

STORIES ABOUT VALUES AND VALUABLE STORIES: A FIELD EXPERIMENT OF THE POWER OF NARRATIVES TO SHAPE NEWCOMERS' ACTIONS

SEAN R. MARTIN
Boston College

This study draws on social identity theories of behavioral contagion and research concerning narratives in organizations to present and test a framework for understanding how narratives embed values in organizational newcomers' actions. Employing a field experiment using newly hired employees in a large IT firm that prioritizes self-transcendent values, this study explores how narratives that vary in terms of the organizational level of main characters and the values-upholding or values-violating behaviors of those characters influence newcomers' tendencies to engage in behaviors that uphold or deviate from the values. The results indicate that stories about low-level organizational characters engaging in values-upholding behaviors are more positively associated with self-transcendent, helping behaviors, and negatively associated with deviant behaviors, than are similar stories about high-level members of the organization. Stories in which high-level members of the organization violate values are more strongly negatively related to newcomers' engagement in both helping and deviance than are values-violating stories about lower-level members. Content analyses of the stories suggest that they convey values in different and potentially important ways. Implications, future directions, and limitations are discussed.

Newcomers might hear many narratives when joining an organization. These could include stories about organizational founders, executives, or other high-level members. For example, at McKinsey & Co., stories about long-time managing director Marvin Bower's integrity abound, and at Starbucks there are stories about CEO Howard Schultz and his commitment to employee welfare. Newcomers might also hear stories about people who are low in the organizational hierarchy. At Ritz-Carlton, for instance, stories about doormen, cleaning and maintenance staff, or other employees going above and beyond for customers or for one another are widely shared. However, not all stories newcomers hear are positive examples of people upholding organizational values. They also might hear stories in which people at the top or other high organizational levels violate the values (see Martin, Feldman, Hatch, & Sitkin, 1983).

While narratives are ubiquitous in organizations (Boje, 1991), and are a memorable way to convey information (Martin, Patterson, & Price, 1979; Martin & Powers, 1982), organizational scholarship lacks a theoretical framework for assessing how different stories might influence the extent to which newcomers act in accordance with organizational values.

Organizations benefit when newcomers align with (e.g., Cable & Parsons, 2001; Edwards & Cable, 2009) and act in ways that uphold, rather than undermine, organizational values. Narratives are helpful in this regard because they are tools for shaping understanding (Sonenshein, 2010) that conveys information about values (Dailey & Browning, 2013; Swap, Leonard, Shields & Abrams, 2001), and reduce uncertainty about what is normative behavior (Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Thus, they are argued to be useful embedding mechanisms that narrow gaps between individual and organizational values (Boje, 1991; Denning, 2004; Ready, 2002; Schein, 2010). This might be particularly true with newcomers, given that much of newcomer adjustment occurs early in organizational tenure, when new members are developing a "perspective for interpreting one's experiences" (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979: 212), telling or hearing stories that help them determine whether they fit

The author would like to thank Jim Detert and Jean Bartunek for their mentorship, Amy Colbert and three anonymous reviewers for their highly developmental stewardship of this paper, and Ann Tenbrunsel and Jessica Christian for reviews of early drafts of this manuscript. In addition, I would like to thank the Institute for Ethical Business Worldwide, and the Fuqua/Coach K Center on Leadership and Ethics for their recognition of this research.

(e.g., Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010) and learning what is contextually appropriate.

Though it has been only lightly explored (Schneider, Ehrhart, & Macey, 2013), some research has suggested that stories about founders or other high-level organizational members can shape employees' understandings of, and tendency to align with, organizational values (e.g., Dandridge, Mitroff, & Joyce, 1980; Martin et al., 1983; Schein, 2010). Different perspectives, though, have argued that individuals' thoughts and actions are influenced by what they perceive others in their local social context to be thinking and doing (e.g., Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). These perspectives raise questions about the relative impact on newcomers' behaviors of influences from above versus from peers, and signal the possibility that narratives featuring different characters may embed organizational values in different ways. In addition, the impact of narratives in which values are violated might differ depending on the identity of the character in the story. This is a critical question, given that the impact of negative narratives has rarely been explored in the organizational context, yet people regularly share negative information with one another (Heath, 1996).

To address these questions, I integrate narrative research with social identity research concerning behavioral contagion (Gino, Ayal, & Ariely, 2009; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) to propose a framework for understanding how narratives that vary in terms of the level of the focal characters (i.e., high-level members, such as founders or executives, vs. low-level members, such as those in the Ritz-Carlton example from above) and whether those characters engaging in values-upholding or values-violating stories (i.e., stories in which the characters act in ways that either uphold or violate espoused organizational values) influence newcomers' tendencies to act in ways that uphold or violate the values. The framework and resulting possibilities are tested with a field experiment employing qualitative and quantitative data, in an organization with strongly held self-transcendent values—defined as values that are concerned with the welfare of others (e.g., helpfulness, honesty, fairness, and equal treatment [Schwartz, 1994]).

This study makes several contributions. First, it integrates social psychological research regarding behavioral contagion and research concerning narratives. Specifically, it posits that the identity of narratives' main characters influence the audiences' perceived social distance from them, and that distance interacts with whether the narratives depict

characters engaged in values-upholding or -violating behaviors to influence newcomers' engagement in behaviors that align with or violate organizational values. In doing so, it posits narratives as a pathway through which behaviors do or do not become contagious (e.g., Barsade, 2002; Gino, Ayal & Ariely, 2009). Prior research has shown that behaviors or emotions can spread through a group via contact with or direct observation of others. The present work argues that narratives influence the spread of behaviors vicariously, without direct observation or contact.

Second, prior work in behavioral contagion has largely focused on the spread of bad behaviors that violate established values (see Gino et al., 2009). The present study complements this work, assessing newcomers' engagement in values violations—specifically, deviant behaviors that are not aligned with the organizational values. This study also extends behavioral contagion research by studying the spread of positive behaviors, such as engagement in helpful, self-transcendent actions toward others, that align with and support organizational values. Relatedly, negative narratives, particularly those about high-level organizational characters, have rarely been examined in organizations. This study deals directly with the effects of negative narratives on organizational newcomers. In addition, prior scholarship in organizational behavior (e.g., Heath, 1996; Martin et al., 1983), and practitioner-oriented writing (Denning, 2004; Ready, 2002) has pointed to distinctions between high- versus low-level organizational characters, and positive versus negative stories, as important elements of a narrative that influence its interpretation; however, these assumptions have yet to be empirically explored in the field.

Lastly, in addressing organizational values, this study primarily focuses on how narratives inculcate self-transcendent values or spur deviance in organizational newcomers. Focusing on self-transcendent values has both theoretical and practical advantages. Practically, these values are those prioritized and commonly espoused by many organizations. In a survey of corporate values (Kelly, Kocourek, McGaw, & Samuelson, 2006), self-transcendent values such as honesty (69%), trust (76%), and commitment to others (customers—88%; fellow employees—78%) were much more commonly espoused than other types of values (e.g., performance values, or self-direction values such as autonomy and creativity). Theoretically, prior work has suggested that tacit behavioral expectations such as self-transcendent values may be more difficult and take longer to inculcate than other aspects of one's work (e.g., Ashforth, Sluss, & Harrison, 2007; Ibarra, 1999; Schein, 1978).

Next, focusing on self-transcendent values positions this study to speak to research in business and behavioral ethics, which has tended to implicitly define ethical actions as those that demonstrate self-transcendent, benevolent values (Graham, Nosek, Haidt, Iyer, Koleva, & Ditto, 2011). Thus, this study addresses newcomers' participation in self-transcendent, helpful behaviors that align with organizational values, or in harmful deviant behaviors that violate them.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Narratives

Narrative is communication that has a “story format”¹ (Dailey & Browning, 2013: 23), consisting of a beginning, middle and end (Polkinghorne, 1988), and either inviting or explicitly stating a desired value or implication for action (Browning & Morris, 2012; Swap et al., 2001). Values are abstract concepts (Feather, 1995) “pertaining to desirable end states or modes of conduct, that transcend specific situations, [and] guide the selection or evaluation of behavior, people, and events” (Schwartz, 1994: 20). Narratives are “effective vehicles” for conveying values (Hansen & Kahnweiler, 1993: 1393) because they place them in a more grounded setting, providing main characters that either uphold or violate values so that people can see where and how values apply in daily life.

Stories are surrogates for direct experience, (Bruner, 1990; Polkinghorne, 1988; Schank, 1990; Stephens, Silbert, & Hasson, 2010), allowing people to learn vicariously. When individuals face situations, they search their memory for the most similar experience they have, be it their own or someone else's, and use that experience to guide their response (Hammond, 1990). Narratives provide information about others' experiences and, because narratives provide details and identifying information about the setting and characters involved, they elicit emotional responses in listeners that forge strong and readily recalled memories (Levine & Pizarro, 2004; Small & Loewenstein, 2003; Small, Loewenstein, & Slovic, 2007).

Because stories convey values in a tractable and memorable way, they are useful for introducing newcomers to organizational values. Narratives embed (Schein, 2010) values in members by imbuing actions with meaning that creates a shared sense of “who we are” and “what we do” (Martin et al., 1983; Swidler, 1986). Indeed, stories “provide a sense of common

direction for all employees and guidelines for their day-to-day behavior” (Deal & Kennedy, 1982: 21). However, while stories are argued to be effective for communicating values, people still frequently violate values. Thus, if stories are meant to guide behavior, but they at times do so weakly or not at all, it is possible that the right stories are not being told or heard.

Narrative types, and newcomer actions

Argyris and Schön (1974) referred to the gap between what we say and do as our espoused theories versus theories in use. Similarly, Cialdini and colleagues (1990) argued that people are guided by both descriptive and injunctive norms—respectively reflecting that which is commonly practiced versus that which is formally endorsed—and have noted that these do not always align (see also Schultz, Nolan, Cialdini, Goldstein, & Griskevicius, 2007). The gap between the espoused and in-use values is driven, in part, by the norms individuals attend to at a given time. People observe others' behaviors to determine what is normative, and how they respond is influenced by their perceived similarity (or not) to those they observe (Gino et al., 2009). Narratives feature characters, to whom newcomers might or might not feel similar, engaging in behaviors that convey normative information about values. Thus, stories about organizational members convey normative information, and feature characters that influence how newcomers interpret and respond to those norms.

Character level (high vs. low). Unless they are hired directly into a very high organizational level, the average newcomer is likely to view high-level members, such as founders or executives, as socially distant characters. They are also likely to see high-level members as exceptional people, endowed with more charismatic attributions (Conger & Kanungo, 1987) and greater perceived responsibility for outcomes (Meindl, Ehrlich, & Dukerich, 1985) compared to those at lower organizational levels. The environments inhabited and decisions made by high-level organizational members are also likely to differ from those of many new employees (e.g., Kanter, Stein, & Jick, 1992; Mintzberg, 1973). High-level members typically perform different work and enjoy greater formal power, status, or resources than do lower-level members, and prior research has found that power differences can lead to perceived social distance between people (e.g., Hogg, 2001; Hogg & Reid, 2006).

Social distance and perceived similarity to others are often inversely related (Liviatan, Trope, & Liberman, 2008). Dissimilarities lead to the belief

¹ The terms narrative and story are used interchangeably in the remainder of the study.

that others are part of a different social category, or “not like us,” and are therefore part of an out-group (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). To the extent that high-level organizational members are seen as socially distant, occupying different jobs, inhabiting different environments and wielding significantly more influence, they could also be construed by newcomers as an out-group. In contrast, low-level organizational members are more likely to be seen by newcomers as occupying similar contexts, performing more similar work, or enjoying comparable status in the organization. Therefore, low-level organizational members might be more likely to be seen as “like me,” or as part of an in-group, to a greater degree than are high-level members.

Gino and colleagues (2009) argued that out-group behaviors make injunctive norms—those pertaining to what is formally espoused as important—salient for individuals. This aligns with the assertion that narratives featuring high-level organizational members illustrate formally endorsed organizational values, and with classic work positing that stories about leaders and founders are important symbols that show newcomers what is formally valued organizationally, at least at the espoused level (e.g., Clark, 1972; Dandridge et al., 1980; Schein, 2010). However, these narratives are also more likely to feature characters and contexts that do not resemble the work context of most newcomers. Thus, while they might be effective for showing the espoused values or injunctive norms, these stories might not be effective behavioral guides for showing newcomers whether and how values are used in daily organizational life.

In-group behaviors make descriptive norms salient (Gino et al., 2009). Narratives about low-level organizational members, featuring characters and environs that are familiar to and not socially distant from newcomers, are thus more likely to be seen as featuring in-group members illustrating “what we do.” These stories might not make formal organizational values as clearly evident to newcomers, but should be stronger guides in terms of illustrating the behavioral norms around values in situ.

Story type (values-upholding vs. -violating). To the extent that high- and low-level members are perceived as in- or out-group members, narratives about them are likely to have varying effects on newcomers’ behaviors. People are motivated to view their in-group positively, and to positively distinguish their group from out-groups (Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Positive information about one’s in-group is often emphasized to a greater extent than is positive information about out-groups, whereas negative information about one’s in-group

is often downplayed or rationalized (Gino & Galinsky, 2012) and negative information about an out-group is not (Brauer, 2001; Judd & Park, 1988; Simon, 1993). A study in behavioral contagion (Gino et al., 2009) found that people were likely to go along with behaviors they saw in-group members doing, even though the behavior violated injunctive norms about what one should do, because their behavior represented descriptive norms about “what we do.” In contrast, out-group member behaviors made injunctive norms salient, and when the out-group members violated injunctive norms, participants did not follow their lead because refraining from negative behavior satisfied their motivation to positively distinguish their in-group from the norm-violating out-group.

The above arguments suggest that stories about low-level characters might affect newcomers differently than stories about high-level characters, and that their influence might be amplified or attenuated by whether the story depicts values-upholding or -violating behaviors. Specifically, values-upholding stories about low-level organizational characters should illustrate for newcomers that self-transcendent, helping behaviors are descriptively normative, and be effective guides showing them how to enact those behaviors in their context. Similar stories about high-level organizational members should make positive injunctive norms salient, but not be effective behavioral guides or emphasized to the same degree. Accordingly, values-upholding stories about low-level characters should more strongly relate to helping behaviors compared to values-upholding stories about high-level characters. In addition, values-violating stories about low-level characters should be seen less negatively than are similar stories about high-level characters, and indicate to newcomers that deviant behaviors are descriptively normative. Similar stories about high-level characters should highlight the violation of injunctive norms and motivate newcomers to positively distinguish themselves to bolster their positive in-group identity. Thus, values-violating stories about low-level characters should be more strongly and negatively related to helping behaviors, compared to similar stories about high-level organizational characters.

Hypothesis 1. Character level (high- or low-level organizational member) and narrative type (values-upholding or -violating) interact to influence newcomers’ helping behavior such that (a) values-upholding stories about low-level characters will be associated with more helping behavior compared to those about high-level

characters, and (b) values-violating stories about low-level characters will be associated with less helping behavior compared to those about high-level characters.

Concerning deviant behaviors, I expect a similar interaction. Values-violating stories about low-level organizational members should indicate to newcomers that deviance is descriptively normative, whereas values-violating stories about high-level characters should lead newcomers to resist deviant behavior in order to bolster their positive in-group identity. Values-upholding stories about low-level characters should be emphasized and make deviance appear counternormative, while values-upholding stories about high-level characters are less impactful, weaker behavioral guides, and should not be as strongly and negatively related to newcomers' engagement in deviance.

Hypothesis 2. Character level (high- or low-level organizational member) and narrative type (values-upholding or -violating) interact to influence newcomers' deviance behavior such that (a) values-upholding stories about low-level characters will be associated with less deviance behavior compared to those about high-level characters, and (b) values-violating stories about low-level characters will be associated

with more deviance behavior compared to those about high-level characters.

The theoretical model and hypotheses to be tested are presented graphically in Figure 1.

METHODS

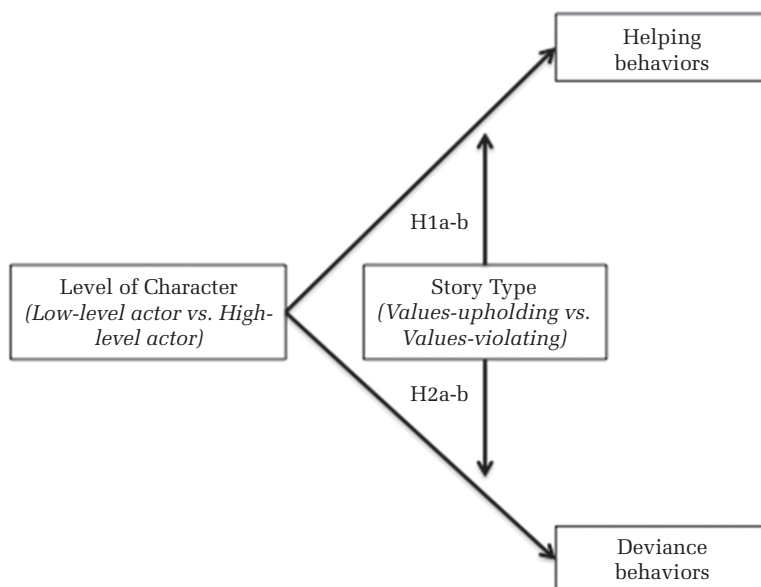
Participants, Design, and Measures

This study was conducted in a large, Asian technology firm called ITECH. At the time of the study, ITECH was growing quickly, with a large number of newcomers joining each week. Employees are proud of ITECH's reputation as a values-driven company in which employees work hard and go above and beyond to help clients and each other. The organization's values are strongly self-transcendent (Schwartz, 1994) in nature, including values such as fairness, excellent treatment of and helpfulness toward others, honesty, and integrity. The ITECH values are also strongly promoted—being written on the walls in company buildings and captured in an acronym that all employees memorize during their first week of employment.

ITECH hires and trains newcomers in large cohorts. The sample for this study was one cohort of 632 newcomers being trained for entry-level programming positions, all of whom began their tenure and training the same week. All newcomers had university degrees

FIGURE 1

The Effects of Character Level and Values-Upholding or Violating Narrative on Values-Upholding and -Violating Actions in Newcomers



and high proficiency in spoken and written English, and the majority were recent graduates from computer science and engineering programs. The mean age was 22 years old, and 52% were female.

Despite having undergraduate degrees in relevant subjects, the specialized nature of ITECH's work requires that newcomers receive extensive additional training. Thus, all members of a cohort join the same week and go through five-and-a-half months of training together. During this time, they live and go to work on an ITECH campus that houses both training facilities and working offices staffed by longer-tenured employees. In their first week in the organization, employees attend a training session in which they are taught the organizational values, and made to memorize an acronym in which each letter represents one of the values. For newcomers, ITECH could be considered a near-total institution (Goffman, 1961). While the contextual strength lies in ITECH's uniqueness from many organizations, the strong setting is useful for exploring socialization effects because they are likely to be present in a clear and powerful way (Ashforth et al., 2007; Pratt, Rockmann, & Kaufmann, 2006).

Training is structured similar to primary or secondary education; all newcomers attend several classes each day, and the same subjects are offered multiple times each day and on multiple days each week, such that some groups of newcomers take a class on Mondays and Wednesdays, while another group take the same class Tuesdays and Thursdays. Each day has an open period of time, much like a "home room," in which newcomers are in a classroom; however, their time is filled with additional sessions in subjects ITECH deems necessary, or with study for other classes. Different groups of newcomers have their open period at different times of day, such that while one group might have an open period, other groups are in a class. Training culminates with a capstone project completed in teams of eight people. This project requires the successful completion of a project similar to those required by clients.

This study employed a field experiment (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2001) using an incomplete factorial design featuring a 2×2 varying type of narrative that newcomers shared and heard according to the level of the characters involved (high-level organizational members [socially distant] vs. low-level organizational members [socially close]) and nature of the characters' actions (values-upholding vs. values-violating behaviors), plus a control condition that was not exposed to the treatments. The manipulation occurred 10 weeks into the newcomers' training.

Narrative Manipulation

ITECH selected four groups of newcomers from the total cohort to participate in the experimental manipulations. These groups had an open period in the middle of the day. The decision was made to select groups with open periods in the middle of the day because both ITECH and the investigator believed this would increase participation compared to groups with open periods earlier or later in the day, when participants might be tardy, not yet fully awake, or tired from a long day. Choosing similar times of day also ensured that no participant was exposed to more than one manipulation condition. There were 290 individuals across the four groups, with group sizes ranging from 59 to 81 newcomers ($M = 72.5$ per group), and each group was in its own classroom. The rest of the study participants ($n = 342$)—that is, those not selected for story-based manipulations—were not on their open period for the day and thus were engaged in other training sessions. This group served as a control condition for later comparison.

The author randomly assigned each of the four groups to one of the four conditions (values-upholding narratives about high-level members, $n=59$; values-violating narratives about high-level members, $n=81$; values-upholding narratives about low-level members, $n=77$; values-violating narratives about low-level members, $n=73$). Each group met for two 90-minute sessions in which they engaged in a story-generating and -sharing exercise adapted from prior work (Boyce, 1995) and designed to draw out and share narratives in a way that caused the newcomers to reflect upon them, and maintained the rich tacit information that Boyce (1995: 109) referred to as the "organizational essence," which is often lost when stories are removed from their context. The investigator conducted the two sessions according to a predetermined protocol designed to limit variation between conditions except in the type of story generated. The protocol for the two sessions consisted of seven steps. Step 1 (five minutes) comprised a short introduction describing what stories and values are. In Step 2 (10 minutes), the facilitator explained to everyone in the condition the type of story they were being asked to generate (determined by the condition in which they took part). Participants then wrote down two stories corresponding to their condition (Step 3, 15 minutes), got into groups of four to five people, and told their stories to one another within their small group, discussing the values they believed those stories conveyed (they were instructed to mix groups between the first and

second sessions so that they were with different people) (Step 4, 35 minutes). The small groups then selected the stories from their group that they believed best represented the types of stories they were charged with generating, marked those stories so the facilitator could identify them, and handed them to the facilitator (Step 5, 10 minutes). After receiving stories from all of the small groups, the facilitator quickly skimmed them and selected two that were especially good examples of the type of story the condition was charged with generating, and that did not include information that could be considered sensitive when read aloud (e.g., specific newcomers' names). The facilitator then read these stories aloud to the entire condition, and participants responded to several manipulation checks assessing social distance from characters and story valence (Step 6, ten minutes). Participants were then asked to refrain as much as possible from discussing what happened in their session with other trainees, and were dismissed (Step 7, 10 minutes). The instructions given to participants to specify the type of stories they were to write and share are provided in Appendix A.

Finally, ITECH sends numerous mass emails to all employees and has internal marketing materials (e.g., posters, murals, etc.) around its buildings to remind newcomers of the organizational values in ways that do not involve narratives. Thus, in order to ensure that the effect of the manipulations was not completely diluted in the two months between the manipulation and Survey 2, the choice was made to send one short email every two weeks to those who participated in one of the experimental conditions. Each email contained a short story that was generated by a fellow participant, and that corresponded to the condition in which they participated. The email asked them to read the story and think about the values they believe it conveyed. Each participant received a total of four emails. The final one was sent two weeks prior to the final survey, which collected the study's dependent variables.

Manipulation Checks

Social distance. Social distance was measured with two questions ($\alpha = .65$), each using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The questions assessed similarity of context to protagonist, and perceived personal similarity to the protagonist. The items were, "The main characters in this story are a lot like me in terms of outlook, perspectives, and work habits" (*personal similarity*), and "The characters in this story are in an

environment that closely resembles what my own work environment will be like" (*context similarity*).

Values-upholding or -violating narratives. The extent to which participants considered stories they heard to be values-upholding or -violating was assessed with two questions ($\alpha = .92$) on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) Likert scale, wherein participants responded to the following statements: "This story is a positive example of ITECH values," and "This story illustrates good behavior as a member of ITECH."

Dependent Variables

Helping behaviors. The extent to which a newcomer engaged in the kinds of self-transcendent, helping behaviors that uphold ITECH values was peer-assessed by the members of his or her final project team using five items ($\alpha = .82$) adapted from the *Altruism* dimension of the organizational citizenship behavior scale by Smith, Organ, and Near (1983), which measures the extent to which individuals engage in other-oriented helpful actions. Example statements include, "Volunteers for things that are not required," and "Helps others who have heavy workloads." Respondents rated each member of their final project team individually, assessing the extent to which each statement was descriptive of that person. Participants did not rate themselves. Each individual's rating was an aggregate of how he or she was rated by the other members of his or her final project team. Ratings used a five-point Likert scale (1 = not at all to 5 = highly). Scores were only computed if participants had three or more group members provide peer ratings. Agreement statistics indicated agreement among raters ($A_D = .59$; $ICC(1) = .28$, $F(303, 608) = 1.38$, $p < .01$) (Bliese, 2000; Smith-Crowe, Burke, Cohen, & Doveh, 2014).

Deviance behaviors. The extent to which newcomers engaged in deviant behaviors that violate ITECH's values was measured using eight items ($\alpha = .97$) taken from Bennett and Robinson's (2000) 12-item deviance scale. Four items were not included because they did not apply in this context (e.g., "Falsified a receipt to get reimbursed for more money than was spent on business expenses") or because members of ITECH were not comfortable asking them (e.g., "Used an illegal drug or consumed alcohol on the job"). As with the measure of values-upholding behaviors, final project team members rated each of their team members individually, and a composite rating was created for each individual. Participants did not rate themselves. On a 1 (never) to 7 (daily) scale, participants rated the frequency with which

each member engaged in various behaviors. Example statements include, "Take property from work without permission," "Neglect to follow instructions," and "Intentionally worked slower than they could have worked." Agreement statistics indicated agreement among raters ($A_D = .77$; $ICC(1) = .44$, $F(303, 608) = 1.80$ $p < .01$) (Bliese, 2000; Smith-Crowe et al., 2014).

RESULTS

Of the initial 632 members of the sample, 307 (49%) completed the final survey and received peer evaluations of their behavior. There were no significant differences between respondents and nonrespondents in terms of age or gender. The manipulation checks revealed significant differences between conditions in how participants rated the stories they generated and heard. The stories in the conditions focused on values-upholding narratives were rated as acting in accordance with ITECH values ($M = 4.46$, $SD = .55$) to a significantly greater extent than were the stories in the values-violating narrative condition ($M = 1.51$, $SD = .73$) $t(311) = 40.81$, $p < .01$. Participants also rated the high-level characters as being more socially distant ($M = 3.10$, $SD = .85$) compared to the low-level characters ($M = 3.52$, $SD = .81$) $t(288) = -4.38$, $p < .01$.

Descriptive statistics for variables by condition are presented in Table 1.

To test Hypotheses 1a, 1b, 2a, and 2b concerning the interaction between character level and story type on newcomers' engagement in citizenship and deviance behaviors, respectively, ANOVA analyses were used to test the incomplete factorial design (2 [high- vs. low-level character] \times 2 [values-upholding vs. -violating stories], plus one control condition) and planned contrasts between conditions. Regarding helping behaviors, the interaction between the level of character and type of story was not significant ($F[1, 302] = .07$; $p = .79$); thus, Hypothesis 1 was not supported. However, there were significant main effects for both character level ($F[1, 302] = 13.26$; $p < .01$), and type of story ($F[1, 302] = 11.57$; $p < .01$). Specifically, stories about low-level characters resulted in more helping behaviors ($M = 3.69$, $SD = .07$) than did stories about high-level characters ($M = 3.31$, $SD = .07$; $F[1, 302] = 13.18$, $p < .01$), and the control group ($M = 3.53$, $SD = .05$; $F[1, 302] = 3.22$, $p = .07$). Stories about high-level characters were related to fewer helping behaviors compared to the control ($F[1, 302] = 6.43$, $p = .01$). In addition, values-upholding stories ($M = 3.67$, $SD = .07$) related to more helping behaviors than did values-violating stories ($M = 3.32$,

TABLE 1
Means, Standard Deviations by Condition

Condition	Helping behaviors	Deviance behaviors
Control ($n = 162$; coded 0)	3.53 (0.69)	2.19 (0.91)
Low-level members and values-upholding ($n = 42$; coded 1)	3.85 (0.38)	1.74 (0.67)
Low-level members and values-violating stories ($n = 28$; coded 2)	3.52 (0.23)	2.55 (0.79)
High-level members and values-upholding stories ($n = 26$; coded 3)	3.5 (0.32)	2.66 (0.62)
High-level members and values-violating stories ($n = 49$; coded 4)	3.12 (0.67)	1.91 (0.69)

Notes: Standard deviations in parentheses.

$SD = .07$; $F[1, 302] = 11.48$, $p < .01$), and the control ($M = 3.53$, $SD = .05$; $F[1, 302] = 2.68$, $p = .10$). Values-violating stories related to significantly fewer helping behaviors than the control ($F[1, 302] = 5.82$, $p = .02$).

Concerning specific conditions, values-upholding stories about low-level characters related to significantly more helping behaviors ($M = 3.85$; $SD = .38$) than did values-upholding stories about high-level characters ($M = 3.50$, $SD = .32$; $F[1, 302] = 5.42$, $p = .02$) or the control ($M = 3.54$, $SD = .69$; $F[1, 302] = 9.41$, $p < .01$) (see Figure 2). Contrary to predictions, values-violating stories about high-level organizational members resulted in fewer helping behaviors ($M = 3.12$, $SD = .67$) than did values-violating stories about low-level characters ($M = 3.52$, $SD = .22$; $F[1, 302] = 8.05$, $p < .01$) or the control ($F[1, 302] = 17.40$, $p < .01$). There were no significant differences between the control condition and those involving values-upholding stories about high-level characters ($F[1, 302] = .06$, $p = .81$), or values-violating stories about low-level characters ($F[1, 302] = .00$, $p = .97$) (see Figure 3).

In sum, the stories featuring low-level characters upholding the organizational values corresponded to more helping behaviors than did values-upholding stories about high-level characters. However, stories featuring low-level characters violating organizational values did not significantly relate to fewer helping behaviors. Instead, the values-violating stories about high-level characters appear to have had the strongest suppressing effect on newcomers' helping behaviors. These results suggest that character level and story type have a more complex effect on newcomers' engagement in helping behaviors than theorized, and that the effects of the different stories

on newcomers' engagement in helping behaviors appears to be additive, not interactive.

Concerning deviance behaviors, the interaction between character level and story type was significant ($F[1, 302] = 30.87, p < .01$). The main effects of character level and values-upholding or -violating story type were not significant. Values-upholding stories about low-level organizational members led newcomers to engage in significantly less deviance behavior ($M = 1.73, SD = .67$) than did values-upholding stories about high-level organizational members ($M = 2.66, SD = .62; F[1, 302] = 20.52, p < .01$) and the control ($M = 2.19, SD = .91; F[1, 302] = 10.29, p < .01$). In addition, values-violating stories about low-level organizational members ($M = 2.55, SD = .79$) resulted in more deviance behavior than did values-violating stories about high-level organizational members ($M = 1.91, SD = .69; F[1, 302] = 10.88, p < .01$), and compared to the control ($M = 2.19, SD = .91; F[1, 302] = 4.53, p = .03$). Thus, Hypotheses 2a and b were supported.

Values-violating stories about high-level characters related to fewer deviance behaviors compared to the control ($F[1, 302] = 4.50, p = .03$), which aligns with the theory that out-group norm violation can motivate individuals to positively differentiate; however, curiously, the condition containing values-upholding

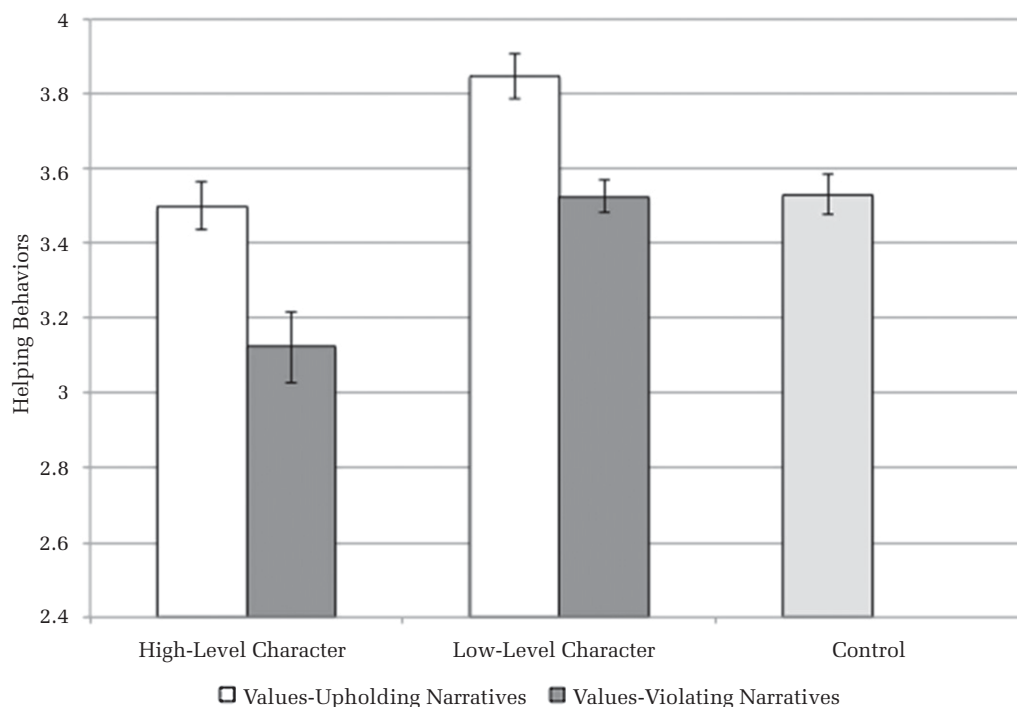
stories about high-level characters related to more peer-rated values-violating behaviors ($M = 2.66, SD = .62$) compared to the control group ($M = 2.19, SD = .91; F[1, 302] = 7.41, p < .01$). Thus, Hypotheses 2a and 2b were supported, but the influence of values-upholding stories about high-level organizational members on deviance behaviors appears to be more complicated. This suggests that these stories might have unintended effects—potentially elevating peers' expectations and behavioral standards for others, and leading them to see their peers as chronically falling short. I address this possibility in the discussion.

Post-hoc Content Analysis

While the above theory and analyses suggest that values-upholding or -violating stories about high- or low-level organizational members are construed differently by, and engender some group dynamics that manifested in, newcomers' actions, they do not provide rich evidence as to how or why they do so. To provide insight into and elaborate upon these processes, I content-analyzed participants' stories.

It is possible that stories about high-level organizational members contain more references to values that are not of the self-transcendent variety

FIGURE 2
Helping Behaviors by Condition



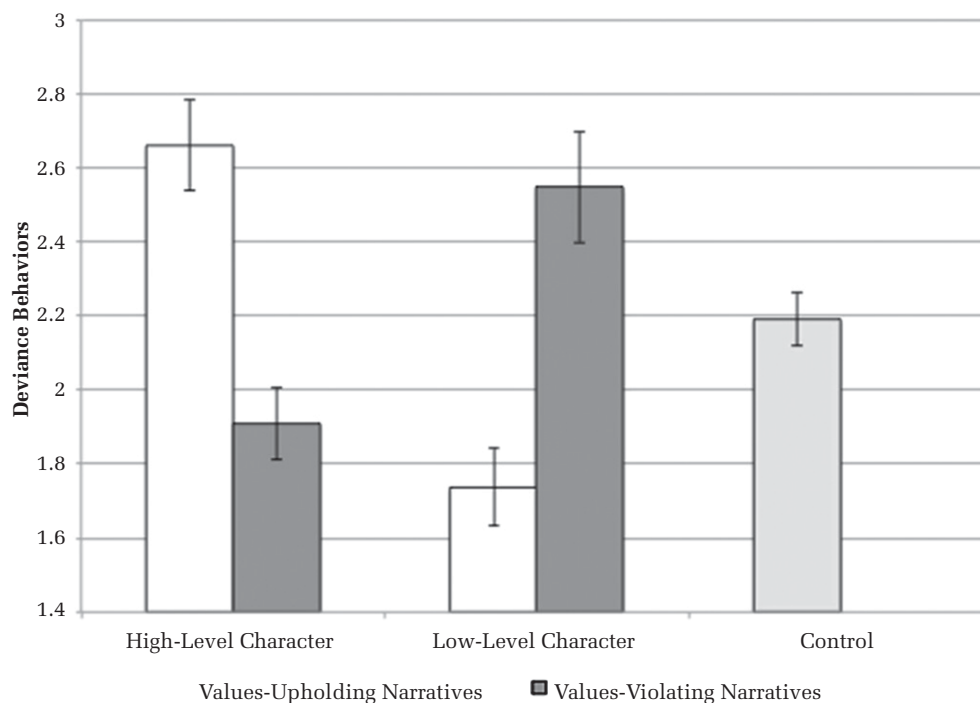
(i.e., self-enhancing values such as success and achievement, openness to change values such as creativity or self-direction, or conservation values such as tradition and conformity [see Schwartz, 1994]), and thus might be less impactful for influencing self-transcendent behaviors. In addition, some stories might contain more or less affective information, indicating a greater emotional connection to certain stories that could make them more impactful. Similarly, some stories might contain more contextual information—as this study theoretically argues—that is useful for showing newcomers where and when values are applicable. To account for these possibilities and to gain greater insight into how and why these different stories influence newcomers, I explored differences in the types of values the stories convey, and the social and affective information they contain.

An assistant typed the 608 complete and legible handwritten stories obtained from participants and assigned each a code indicating the condition to which it belonged. I analyzed the stories using the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC), a psychometrically valid and established (Pennebaker & Francis, 1999; Pennebaker & King, 1999) textual analysis application (Pennebaker, Chung, Ireland, Gonzales, & Booth, 2007). LIWC searches for words

that match categories in preestablished dictionaries, and reports the frequency with which those words and their derivatives appear in a text. The default LIWC dictionary contains over 2,300 words that have been categorized into over 60 categories by independent judges (Pennebaker, Mehl, & Niederhoffer, 2003). Users can also create their own dictionaries to capture categories that are not in the existing dictionary.

I created a values dictionary with five categories. Four categories correspond to the dimensions of the Schwartz (1994) values typology—self-transcendence values, self-enhancement values, conservation values, and openness to change values. I put the values from this typology under the general categories to which they pertain. To obtain a more complete set of words, I also reviewed the Values in Action typology (Peterson & Park, 2009; Peterson & Seligman, 2004), and the Rokeach (1973) Value Survey to find values words that were not included in the Schwartz typology, and grouped those that were unique under the most appropriate Schwartz dimension. I next created a category for ITECH's five formally espoused values. Finally, I added synonyms and antonyms of all the values listed across the five categories (four Schwartz values categories, and one ITECH category). This process created a dictionary of 169 base words. LIWC searches for these base words,

FIGURE 3
Deviance Behaviors by Condition



as well as their permutations (e.g., if “honest” is in the dictionary, LIWC will also count “honesty,” “honestly,” etc.). A word can also pertain to more than one category. For example, fairness is categorized as a self-transcendent value, as well as a formal ITECH value.

I also used the existing LIWC dictionary to explore the prevalence of words indicating social and affective dimensions of the stories. Exploring the use of social words is useful for confirming that stories about low-level characters are more likely to reflect participants’ social context. Differences in the occurrence of affect-laden words would indicate greater affective involvement with some types of stories compared to others. See Table 2 for examples of dictionary words and their categories.

Next, LIWC searched the stories and generated frequency statistics for the categories described above. I then conducted ANOVAs to test for significant differences between story conditions in each category. Table 3 presents the descriptive and significance statistics for differences within each category by story condition, and Table 4 presents the correlations between variables.

The frequency with which the formally espoused ITECH values were present varied significantly by condition ($F[3, 604] = 2.98, p = .03$). Post hoc tests showed that values-upholding stories about high-level organizational members contained more explicit references to the formal ITECH values than did other conditions, but the other conditions did not significantly differ from one another. Self-transcendent values differed significantly by condition as well ($F[3, 604] = 11.13, p < .01$). Values-upholding stories about low-level organizational members contained significantly more references to self-transcendent values than other conditions did, but the other conditions did not differ significantly from each other.

The presence of words indicating social context and relationships varied significantly by condition ($F[3, 604] = 3.83, p < .01$), as did words indicating affect ($F[3, 604] = 6.78, p < .01$). In both cases, the values-upholding and values-violating stories about low-level organizational members did not differ significantly from each other, but both were significantly different from either condition concerning stories about high-level organizational members. This suggests that there were more mentions of social relationships and the proximal context in stories about low-level organizational members than in stories about high-level members, and that newcomers expressed more affective information when conveying these stories.

Taken together, these findings suggest that values-upholding stories about high-level organizational

TABLE 2
Example Words from Values Dictionary

Broad category	Sub-dimensions	Examples of words included in dictionary
Self-transcendence values	Benevolence Universalism	Help, honest, fair, justice, love, friendship, thankful, justice, equal
Self-enhancement values	Power Achievement Hedonism	Power, ambition, exciting, successful, prestige, control, wealth, money
Openness to change values	Stimulation Self-direction	Creative, curious, daring, independent, excitement, explore, pleasure, enjoy
Conservation values	Security Conformity Tradition	Obedient, respect, conform, obey, honor, safe, clean
Social words	None	Coworker, participant, friend, we, us, him, her, they, them, talk, listen, give, offer
Affect words	None	Anger, happy, scary, love, hate, grin, calm, humor, pain, hope, sad, likes

members are more likely to convey formal ITECH values, supporting the assertion that these stories make the formal, injunctive values more salient. And while the formal ITECH values are related to self-transcending values, as indicated by their significant correlation (see Table 4), they might only make salient a narrow range of self-transcendent values. In contrast, the values-upholding stories about low-level characters elucidate a broader, richer array of values that are complementary to the formal ones. In addition, while they perhaps do not explicitly mention the formal values with the same frequency, they might instead reflect the intent or spirit of the values, which are concerned with acting in a self-transcendent way.

Further, stories about low-level organizational members are more likely to feature contexts to which newcomers can relate, as indicated by the greater prevalence of social affective dimensions in these stories. As such, values-upholding stories about low-level members might not only present a wider range of self-transcendent values, but also be more effective at showing where the values apply in context, and in generating affective connections that make the story more impactful.

Concerning other types of values conveyed in the stories, the occurrence of conservation values differed significantly by condition ($F[3, 604] = 5.68, p < .01$). Values-violating stories about low-level organizational members contained significantly more mentions of

TABLE 3
Means and Standard Deviations, and Differences between Conditions

	<i>High-level characters</i>		<i>Low-level characters</i>		F(3, 604)
	Positive stories	Negative stories	Positive stories	Negative stories	
<i>Values prevalence</i>					
ITECH values	1.25 (1.26)	0.84 (1.39)	0.89 (1.11)	0.98 (1.34)	2.98*
Self-transcendent values	1.98 (1.68)	1.7 (1.75)	2.84 (1.90)	1.93 (1.99)	11.28**
Self-enhancement values	0.37 (0.67)	0.38 (1.04)	0.25 (0.60)	0.2 (0.52)	2.2
Openness values	0.2 (0.49)	0.18 (0.63)	0.17 (0.49)	0.15 (0.50)	0.24
Conservation values	0.09 (0.35)	0.17 (0.51)	0.19 (0.59)	0.36 (0.84)	5.70**
<i>Other dimensions</i>					
Social words	11.24 (2.42)	11.34 (5.56)	12.83 (5.60)	12.65 (5.45)	3.83**
Affect words	4.71 (2.35)	4.96 (3.02)	6.11 (2.95)	5.55 (3.23)	6.78**

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

conservation values than did any other condition, but the other conditions did not significantly differ from one another. Given that this category of values focuses to a large degree on obedience, conformity, and respect, this suggests that these stories were more likely to feature descriptions of disobedient, disrespectful, or deviant behavior, and provides additional insight into why this condition related to higher levels of deviant behavior. There were no differences in the occurrence of self-enhancing values.

DISCUSSION

This study integrates research in narrative with social identity theory regarding behavioral contagion to posit a theoretical framework for how narratives influence newcomers' enactment of organizational values. Stories about high-level members were more likely to convey the formally espoused values, but the values-upholding and -violating stories about lower-level members appear to be more impactful on

behaviors. These findings have implications for theory and practice, and raise opportunities for future research.

Theoretical Implications

Prior studies have explored various aspects of narratives in organizations. Some have looked at structural or linguistic aspects of narratives (Näslund & Perner, 2012; Whittle & Mueller, 2012), the symbolic understandings they are meant to convey (Mahler, 1988), how they are shared (Boje, 1991), or how stories pass the culture on to new members (Schein, 2010). Recently, however, scholars have begun to explore how some types of stories might be useful for achieving specific outcomes. For instance, Cable, Gino, and Staats (2013) recently explored the effects of sharing narratives about one's own identity during socialization as opposed to hearing narratives about the organizational identity. They found that sharing stories about themselves led newcomers to be better

TABLE 4
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations among Story Variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Social	12.07	5.31						
2. Affect	5.36	2.96	0.18**					
3. ITECH values	0.98	1.29	-0.08	0.11**				
4. Self-transcendence	2.11	1.89	0.25**	0.35**	0.34**			
5. Self-enhance	0.29	0.73	0.01	0.02	0.18**	-0.11**		
6. Openness to change	0.17	0.53	-0.06	0.18**	-0.03	-0.02	0.05	
7. Conservation	0.21	0.62	-0.06	0.09*	-0.04	-0.01	-0.09*	-0.01

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

socialized in terms of performance and employee retention than did exposure to narratives conveying the organizational identity. The present work complements this line of research, similarly finding that stories about high-level organizational members who might be seen as organizational representatives are perhaps not as effective at influencing some important and desired newcomers behaviors as was once supposed. Our study also extends this work by focusing on the stories that one hears about peers, co-workers, or others at their own organizational level, and finds these stories to be influential means through which organizational values are embedded in newcomers' behaviors. Rather than affirming one's own identity, these stories seem to provide normative information about one's group. The findings of the current study and those of Cable and colleagues (2013) suggest that more work is needed to understand whether, and in what circumstances, organizational stories featuring high-level members or highlighting the organizational identity are more effective than stories featuring one's self or one's peers, and for what outcomes they are effective. Similarly, these studies suggest that stories are a potent influence on newcomers' behaviors, and there are likely many other behavioral or affective outcomes for which stories might be particularly useful.

By highlighting the role of organizational hierarchy as a source of social distance and in-group or out-group perceptions, this study speaks to Schneider and colleagues' (2013) call to consider the vertical aspects of organizational culture, showing that cultural elements from the top versus the bottom impact how people think and act. In exploring group dynamics and culture, prior work has largely compared between subcultures, generally classified across job functions (e.g., Sackmann, 1992; Schein, 2004). The present study suggests that the structure of an organization's culture also has distinct groups that are categorized vertically, as well as horizontally.

This study also has implications for understanding how members might interpret and respond to the behaviors of, or other organizational symbols concerning, those at other organizational levels, and allows more of the rich work from social identity theory to inform our understanding of organizational culture, leadership, and hierarchy. For instance, Antonakis and Atwater (2002) have discussed the importance of considering distance in studies of leadership, and the present study's findings could be applied to this pursuit. Indeed, it highlights an inherent challenge of leaders being too socially distant from followers—such that they might come to be seen as out-groups.

However, the arguments in the present work also suggest that high-level organizational members might see lower-level counterparts as out-group members. Thus, narratives or other symbols involving lower-level organizational members may make the espoused, injunctive norms salient for high-level members, but could also make social distance salient and trigger out-group perceptions. In such a case, high-level organizational members might judge and punish values violations by those at lower levels more harshly than they would violations by those at their own organizational level, while lauding positive behavior by those at their own level to a greater extent than they would positive actions by those at lower levels, because doing so builds their positive social identity. These arguments converge with extant findings that the tendency to view out-groups less favorably is more pronounced among high-status groups (e.g., Bettencourt, Charlton, Dorr, & Hume, 2001).

This study also has implications for business and behavioral ethics. As mentioned in the introduction, the values espoused by ITECH and focused on in this study are often those considered “ethical” in business and behavioral ethics scholarship (Graham et al., 2011). Research has long focused on the elements of an ethical organizational climate or culture (e.g., Treviño, 1986; Treviño et al., 1998; Victor & Cullen, 1988), and how it can be created or sustained. To that end, scholars have studied socialization programs (e.g., Chao et al., 1994), ethics training programs (e.g., Weaver, Treviño, & Cochran, 1999), and the impact of mission statements or codes of ethics (e.g., Kaptein & Schwartz, 2008) in encouraging values-driven behavior among organizational members. In general, much of this work has found that these approaches are successful to the extent that they are focused on values rather than compliance (Weaver & Treviño, 1999), and are supported by those higher in the organization (Valentine & Barnett, 2002). Social psychological work in behavioral ethics has studied ways to make ethics and values salient (e.g., Gino & Desai, 2012; Mazar, Amir, & Ariely, 2008), and thereby lead individuals to behave ethically. A challenge, however, lies in how to make values salient in the organizational environment in an impactful, enduring way. The present study suggests that stories might be a way to do so, and embed values in members' behaviors in a way that endures.

Limitations and Future Research

This study yielded two unexpected and interesting findings that, due to design limitations in

the design, could not be explored. First, values-upholding stories about high-level organizational members resulted in greater peer-rated deviance behavior in newcomers compared to newcomers who were not in any narrative condition. Second, values-violating stories about high-level characters corresponded to fewer helping behaviors compared to values-violating stories about low-level characters. A possible reason for both may be that other, unmeasured organizational influences apply beyond social identity theory, behavioral contagion, or narrative. While high-level members may, to some degree, be seen as an out-group, they are also the members who are supposed to most represent the culture (Schein, 2010), and indeed the content analysis revealed that these stories were more likely than any other to explicitly state the formally desired and espoused values. Perceptions that important, high-level members expect specific values to guide others' behaviors may lead newcomers to compare others in their surroundings to the leader's high standard. Thus, when newcomers hear stories about high-level characters acting in values-upholding ways it may lead them to compare their peers to a very high behavioral standard that is difficult to achieve, and thus to evaluate peers' behaviors stringently. Conversely, value-violating stories about these representative members might motivate newcomers to refrain from values-upholding behaviors because they perceive that the values are not held in earnest. This is an interesting area for future work.

A second limitation relating to design is that this study design used perceptual evaluations by individuals' peers to assess citizenship and deviance behaviors. As such, while these ratings are based on multiple perceptions they do not measure objective behaviors. The organization was understandably reticent to share documented evidence of deviant behavior. There was also no feasible way to observe self-transcendent behaviors in situ for extended periods. Thus, although having peer-rated measures of each variable seemed the best decision for this context, future work may benefit from gathering more objective behavioral measures.

There are also limitations pertaining to the setting and sample that bear mention. While ITECH provided a context uniquely suited to conducting a study of this type, it also limits the conclusions and raises interesting questions for subsequent work. First, since ITECH's values are dominantly of a self-transcendent variety, this study does not address how stories or other symbols conveying different types of values influence organizational members.

This is a compelling area for future work. For example, this study found that hearing about low-level members violating organizational values led other low-level members to engage in deviant action. However, not all deviance is necessarily a values violation (Vadera, Pratt, & Mishra, 2013), and some can be beneficial. Indeed, innovation often involves deviating from or experimenting with established ways of doing things. This represents what Schwartz (1994) would categorize as openness to change values. It is possible that those wishing to encourage more innovating behavior could do so by sharing narratives in which members deviate from the norm but are rewarded for it, while combining those stories with stories about the leaders taking risks and innovating to demonstrate that openness to change is an espoused, as well as in-use value.

In addition, the sample for this study was entirely low-level organizational newcomers. As such, the power of stories or other symbols to influence longer-tenured members is an important and unanswered question. As tenure increases, so does one's familiarity with the organization, and their beliefs about it may become less susceptible change. To wit, the effects of socialization can wane with time as newcomers learn more about the organization (Ashforth & Saks, 1996). It is possible that stories are less influential for them because their beliefs about the organization have ossified. Future work could explore the extent to which narratives versus other types of symbols influence long-tenured members' tendencies to act in values-aligned ways.

Furthermore, the stories in this study concerned characters at far ends of the hierarchy. Thus, the effect on newcomers of stories or other symbols involving mid-level organizational members is uncertain. Perhaps mid-level members are "stuck in the middle" (Dewett, Treviño, & Mollica, 2003) in a symbolic sense, being neither socially close nor distant, or not fully representing the lower levels while also not fully representing the organization. Stories about them may therefore be seen as neither behavioral guides by newcomers, nor as clear reflections of the organizational values. However, stories and symbols about them may still be useful for other mid-level members.

Another interesting question is how a narrative's impact might vary depending upon the storyteller. The source of information is often important (e.g., Whiting, Maynes, Podsakoff, & Podsakoff, 2012). In this study, the storytellers were all peers. It is possible that stories may not only be interpreted differently when they are about people from different levels, but also when they

are told by people from different levels. In addition, it is possible that stories told informally or repeated among peers (Dailey & Browning, 2013) are not perceived the same as when presented formally in internal marketing materials or by formal representatives of the organization, such as human resources personnel.

Implications for Practice

Organizations invest significant resources to socialize newcomers and embed in them the desired aspects of the culture. Having them tell and hear stories presents a relatively easy and inexpensive way to do that. This study suggests that cultural elements such as narratives might be used more strategically to increase the likelihood that organizational values are embedded in newcomers at the behavioral level. Specifically, positive stories about high-level members may be useful for making the values and injunctive norms salient, but in order to illustrate the ways that values should guide behavior and encourage others to act in values-driven ways, stories about characters at closer social distance may be most effective. Combining both in newcomer socialization may help to both make the values salient and encourage consonant action. By gaining a greater understanding of the effects of different types of stories in the organizational environment, practitioners can potentially propagate the desirable aspects of a culture onto others in ways that are impactful, while reducing undesirable actions.

CONCLUSION

Narratives are a ubiquitous part of organizations, with the power to guide the actions of members in specific ways. This study builds and tests a framework for how different kinds of stories influence newcomers, and finds evidence that narratives might be studied and used more precisely. There is still much to be done in this area to understand how stories can be used more strategically and to greater effect, how variance along other dimensions than those studied here influence behavior, and how organizations might encourage the proliferation of useful and beneficial stories while mitigating harmful ones. Hopefully, future work will pay increasing attention to this potent aspect of organizational life. There are undoubtedly more stories to be told in this area.

REFERENCES

- Antonakis, J., & Atwater, L. 2002. Leader distance: A review and a proposed theory. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 13: 673–704.
- Argyris, C., & Schön, D. A. 1974. *Theory in practice: Increasing professional effectiveness*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Ashforth, B. E., Sluss, D. M., & Harrison, S. H. 2007. Socialization in organizational contexts. *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 22: 1–70.
- Ashforth, B. K., & Saks, A. M. 1996. Socialization tactics: Longitudinal effects on newcomer adjustment. *Academy of Management Journal*, 39: 149–178.
- Barsade, S. G. 2002. The Ripple Effect: Emotional contagion and its influence on group behavior. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 47: 644–675.
- Bennett, R. J., & Robinson, S. L. 2000. Development of a measure of workplace deviance. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85: 349–360.
- Bettencourt, A. B., Charlton, K., Dorr, N., & Hume, D. L. 2001. Status differences and in-group bias: A meta-analytic examination of the effects of status stability, status legitimacy, and group permeability. *Psychological Bulletin*, 127: 520–542.
- Bliese, P. D. 2000. Within group agreement, non-independence, and reliability: Implications for data aggregation and analysis. In K. J. Klein & S. W. J. Kozlowski (Eds.), *Multilevel theory, research, and methods in organizations: Foundations, extensions and new directions*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Boje, D. M. 1991. The storytelling organization: A study of story performance in an office-supply firm. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 36: 106–126.
- Boyce, M. E. 1995. Collective centering and collective sense-making in the stories and storytelling of one organization. *Organization Studies*, 16: 107–137.
- Brauer, M. 2001. Intergroup perception in the social context: The effects of social status and group membership on perceived out-group homogeneity and ethnocentrism. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 37: 15–31.
- Browning, L., & Morris, G. H. 2012. *Stories of life in the workplace: An open architecture for organizational narratology*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Bruner, J. 1990. *Acts of meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cable, D. M., Gino, F., & Staats, B. R. 2013. Breaking them in or eliciting their best? Reframing socialization around newcomers' authentic self-expression. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 58: 1–36.
- Cable, D. M., & Parsons, C. K. 2001. Socialization tactics and person-organization fit. *Personnel Psychology*, 54: 1–23.
- Chao, G. T., O'Leary-Kelly, A. M., Wolf, S., Klein, H. J., & Gardner, P. D. 1994. Organizational socialization: Its content and consequences. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79: 730–743.
- Cialdini, R. B., Reno, R. R., & Kallgren, C. A. 1990. A focus theory of normative conduct: recycling the

- concept of norms to reduce littering in public places. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 58: 1015–1026.
- Clark, B. R. 1972. The organizational saga in higher education. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 17: 178–184.
- Conger, J. A., & Kanungo, R. N. 1987. Toward a behavioral theory of charismatic leadership in organizational settings. *Academy of Management Review*, 12: 637–647.
- Crocker, J., & Luhtanen, R. 1990. Collective self-esteem and in-group bias. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 58: 60–67.
- Dailey, S., & Browning, L. 2013. Retelling stories in organizations: Understanding the functions of narrative repetition. *Academy of Management Review*, 39: 21–43.
- Dandridge, T. C., Mitroff, I., & Joyce, W. F. 1980. Organizational symbolism: A topic to expand organizational analysis. *Academy of Management Review*, 5: 77–82.
- Deal, T. E., & Kennedy, A. A. 1982. *Corporate cultures: The rites and rituals of organizational life*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Denning, S. 2004. Telling tales. *Harvard Business Review*, 82: 122–129.
- DeWitt, R. L., Treviño, L. K., & Mollica, K. A. 1998. The influence of eligibility on employees' reactions to voluntary workforce reductions. *Journal of Management*, 24: 593–613.
- Edwards, J. R., & Cable, D. M. 2009. The value of value congruence. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, 94: 654–677.
- Feather, N. T. 1995. Values, valences, and choice: The influences of values on the perceived attractiveness and choice of alternatives. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 68: 1135–1151.
- Gino, F., Ayal, S., & Ariely, D. 2009. Contagion and differentiation in unethical behavior. *Psychological Science*, 20: 393–398.
- Gino, F., & Desai, S. D. 2012. Memory lane and morality: How childhood memories promote prosocial behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 102: 743–758.
- Gino, F., & Galinsky, A. D. 2012. Vicarious dishonesty: When psychological closeness creates distance from one's moral compass. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 119: 15–26.
- Goffman, E. 1961. *Asylums: Essays on the social situation of mental patients and other inmates*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books.
- Graham, J., Nosek, B. A., Haidt, J., Iyer, R., Koleva, S., & Ditto, P. H. 2011. Mapping the moral domain. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 101: 366–385.
- Hammond, K. J. 1990. Case-based planning: A framework for planning from experience. *Cognitive Science*, 14: 385–443.
- Hansen, C. D., & Kahnweiler, W. M. 1993. Storytelling: An instrument for understanding the dynamics of corporate relationships. *Human Relations*, 46: 1391–1409.
- Heath, C. 1996. Do people prefer to pass along good or bad news? Valence and relevance of news as predictors of transmission propensity. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 68: 79–94.
- Hogg, M. A. 2001. A social identity theory of leadership. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 5: 184–200.
- Hogg, M. A., & Reid, S. A. 2006. Social identity, self-categorization, and the communication of group norms. *Communication Theory*, 16: 7–30.
- Ibarra, H. 1999. Provisional selves: Experimenting with image and identity in professional adaptation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44: 764–791.
- Ibarra, H., & Barbulescu, R. 2010. Identity as narrative: Prevalence, effectiveness, and consequences of narrative identity work in macro work role transitions. *Academy of Management Review*, 35: 135–154.
- Judd, C. M., & Park, B. 1988. Out-group homogeneity: Judgments of variability at the individual and group levels. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54: 778–788.
- Kanter, R. M., Stein, B., & Jick, T. 1992. *The challenge of organizational change: How companies experience it and leaders guide it*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Kaptein, M., & Schwartz, M. S. 2008. The effectiveness of business codes: A critical examination of existing studies and the development of an integrated research model. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 77: 111–127.
- Kelly, C., Kocourek, P., McGaw, N., & Samuelson, J. (2006). *Deriving value from corporate values*. Washington, DC: Booz Allen Hamilton, The Aspen Institute.
- Levine, L. J., & Pizarro, D. A. 2004. Emotion and memory research: A grumpy overview. *Social Cognition*, 22: 530–554.
- Liviatan, I., Trope, Y., & Liberman, N. 2008. Interpersonal similarity as a social distance dimension: Implications for perception of others' actions. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 44: 1256–1269.
- Mahler, J. 1988. The quest for organizational meaning identifying and interpreting the symbolism in organizational stories. *Administration & Society*, 20: 344–368.
- Martin, J., Feldman, M. S., Hatch, M. J., & Sitkin, S. B. 1983. The uniqueness paradox in organizational stories. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 28: 438–453.

- Martin, J., Patterson, K., & Price, R. (1979). *The effects of level of abstraction of a script on accuracy of recall, predictions, and beliefs*. Research paper No. 520. Graduate School of Business, Stanford University.
- Martin, J., & Powers, M. E. 1982. Organizational stories: More vivid and persuasive than quantitative data. In B. M. Staw (Ed.), *Psychological foundations of organizational behavior*. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman.
- Mazar, N., Amir, O., & Ariely, D. 2008. The dishonesty of honest people: A theory of self-concept maintenance. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 45: 633–644.
- Meindl, J. R., Ehrlich, S. B., & Dukerich, J. M. 1985. The romance of leadership. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 30: 78–102.
- Mintzberg, H. 1973. *The nature of managerial work*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Näslund, L., & Perner, F. 2012. The appropriated language: Dominant stories as a source of organizational inertia. *Human Relations*, 65: 89–110.
- Pennebaker, J. W., Chung, C. K., Ireland, M., Gonzales, A., & Booth, R. J. 2007. *The development and psychometric properties of LIWC2007*. Austin, TX: Software Manual.
- Pennebaker, J. W., & Francis, M. E. 1999. *Linguistic inquiry and word count: LIWC*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Pennebaker, J. W., & King, L. A. 1999. Linguistic styles: Language use as an individual difference. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 77: 1296–1312.
- Pennebaker, J. W., Mehl, M. R., & Niederhoffer, K. G. 2003. Psychological aspects of natural language use: Our words, our selves. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 54: 547–577.
- Peterson, C., & Park, N. 2009. Classifying and measuring strengths of character. In S. J. Lopez & C. R. Snyder (Eds.), *Oxford handbook of positive psychology* (2nd ed.): 25–33. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. 2004. *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. New York: Oxford University Press and Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Polkinghorne, D. 1988. *Narrative knowing the human sciences*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Pratt, M. G., Rockmann, K. W., & Kaufmann, J. B. 2006. Constructing professional identity: The role of work and identity learning cycles in the customization of identity among medical residents. *Academy of Management Journal*, 49: 235–262.
- Ready, D. A. 2002. How storytelling builds next-generation leaders. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 43: 63–69.
- Rokeach, M. 1973. *The nature of human values*. New York, NY: The Free Press.
- Sackmann, S. A. 1992. Culture and subcultures: An analysis of organizational knowledge. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 37: 140–161.
- Saks, A. M., & Ashforth, B. E. 1997. Organizational socialization: Making sense of the past and present as a prologue for the future. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 51: 234–279.
- Salancik, G. R., & Pfeffer, J. 1978. A social information processing approach to job attitudes and task design. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 23: 224–253.
- Schank, R. C. 1990. *Tell me a story: Narrative and intelligence*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Schein, E. H. 1978. *Career dynamics: Matching individual and organizational needs*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing.
- Schein, E. H. 2004. Learning when and how to lie: A neglected aspect of organizational and occupational socialization. *Human Relations*, 57: 259–273.
- Schein, E. H. 2010. *Organizational culture and leadership*. San Francisco CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Schneider, B., Ehrhart, M. G., & Macey, W. H. 2013. Organizational climate and culture. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 64: 361–388.
- Schultz, P. W., Nolan, J. M., Cialdini, R. B., Goldstein, N. J., & Griskevicius, V. 2007. The constructive, destructive, and reconstructive power of social norms. *Psychological Science*, 18: 429–434.
- Schwartz, S. H. 1994. Are there universal aspects in the structure and contents of human values? *The Journal of Social Issues*, 50: 19–45.
- Shadish, W. R., Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T. 2001. *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin.
- Simon, B. 1993. On the asymmetry in the cognitive construal of in-group and out-group: A model of egocentric social categorization. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 23: 131–147.
- Small, D. A., & Loewenstein, G. 2003. Helping a victim or helping the victim: Altruism and identifiability. *Journal of Risk and Uncertainty*, 26: 5–16.
- Small, D. A., Loewenstein, G., & Slovic, P. 2007. Sympathy and callousness: The impact of deliberative thought on donations to identifiable and statistical victims. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 102: 143–153.
- Smith, C. A., Organ, D. W., & Near, J. P. 1983. Organizational citizenship behavior: Its nature and antecedents. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, 68: 653–663.
- Smith-Crowe, K., Burke, M. J., Cohen, A., & Doveh, E. 2014. Statistical significance criteria for the RWG and the

- average deviation interrater agreement indices. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, 99: 239–261.
- Sonenshein, S. 2010. We're changing—or are we? untangling the role of progressive, regressive, and stability narratives during strategic change implementation. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53: 477–512.
- Stephens, G. J., Silbert, L. J., & Hasson, U. 2010. Speaker–listener neural coupling underlies successful communication. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 107: 14425–14430.
- Swap, W., Leonard, D., Shields, M., & Abrams, L. 2001. Using mentoring and storytelling to transfer knowledge in the workplace. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 18: 95–114.
- Swidler, A. 1986. Culture in action: Symbols and strategies. *American Sociological Review*, 51: 273–286.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. 1986. The social identity theory of intergroup behaviour. In S. Worchel & W. G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations*: 7–24. Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall.
- Treviño, L. K. 1986. Ethical decision making in organizations: A person-situation interactionist model. *Academy of Management Review*, 11: 601–617.
- Treviño, L. K., Butterfield, K. D., & McCabe, D. L. 1998. The ethical context in organizations: Influences on employee attitudes and behaviors. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 8: 447–476.
- Vadera, A. K., Pratt, M. G., & Mishra, P. 2013. Constructive deviance in organizations integrating and moving forward. *Journal of Management*, 39: 1221–1276.
- Valentine, S., & Barnett, T. 2002. Ethics codes and sales professionals' perceptions of their organizations' ethical values. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 40: 191–200.
- Van Maanen, J., & Schein, E. H. 1979. Toward a theory of organizational socialization. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 1: 209–264.
- Victor, B., & Cullen, J. B. 1988. The organizational bases of ethical work climates. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 33: 101–125.
- Weaver, G. R., & Treviño, L. K. 1999. Compliance and values oriented ethics programs: Influences on employees' attitudes and behavior. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 9: 315–335.
- Weaver, G. R., Treviño, L. K., & Cochran, P. L. 1999. Corporate ethics programs as control systems: Influences of executive commitment and environmental factors. *Academy of Management Journal*, 42: 41–57.
- Whittle, A., & Mueller, F. 2012. Bankers in the dock: Moral storytelling in action. *Human Relations*, 65: 111–139.
- Whiting, S. W., Maynes, T. D., Podsakoff, N. P., & Podsakoff, P. M. 2012. Effects of message, source, and context on evaluations of employee voice behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 97: 159–182.



Sean R. Martin (sean.martin.4@bc.edu) is an assistant professor of management in the Carroll School of Management at Boston College. He received his PhD in management from the Johnson School of Management at Cornell University. His research interests include leadership and values.



APPENDIX A

All story participants received the following instructions:

FIRST, WRITE DOWN A STORY THAT MEETS THE CRITERIA DESCRIBED BELOW

- About a *very high-level leader within ITECH (founders, executives, etc.) [lower-level member within ITECH (i.e., not far removed from your own situation,)]* either now or in the past.
- This person acted in a way that was a *great, positive demonstration of the ITECH values [a violation or negative example of ITECH values]*.
- *Be sure to briefly describe the situation, how the actor responded, what the outcome was, and why you think this was a good example of a value.*

Participants were then instructed to get into groups of four to five, and then given the following instructions:

EACH MEMBER OF THE GROUP WILL SHARE THEIR STORIES

- Tell the story like you would actually tell it, not just as you wrote it down.

After hearing each person's story, the group will select two stories from the group to share.

- Circle those stories, and hand all the stories in to me.

When each group has submitted stories, we will:

- Discuss a couple of them together.
- Talk about what values those stories show.
- Discuss how they relate to you as an ITECH employee.

Copyright of Academy of Management Journal is the property of Academy of Management and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.