .84). The PANAS items and those on the feelings of dirtiness scale were randomly presented.

Cleansing products. Afterward, we presented participants with a list of products and asked them to indicate how desirable they found each of them to be (1 = completely undesirable to 7 = completely desirable). The list included both cleansing products (e.g., Dove shower soap, Crest toothpaste, Windex cleaner) and neutral products (e.g., Post-it Notes, Nantucket Nectars juice, Sony CD cases), as in Zhong and Liljenquist (2006).

Results and Discussion

Feelings of dirtiness. As predicted, participants in the instrumental-professional networking situation were significantly more likely to report feeling dirty (mean = 2.13, s.d. = 1.21) than were participants in the spontaneous-personal condition (mean = 1.43, s.d. = .62), $t(83) = 3.36$, $p = .001$.

Negative and positive affect. Negative affect differed between conditions (mean professional = 1.68, s.d. = .90 vs. mean personal = 1.23, s.d. = .37), $t(83) = 3.00$, $p = .004$, but positive affect did not (mean professional = 2.55, s.d. = 1.03 vs. mean personal = 2.36, s.d. = 1.14), $t(83) < 1$.

Cleansing. As predicted, instrumental-professional networking (mean = 3.80, s.d. = 1.39) increased the desirability of cleansing products as compared with spontaneous-personal networking, (mean = 3.19, s.d. = 1.28), $t(83) = 2.13$, $p = .036$. Importantly, there were no differences between conditions for the non-cleansing products (mean professional = 3.99, s.d. = .80 vs. mean personal = 3.81, s.d. = .95), $t(83) < 1$.

Mediation analyses. We tested whether feelings of dirtiness mediated the relationship between our networking conditions and expressed desirability of cleansing products, using the bootstrapping approach outlined by Preacher and Hayes (2004). Based on bootstrapping (with 5,000 iterations), we estimated the direct and indirect effects of the networking condition via felt dirtiness on our dependent variable, desirability ratings of cleansing products. Our manipulation had a significant effect on feelings of dirtiness ($b = .70$, S.E. = .21, $p = .001$), which, in turn, significantly affected the favorability of cleansing products ($b = .47$, S.E. = .14, $p = .002$). In contrast, the effect of our manipulation was reduced (from $b = .62$, S.E. = .29, $p = .036$ to $b = .29$, S.E. = .29, $p = .33$) when

felt dirtiness was included in the equation. The 95-percent bias-corrected confidence interval for the size of the indirect effect excluded zero (.114, .624), suggesting that feelings of dirtiness mediated the link between the networking condition and heightened desire for cleanliness.

Multiple mediation. To test for the potential role of negative and positive affect as mediators, we used a multiple mediation model (Preacher and Hayes, 2008). This model allowed us to test the extent to which each measured variable (i.e., feelings of dirtiness, negative and positive affect) mediates the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable in the presence of other variables in the model. Results (obtained with 5,000 samples) indicated that the total indirect effect of our networking manipulation on desirability of cleansing products was significant (95-percent bias-corrected CI = .142, .783). The bootstrapping procedure also revealed that the indirect effect of our manipulation was significant through dirtiness, as expected (95-percent bias-corrected CI = .023, .645). Instead, negative affect (95-percent bias-corrected CI = –.187, .447) and positive affect (95-percent bias-corrected CI = –.035, .203) were not significant mediators.

Together, these results provide support for both hypotheses 1 and 2 by showing that instrumental-professional networking leads to greater feelings of dirtiness and greater desire for cleansing products than does spontaneous-personal networking. The results also show that feeling dirty mediates the relationship between types of networking and need for cleansing.

STUDY 3: FIELD STUDY

Having documented experimentally the causal path between professional-instrumental networking, feeling dirty, and need for cleansing, in Study 3 we explored in a field setting the implications of this pattern of association for the frequency with which professionals engage in instrumental networking and its link with their work performance. A field setting also gives us the opportunity to examine the relationship between power and dirtiness from instrumental networking. To test hypotheses 3 through 6, therefore, we conducted a survey study of all lawyers employed at a large North American business law firm.

A business law firm is a particularly appropriate setting for exploring the association between professional-instrumental networking and performance for several reasons. First, in a business law firm, lawyers obtain working engagements either when clients hire them as counsel or when colleagues at the firm ask them to contribute their expertise to a client file. This process of work acquisition requires relationships with colleagues and clients, making instrumental networking a central concern of law professionals, both at junior and senior levels. Second, performance in law firms is measured in a standard and consistent manner based on billable hours. This conventional measure allows us to separate objective, quantifiable performance measurement from the subjective component that typically characterizes performance evaluation in many business settings. Finally, law firms are generally organized hierarchically; thus members naturally experience different levels of subjective and objective power.

Sample and Procedure

At the time of our study, the law firm we surveyed employed 406 lawyers located in five offices across North America and grouped into 12 legal practices in business law. Hierarchically, the law firm is structured along levels of legal experience, as is typical for the industry: junior associate, mid-level associate, senior associate, junior partner (i.e., non-equity partner), and senior partner (i.e., equity partner). All 406 lawyers received an invitation to fill out an online questionnaire about their professional networking activities. The invitation was emailed directly from an academic research team external to the firm. The invitation reassured participants that their individual responses would be accessed exclusively by the research team, which would provide the firm's management with only aggregate data on networking behavior at the firm and large subgroups within it—such as partners versus non-partners—to aid the firm in designing opportunities for professional development for all lawyers in the firm. The invitation also specified that participation was entirely voluntary and that, for their effort, all participants would receive from the research team a personalized confidential report on their networking behavior compared with that of their group of peers.

A total of 165 lawyers completed the survey in its entirety, yielding a 41-percent response rate. There were no significant differences between participants and non-participants in office location, law practice (i.e., legal specialty), and gender, but partners were less likely to participate in the study than associates ($t = 2.58$, $p < .01$). According to the firm's management, this difference was attributable to greater demands on partners' time as compared with associates. Nevertheless, the final sample included 62 junior (non-equity) partners and 21 senior (equity) partners, providing us with an adequate sample at the higher end of the hierarchical structure of the organization.

Dependent and Independent Variables

Frequency of instrumental networking. The survey first provided respondents with a definition of professional networking as ''the purposeful building and nurturing of relationships to create a system of information and support for professional and career success.'' They were then asked, ''How often do you engage in professional networking?'' Response options were on a 5-point scale with the following anchors: ''not at all,'''' rarely,'''' sometimes,'''' frequently,'' and ''a great deal.''

Feelings of dirtiness. We measured the experience of dirtiness from instrumental-professional networking with the average response (on the 5-point scale) to four survey items, each starting with the sentence ''When I engage in professional networking, I usually feel . . .'' followed by these adjectives: dirty, ashamed, inauthentic, uncomfortable.[3] To minimize demand effects, we listed these adjectives interspersed with markers along the

[3] In this study, we assessed feelings of dirtiness by using four items rather than three items as in Study 2. We added the item ''ashamed'' because this word was frequently used to describe feelings experienced after networking in discussions with various lawyers at a different firm. The nature and significance of our results in Study 3 do not change when using the three-item rather than the four-item measure.

affective circumplex (Barrett and Russell, 1998), such as happy, excited, anxious, and satisfied.

Individual performance. We measured individual performance in terms of billable hours, the standard metric of effectiveness and performance evaluation in law firms. Firm management provided us with billable-hour data they collect and record for each lawyer. To rescale these data for comparison with other variables, we divided the billable-hour figures by 1,000.

Because lawyers typically operate in a client-facing capacity throughout their careers in law firms, billable hours are the most relevant measure of performance across hierarchical levels. The only potential exceptions to this rule are senior partners who, by virtue of taking on leadership roles in their firm, may scale back their client work and thus their billable hours. We accounted for this possibility by controlling for hierarchical level in the analyses. In addition, in supplemental analyses, we excluded five senior partners whose billable hours were more than two standard deviations below the mean for senior partners as a result of their leadership roles in the firm. The results from these analyses were identical to those we present below.

Power. We measured power in formal-structural terms by using lawyers' level of seniority in the firm. We coded the hierarchical level of lawyers on a 5-point scale (1 = junior associate; 2 = mid-level associate; 3 = senior associate; 4 = junior partner; and 5 = senior partner). In law firms, these hierarchical distinctions are sharp and clearly delineate the power each level yields (Nelson, 2004).

Control Variables

We controlled for *law practice.* The firm was organized in departments representing 12 legal specialties in business law, such as litigation, tax, trusts and estates, and employment and labor. We used dummy variables to control for practice membership in the sample. We also controlled for *office geographical location*, as the law firm had offices in five large cities in North America. To account for the possibility of location affecting billable hours for lawyers operating in different geographies, we used dummy variables to control for lawyers' office membership. But because these indicator variables never had statistically significant effects in any of the regression models, we excluded them from the analyses we report. To account for potential differences in the behavior and performance of male and female lawyers, we used a dummy variable denoting a lawyer's *gender* (1 = female). Finally, we controlled for personality traits. In light of research documenting associations between personality traits and relational behavior, we included controls for *self-monitoring* and for the Big Five *personality traits.* We measured self-monitoring with eight items (α = .66, see Online Appendix B) from the self-monitoring scale developed by Snyder and Gangestad (1986). The eight items were selected based on the scale's factorial structure (Gangestad and Snyder, 2000). We measured extroversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, openness to experience, and conscientiousness with the Ten Item Personality Inventory (TIPI) (Gosling, Rentfrow, and Swann, 2003).

Modeling Approach

Because our theory requires the simultaneous testing of multiple mediation sequences while controlling for organizational and individual characteristics that co-vary with multiple dependent variables, we tested hypotheses 3, 4, 5, and 6 with a path analysis (Wright, 1934), estimating direct and indirect effects using the corresponding structural equation model (Kline, 2011).

Results and Discussion

Table 2 shows descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients for modeled variables. Table 3 shows the results of the path analysis testing hypotheses 3, 4, 5 and 6, including both direct and indirect effects. The standardized regression coefficients provide support for all hypotheses, with the model statistics (table 3) consistently indicating an excellent fit of the model to the data. Professionals who experience feelings of dirtiness from instrumental-professional networking tend to engage in it with lower frequency, consistent with hypothesis 3. In turn, those who engage in instrumental-professional networking more frequently tend to have higher performance on the job, measured as billable hours, as predicted in hypothesis 4. An analysis of indirect effects (right-hand side of table 3) provides support for hypothesis 5, which predicted that the frequency of instrumental networking would mediate the relationship between feeling dirty and job performance: feeling dirty has a statistically significant negative indirect effect on billable hours.

To address the possibility of reverse causality, we performed a second path analysis, which showed no effects of job performance, either direct or indirect, on either networking frequency or feeling dirty, effectively reducing the plausibility of networking frequency and feelings of dirtiness as artifacts of job performance. In another robustness check, we addressed the possibility that need for cleansing may be driven by stress and anxiety versus moral impurity. To that end, we controlled for the average response to the survey items ''stressed'' and ''anxious'' that followed the question ''When I engage in professional networking, I usually feel . . .'' This measure did not have a direct or an indirect effect on any of the dependent variables in the path analysis, nor did

Table 2. Mean, Standard Deviations, and Correlation of Variables, Study 3*

Variable	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Billable hours	1.47	.46										
2. Networking frequency	3.50	.84	.18									
3. Feeling dirty	1.81	.59	−.01	−.49								
4. Seniority	3.19	1.46	−.01	.29	−.30							
5. Female	.33	.47	.00	−.06	.13	−.13						
6. Self-monitoring	3.11	.55	.00	.15	−.11	−.20	−.03					
7. Extroversion	3.42	.90	.07	.32	−.37	.02	.00	.52				
8. Agreeableness	3.59	.75	−.01	.01	−.20	.20	−.13	−.10	.15			
9. Conscientiousness	4.22	.62	.10	.12	−.18	.21	.20	−.07	.21	.26		
10. Neuroticism	2.40	.84	−.10	−.21	.28	−.18	.17	−.10	−.36	−.26	−.25	
11. Openness to experience	3.59	.87	.00	−.06	−.11	−.01	.00	.18	.02	.13	.16	.03

* Correlation coefficients greater than .13 are significant at $p < .05$.

Table 3. Results of Path Analysis: Direct and Indirect Effects, Study 3 (N = 165)*

	Direct Effect		Indirect Effect	
Variable	Standardized coefficient	OIM S.E.	Standardized coefficient	OIM S.E.
Dependent variable: Networking frequency				
Feeling dirty	−.403•••	(.101)	.000	(no path)
Seniority	.148•	(.040)	.102••	(.020)
Female	−.005	(.120)	−.031	(.052)
Self-monitoring	.050	(.120)	−.017	(.052)
Extroversion	.105	(.078)	.138••	(.040)
Agreeableness	−.074	(.078)	.020	(.033)
Conscientiousness	.021	(.097)	.007	(.041)
Neuroticism	−.060	(.071)	−.039	(.031)
Openness to experience	−.096	(.063)	.043	(.028)
Dependent variable: Feeling dirty				
Seniority	−.252•••	(.030)	.000	(no path)
Female	.078	(.091)	.000	(no path)
Self-monitoring	.041	(.093)	.000	(no path)
Extroversion	−.341•••	(.059)	.000	(no path)
Agreeableness	−.050	(.059)	.000	(no path)
Conscientiousness	−.017	(.074)	.000	(no path)
Neuroticism	.097	(.055)	.000	(no path)
Openness to experience	−.106	(.049)	.000	(no path)
Dependent variable: Billable hours				
Networking frequency	.183•	(.049)	.000	(no path)
Feeling dirty	.108	(.066)	−.074•••	(.010)
Seniority	.004	(.024)	.019	(.008)
Female	−.059	(.072)	.002	(.014)
Self-monitoring	.000	(no path)	.011	(.013)
Extroversion	.000	(no path)	.008	(.016)
Agreeableness	.000	(no path)	−.015	(.009)
Conscientiousness	.000	(no path)	.003	(.010)
Neuroticism	.000	(no path)	−.008	(.009)
Openness to experience	.000	(no path)	−.021	(.009)

• $p < .05$, •• $p < .01$; ••• $p < .001$; two-tailed tests.

* Law practice dummy variables were included in the models predicting networking frequency and billable hours. $\chi^2_{(17)} = 14.18$, $p = .65$; RMSEA = 0.00; CFI = 1.00; SRMR = 0.16.

it alter the effects of feelings of dirtiness, supporting our contention that it is specifically moral impurity, not generalized anxiety, that underlies our findings, consistent with the results of Study 2.

Hypothesis 6 predicted that individuals with high power experience fewer feelings of dirtiness from instrumental networking than those with low power. As shown in table 3, we found support for this prediction. Individuals with high power, measured in terms of seniority (ranging from junior associate to senior partner), experience fewer feelings of dirtiness from instrumental networking than low-power people. More-senior lawyers also engage in networking more frequently than more-junior lawyers. Power also has a statistically significant indirect effect on networking frequency, indicating that feeling less dirty from instrumental networking increases the frequency with which more-senior people engage in this relational behavior.

The only additional significant effect emerging from the path models concerns the negative effect of extroversion on feelings of dirtiness from instrumental networking. Extroversion also has an indirect effect on networking frequency. Prior research has documented a positive relationship between extroversion and networking intensity (Wanberg, Kanfer, and Banas, 2000; Wolff and Kim, 2012), and our findings add nuance to this evidence by suggesting that feelings of moral purity may mediate the association between extroversion and networking frequency.

Taken together, these findings bring the potential psychological costs of an agentic approach to social networks to the fore of network theory and practice. They also raise the possibility that the hierarchical structure of professional environments may perpetuate and reinforce inequality in the exercise of such networking agency and the distribution of benefits stemming from it. But it is possible that the correlation between power and feelings of dirtiness is endogenous, with people potentially achieving higher rank *because* they feel less dirty than others when they engage in instrumental networking. To rule out this possibility, we conducted a final laboratory experiment to establish a causal link between power and dirtiness.

STUDY 4

To provide further support for our prediction that individuals with high power experience fewer feelings of dirtiness from instrumental-professional networking than those with low power (H6), in Study 4 we manipulated both power and the content of the networking (professional vs. personal) in an instrumental networking situation.

Method

Participants and design. One hundred and forty-nine students (mean age = 22.05, s.d. = 5.35, 37.6 percent male) from local universities in a city in the southeastern United States completed the study for pay. We randomly assigned participants to one of four conditions in a 2 (professional vs. personal networking) by 2 (high-power vs. low-power) between-subjects design. In all networking conditions, the approach of the networking was instrumental. We recruited only participants who had an account on both LinkedIn and Facebook.

Power manipulation. Participants first completed a leadership questionnaire and were told that they would be assigned to a role as part of a group task on the basis of their answers to the questionnaire (as in Galinsky, Gruenfeld, and Magee, 2003). Participants were then assigned to the role of an employee (i.e., low power) or a manager (i.e., high power) and received instructions with regard to their role for the group task, adapted from prior research (for detailed instructions, see Galinsky, Gruenfeld, and Magee, 2003). The instructions made clear to participants that employees would follow the directions of the manager (i.e., managers had power over employees). Subsequently, participants were told that before taking part in this group task, they would participate in other short tasks for another study.

Networking manipulation. Next, we asked participants to select a person in their network (someone they were already connected with or someone they would like to connect with), draft a message, and send the message to that individual. Participants in the professional condition were asked to send the message through their personal LinkedIn account and were told, ''Your intention in sending the message should be to build or nurture a professional relationship. With this message, you are trying to create a connection that would aid the execution of work tasks and your professional success.'' Those in the personal condition were asked to send the message through Facebook and were told, ''Your intention in sending the message should be to build or nurture a personal relationship. With this message, you are trying to create a connection for emotional support and friendship.''

Measures. Participants were then asked to complete the same product preference task as in Study 2. They also completed the PANAS (Watson, Clark, and Tellegen, 1988) and indicated the extent to which they experienced different positive and negative emotions on a 5-point scale (1 = very slightly or not at all, 5 = extremely).

Next, they answered attention and manipulation-check questions. To ensure they understood the task, we asked participants to indicate their role (manager or employee), select the social network through which they had sent a note earlier (Facebook or LinkedIn), and identify their intention in writing the message (to create a relationship for emotional support or for professional success). Additionally, we assessed their feelings of power (the extent to which they felt powerful after receiving their role assignment; 1 = not at all powerful to 7 = extremely powerful) and dirtiness (the extent to which they felt dirty after sending the message they drafted; 1 = not at all dirty to 7 = extremely dirty). At the end of the study, they answered demographic questions.

Three participants did not draft a message and thus were excluded. In addition, we excluded ten participants who did not provide a correct answer to one or more of the three attention-check questions. This left us with 136 participants for the analyses.

Results and Discussion

Manipulation check. As expected, participants reported feeling significantly less powerful in the low-power condition (mean = 3.18, s.d. = 1.52) than in the high-power condition (mean = 5.29, s.d. = 1.23; $F(1, 132) = 78.90$, $p < .001$), suggesting our manipulation of power was successful. We found no significant main effect of type of network (professional or personal) ($p = .34$) nor a significant interaction ($p = .63$).

Cleansing. A 2 (content: personal vs. professional) by 2 (power: high vs. low) between-subjects ANOVA revealed a significant interaction between our two manipulations, $F(1, 132) = 4.96$, $p = .028$. Participants with high power did not differ in their desirability for cleansing products based on the content of their networking (mean professional = 2.34, s.d. = 1.22 vs. mean personal = 2.70, s.d. = 1.49, $F(1, 68) = 1.25$, $p = .27$), but those with low power had a higher preference for cleansing products when they engaged in professional

(mean = 3.01, s.d. = 1.30) rather than personal (mean = 2.35, s.d. = 1.29) networking, $F(1, 64) = 4.20$, $p = .045$. Importantly, there were no differences between conditions for the non-cleansing products (main effects and interaction effect, p's $> .45$).

Negative and positive affect. Negative or positive affect did not differ across conditions (main effects and interaction effects, p's $> .50$).

Feeling dirty. A 2 by 2 ANOVA revealed a marginally significant main effect of content, $F(1, 132) = 3.39$, $p = .068$. Those in the professional networking condition (mean = 1.97, s.d. = 1.28) felt dirtier than those in the personal networking condition (mean = 1.59, s.d. = 1.13). But the interaction between power and the content of networking was not significant, $F(1, 132) = .77$, $p = .38$. Despite the lack of significance, we ran follow-up comparisons between groups. Participants with high power felt equally dirty independent of the content of their networking behavior (mean professional = 1.86, s.d. = 1.14 vs. mean personal = 1.66, s.d. = 1.14, $F(1, 68) = .54$, $p = .47$), while low-power people felt dirtier when they engaged in professional (mean = 2.09, s.d. = 1.42) rather than personal (mean = 1.53, s.d. = 1.13) networking ($F(1, 64) = 3.19$, $p = .079$). Unlike in Study 2, participants in this study completed the item measuring feeling of dirtiness after rather than before the cleansing measure, a difference that may account for the lack of predicted significant interaction. That is, the cleansing measure may have weakened the effect of our manipulations on feeling dirty. Nonetheless, the marginal significance of type of networking in the low-power condition is in line with our theoretical argument.

Together, these results provide further support for hypothesis 6 and suggest that the powerful may be immune to the feeling of dirtiness that results from engaging in instrumental professional networking. While low-power people experience a greater sense of dirtiness from engaging in professional-instrumental versus personal-instrumental networking, high-power people do not.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

As our friends and colleagues often remind us, and as the popularity of social media platforms suggests, there are clear advantages to creating and maintaining both personal and professional relationships. Many social ties emerge spontaneously from the simple fact of working in the same organization or hanging out in the same social circle. Others are the result of purposeful and intentional behaviors: through instrumental networking, people create and maintain connections that they think will provide them with opportunities and other benefits.

In this article, we examined the psychological consequences of engaging in networking. We identified two important dimensions on which networking behaviors differ: content and approach. We argued that, unlike personal networking in pursuit of friendship or emotional support and unlike social ties that emerge spontaneously, instrumental networking in pursuit of professional goals can impinge on an individual's moral purity and thus make him or her feel

dirty. Consistent with our theorizing, we found that professional and instrumental networking produce greater feelings of dirtiness than do personal and spontaneous networking. Using data from a large North American law firm, we also found that professionals who feel dirtier from instrumental networking tend to engage in it less frequently and, in turn, have lower job performance. Finally, we showed that the greater the power people have when they engage in instrumental networking, the less dirty such networking can make them feel.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Three insights emerge from our research. First, we demonstrate the analytic utility of a clear conceptual distinction between instrumental networking driven by individual agency versus spontaneous networking reflecting the constraints and opportunities of the social structure. The long-standing sociological debate on the relationship between structure and agency has emphasized their interplay so thoroughly (e.g., Giddens, 1984; Bourdieu, 1990) as to blur the analytical distinction between the two (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998). By contrast, organizational network scholars have largely bypassed this debate (for critical perspectives, see White, 1992; Emirbayer and Goodwin, 1994; Bensaou, Galunic, and Jonczyk-Sédès, 2014): they espouse a deterministic view focused on network outcomes while at times allowing for—but rarely tackling analytically—an agentic view of social actors who deliberately seek to create ties that favor them (for a review, see Ahuja, Soda, and Zaheer, 2012). With rare exceptions (Kilduff and Tsai, 2003), organizational network research has thus not made conceptual distinctions sharply enough to draw out their distinct psychological and behavioral implications (Kilduff and Brass, 2010). Our research shows the benefits of separately defining instrumental (agentic) versus spontaneous (structurally determined) networking and overlaying this distinction on the traditional distinction between professional (work-related) versus personal (expressive) tie content. By doing so, we demonstrate that the content and approach of networking each influence the psychological experience of those engaging in it. These results have broad potential implications for research on organizational networks. For instance, organizational discourse on brokerage, with its tendency to assume agency (Burt, 2005), has largely left unexplored the extent to which brokerage is the result of intentional behavior or of structural opportunity, as Zaheer and Soda (2009) acutely noted. Our theory and findings suggest that the emergence and sustainability of brokerage behavior may depend on whether the broker intentionally pursued the information and control benefits of bridging structural holes or reacted to the demands and opportunities of operating at the boundaries of a social structure: namely, the moral consequences of agentic versus structurally determined brokerage may affect how brokers emerge, whether they persist or vanish in time, and whether they benefit themselves or others.

Second, this research makes strides in establishing the relevance of moral psychology to network theory. People define morality within the embedded social context (Haidt, 2008). The notion that social behavior has implications for individual morality is the centerpiece of moral psychology (Haidt, 2008; Moore and Gino, 2013). Sociologists have also investigated the role of moral emotions—such as shame and guilt—in social behavior (for a review, see Turner and Stets, 2006). By contrast, social network research has paid scant

attention to the moral dimension of the human experience in social networks. Even the recent surge in interest in the psychological underpinnings of organizational networks has eschewed morality as an object of study in favor of affect (e.g., Casciaro and Lobo, 2008) and personality (e.g., Mehra, Kilduff, and Brass, 2001). The results of this study show that networking behavior cannot be fully understood without a thorough consideration of its psychological and moral implications. We show that networking affects an individual's psychological experience beyond mere feelings of positive and negative affect to impinge on a person's feelings of moral purity. The content and approach of networking each have independent effects on the dirty feelings people experience, as well as on their desire to cleanse themselves, with professional-instrumental networking as the behavior leading to the greatest feelings of dirtiness and desire for cleanliness. This physical embodiment of psychological responses to networking demonstrates how profoundly morality can influence networking behavior and thus the social networks emerging from it. A thorough understanding of network emergence needs to consider the moral psychology of network agency.

Third, we unveil how power changes the moral experience of instrumental networking. Understanding agency in networking behavior requires an understanding of the structural context within which agency emerges. Whether and how individuals engage in network agency depend heavily on their position in the social structure (Sewell, 1992), yet little attention has been devoted to understanding how structure encourages or discourages varying agentic orientations (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998). We considered power as a key dimension of an actor's structural position and elaborated on why instrumental networking does not make powerful people feel as morally impure as the powerless. By ruling out the possibility that the powerful merely self-select into powerful positions because they feel less dirty than others when they network, we uncover a critical source of inequality in organizations. Network ties are essential to advancement in organizations because they provide people with access to opportunities, political insight, and technical knowledge. Because people in powerful positions do not experience the morally contaminating effects of instrumental networking, power emerges from our work as yielding unequal access to networking opportunities. This reinforces and perpetuates inequality in performance. By virtue of their minority status, subordinate roles in the formal hierarchy, or peripheral positions in the informal organizational networks, disadvantaged organizational members rarely have opportunities for spontaneous networking and, our results suggest, feel dirtiest in pursuing networking actively. One implication for practice is that, to foster the advancement and effectiveness of professionals at low hierarchical levels or in minority groups, organizations need to create opportunities for emergent forms of networking, as those who need instrumental networking the most are the least likely to engage in it.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Despite its strengths, our research also has some limitations that point to potential avenues for future research. First, although we studied a variety of personally and organizationally relevant outcomes resulting from different networking behaviors (i.e., feelings of dirtiness, need for cleansing, frequency of

networking, and job performance), it also would be useful to investigate other variables, such as creativity or innovation. Feeling dirty may drain a person's energy or mental resources and thus have a negative impact on creativity on the job (Tice et al., 2007). Second, all our measures focused on the person engaging in networking. It would be useful also to measure and model how others perceive different networking behaviors. Though certain types of networking make one feel particularly dirty, the perceiver may—at least in certain situations—feel flattered by it, suggesting that there is a mismatch between the initiator's experience of networking and the recipient's. Unaware of others' strategic motives, we might inaccurately assume that initiators of ties are seeking us out because we are wise or important. Third, we did not examine the effect of initiators' past experiences with networking (e.g., the reactions they received from recipients of their attempts to create ties). Such experiences are likely to influence the extent to which initiators view networking as deceptive and thus feel dirty when engaging in it.

There are also a number of potential boundary conditions surrounding our theory that will be important to test in future research. For example, it would be interesting to consider the appropriateness of networking in contexts in which expectations concerning such behaviors are more or less clear. In settings that are explicitly structured to bring people together for instrumental or strategic reasons (e.g., a networking event organized by a company to introduce new recruits to senior management), networking may not produce the same feelings of dirtiness we observed in our research, as everyone present will know the event was created by others for the specific purpose of building or cultivating social ties among organization members. When individual agency is removed, feelings of contamination are less likely to take hold. Relatedly, when professional-instrumental networking is intended to benefit a third party—e.g., one's work team or organization—the intentionality of the behavior is less likely to impinge on a person's moral purity, as an altruistic motive coexists with the benefits drawn from networking. This lessening of the contaminating effects of professional-instrumental networking may work as an important tool for the powerless in organizations, who feel dirtiest when they intentionally pursue professional relationships and thus particularly need means to justify networking to themselves. Benefitting a third party may serve such a purpose well.

Tie multiplexity might also serve as a boundary condition to moral impurity from networking. Theoretically and empirically, we aimed to isolate the respective effects of professional and personal networking. We found that networking has distinctly different effects on individual morality depending on tie content. Yet personal and work-related content often overlap in organizational and business networks (e.g., Ingram and Roberts, 2000; Casciaro and Lobo, 2008). There are competing arguments for how multiplexity may moderate the link between professional-instrumental networking and moral purity. On the one hand, people who mix professional and personal content may feel more impure, because by doing so they contaminate the altruistic motives of friendship. On the other hand, the overlap of personal content may ease the moral burden of networking for professional goals, because the concern for the other that animates the relationship may make it more justifiable to oneself to benefit from it. This is a very promising avenue for future research given the plausibility of these competing arguments and the increasing evidence that the personal

content of organizational networks is inextricably linked to their task-related content (Casciaro, 2014).

The framing of networking or the main motivation for engaging in it may also be important. For instance, promotion and prevention focus are two distinct orientations people may use to achieve their goals (Higgins, 1997, 1998). As applied to networking, some people may engage in networking because of the potential for opportunity and success (i.e., those with a promotion focus), while others may engage in networking because of a sense of duty, adherence to behavioral norms, and threat of lost opportunity (i.e., those with a prevention focus). Prevention-focused individuals may therefore engage in networking with the burden of inauthenticity rather than with a joyous sense of excitement—they network because they have to, not because they want to, and thus they may feel dirtier in the process. Yet it is also possible that ''having to'' network may release some of the uncomfortable feelings of networking, allowing people to reap the benefits to their performance and careers.

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