TERRITORIALITY IN ORGANIZATIONS: THEORY AND MEASUREMENT

by

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ABSTRACT

Territorial feelings and behaviors are important, pervasive, and yet largely overlooked aspects of organizational life. Organizational members can and do become territorial over physical spaces, ideas, roles, relationships and a myriad of other potential possessions in organizations. To this point, however, virtually no research has examined territoriality in organizations. In three different papers, I address the issue of territoriality in organizations. In the first paper, I theoretically examine the concept of territoriality as it applies to organizations and discuss some potential antecedents and consequences of territoriality. In the second paper, I develop a survey measure of territoriality that can be used to empirically study territoriality in organizations. In the final paper, I conduct an empirical study to examine the consequences of territoriality in organizations. This project begins an important direction in studying and better understanding human behavior in organizations.
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Chapter two of this dissertation represents a co-authored paper. I was solely responsible for the conceptual idea. I also contributed to the theoretical arguments and was largely responsible for the preparation of the manuscript. My co-authors played significant roles developing the theoretical arguments and writing the paper.
CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW

Life in organizations is fundamentally territorial. We make claims on and defend our control of a variety of organizational objects, spaces, roles, and relationships. Walk into almost any organization today, and you are immediately exposed to a wide variety of indications of employees' territoriality: artefacts, such as nameplates on doors, and family photos on desks; and behaviors, such as resistance to the introduction of office cubicles, and reluctance to let others join on a key project. These are examples of employee attempts to establish, communicate, and control their relationships with elements of organizational life.

Although it is prevalent, territoriality is not explicitly recognized in organizations. This may be partly because there is no theory of territoriality in organizations. Thus, academics and individuals in organizations may be either ignoring or miscategorizing territorial behavior. The purpose of this dissertation is threefold: 1) to outline a theory of territoriality; 2) develop a measure of territoriality; and 3) to show that territoriality matters at both the individual and social level in organizations.

The Concept of Territoriality

The idea of territoriality originates in animal research. It describes behavior that is used to mark and defend territories from other animals. The focus on animal territoriality is largely on the protection of strategically valuable resources for survival. Animals mark territories to avoid conflict by signalling that an object has been claimed. Defending behaviors are generally aggressive acts against intruders of their territories. Territoriality also exists in humans; however, human territoriality serves to organize human behavior so that violence, aggression, and overt domination are unnecessary (Edney, 1974).
Although there are commonalities between animal and human territoriality, Stokols (1978: 271) noted that, “recent analyses have emphasized the cognitive and social-organizational functions of human territoriality rather than its biological (reproductive and survival-related) aspects”. Thus, human territoriality has more complexity than simply just the claiming and defence of valued resources.

Human territoriality has been studied in many disciplines including anthropology (Cashdan, 1983), geography (Ley & Cyrbiski, 1974), and psychology (Brown, 1987). These studies show that the human territoriality has a variety of effects including engendering a sense of belonging to social groups (Altman, 1975; Lewis, 1979), enhancing group identity (Suttles, 1968), clarifying and simplifying social interactions (Altman & Haythorn, 1967; Rosenblatt & Budd, 1975), and distributing resources (Cashdan, 1983).

Extrapolating from this, it is easy to imagine how territoriality can similarly affect the performance and well being of organizations and their members. In fact, territoriality in organizations may be particularly noteworthy for two reasons. First, we spend a significant portion of our lives in organizations. Work is very important and is central for many people. Next to the home, people spend most of their time at work. Therefore, people are likely to form significant attachments to objects at work. These territories are likely to be central, albeit sometimes subconscious, aspects important in the daily lives of individuals. Second, organizations are, by their nature, highly interdependent. For the most part, organizational life is filled with transactions and dependencies between individuals. Thus, the social nature of work in organizations lends itself to a situation where marking and defending one’s possessions takes on particular significance. There
are many objects in organizations that people might claim as resources or as parts of expressing their identity to others. As such, there exist many opportunities to mark and defend, and, perhaps because of the many different actors in organizations, there is a great need to mark and defend.

Surprisingly then, despite its prevalence and potential influence, there has been very little theoretical or empirical examination of territoriality in organizational life. I believe there are at least two related reasons for the lack of research on territoriality in organizations. First, it is my experience, based on speaking with senior managers and owners in a variety of companies, that people in organizations do not understand territoriality. More specifically, they perceive territoriality as negative and simply about fighting over resources. This reflects the association of territoriality to its historical roots in animal research. However, as noted above, human territoriality goes beyond the need to control scarce resources. Moreover, managers and organizations should care about territoriality because research in other disciplines, some of which is cited above, has shown that there are many potential benefits from allowing and encouraging territoriality.

The second, and perhaps more significant, issue limiting research on territoriality is the lack of a theoretical framework to integrate and guide research. Through my dissertation, I plan to address both issues.

**Dissertation Framework**

My goal in this dissertation is to develop a foundation to study territoriality. To do this, I divide the dissertation into 3 distinct papers. In Chapter 2, I develop a theoretical framework for studying territoriality. I use this paper to introduce the concept of territoriality and to explore key antecedents and consequences. This paper provides the
foundation for future studies. I offer methodological suggestions for approaching territoriality research as well as potentially important future directions.

Territoriality research is important and in Chapter 2 I develop several ideas for studying territoriality. However, it is difficult to proceed without a valid, reliable, instrument to measure territoriality. In Chapter 3, I developed a measure of territoriality towards one type of territory: one’s workspace. Through a series of studies I generated items for the measure. After refining the items I tested the scale against theoretically related measures to establish convergent and discriminate validity. Although limited to workspaces, the measure of territoriality provides a foundation for studying territoriality in organizations.

In Chapter 4, I use the measure developed in Chapter 3 to empirically study the consequences of territoriality in organizations. Due to the social nature of territorial behavior I consider both the relationship between territoriality and individual attitudes as well as between territoriality and other’s perceptions of the territorial individual. Thus I consider both psychological and social consequences in this first examination of territoriality in organizations. I believe it is important to consider territoriality for both parties because territorial behavior may have varying consequences that organizations need to consider. Past research in other disciplines suggests that territorial behavior may have positive psychological consequences but that this same behavior may not be understood or may be viewed negatively by others. Thus, the benefits for the individual may be offset by other’s negative perceptions of the people who are territorial.
Conclusion

Territorial behavior is natural but it is not innocuous. A better understanding of territoriality has the potential to aid us in understanding many important behaviors that we observe in organizations. In particular, behavior that might appear to be irrational, dysfunctional, or unusual might largely be explained by territoriality. Examples of such behavior might include conflicts over seemingly trivial matters, such as who gets to announce the annual service award, or why someone decorates their door and office with personal possessions. Though some of these behaviors may be explained in part by other concepts, ignoring the role of territoriality misses an important facet with unique explanatory power. Collectively the studies that form my dissertation provide an important step towards better understanding this common but ignored aspect of human behavior.
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CHAPTER 2: TERRITORIALITY IN ORGANIZATIONS

Life in organizations is fundamentally territorial. We make claims on and defend our control of a variety of organizational objects, spaces, roles, and relationships. Walk into almost any organization today, and you are immediately exposed to a wide variety of indications of employees' territoriality: artifacts, such as nameplates on doors, and family photos on desks; and behaviors, such as resistance to the introduction of office cubicles, and reluctance to let others join on a key project. These are examples of employee attempts to establish, communicate, and control their relationships with elements of organizational life.

To discount territorial feelings and behaviors as petty, political, or self-serving is to overlook their importance to employees in contemporary work organizations. Studies of human territoriality have long suggested its potential significant effect on the performance and well being of organizations and their members. Territoriality of physical space has been shown to engender a sense of belonging to social groups (Altman, 1975; Lewis, 1979), which in an organizational context may result in reduced turnover and increased performance. Studies also suggest that territoriality can be beneficial in clarifying and simplifying social interactions (Altman & Haythorn, 1967; Rosenblatt & Budd, 1975), which in organizations might reduce conflict and enhance effectiveness by more efficiently distributing key organizational resources. Territoriality may, however, also have deleterious effects on organizations. Employee preoccupations with communicating and maintaining proprietary claims, for instance, may diminish the focus on task performance and achievement of broader organizational goals. Moreover, in

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1 This paper is forthcoming in the Academy of Management Review
organizations where territoriality is entrenched and pervasive, members may – for fear of infringing on another’s territory – be reluctant to venture into certain areas, take on new roles, or collaborate with particular colleagues.

Despite its prevalence and potential influence, there has been very little theoretical or empirical examination of territoriality in organizational life. The few studies of territoriality in organizations have largely been carried out within the tradition of environmental psychology (e.g., Wollman, Kelly & Bordens, 1994), and consequently have not directly addressed the issues that most concern scholars of organizational behavior (Sundstrom & Altman, 1989). Within organizational research, significant attention has only recently begun to be paid to the nature and antecedents of psychological ownership in organizations (e.g. Pierce, Kostova & Dirks, 2001). We believe, however, that researchers need to further consider how organizational members communicate, maintain, defend and restore the territories to which they feel ownership.

In this paper we examine territoriality in organizations, and attempt to integrate and build upon previous studies of territoriality in anthropology, geography, and social and environmental psychology, as well as organizational research that has addressed complementary issues. By introducing the concept of territoriality into organizational research, we hope to illuminate its significance and encourage additional study into this important phenomenon. We believe that the concept of territoriality has the potential to aid us in understanding many important behaviors that we observe in organizations. In particular, behavior that might appear to be irrational, dysfunctional, or unusual might largely be explained by territoriality. Examples of such behavior might include conflicts over seemingly trivial matters, such as who gets to announce the annual service award, or...
why someone decorates their door and office with personal possessions. Though some of these behaviors may be explained in part by other concepts, we believe that ignoring the role of territoriality misses an important facet with unique explanatory power.

We divide our paper into four major sections. We begin by developing a detailed definition of territoriality and discussing its relationship to psychological ownership. We then introduce four specific types of territorial behavior and highlight factors that influence these behaviors. Next, we examine some likely functional and dysfunctional organizational consequences of territoriality. We conclude by addressing some interesting future research directions, ways by which we might empirically study territoriality, and the implications of territoriality for managerial practice.

THE CONCEPT OF TERRITORIALITY

The study of human territoriality has traditionally involved a focus on physical space (Hall, 1959). Originally observed and studied in animals, researchers focused on the biological roots and evolutionary implications of territorial behavior (Brown, 1987; Sundstrom & Altman, 1974; Taylor, 1988). An important shift in territoriality research occurred in the mid 1980s, as scholars began to argue that human territoriality served to organize behavior in ways that reduced the necessity for violence, aggression, and overt domination (Edney, 1975). Thus, territoriality towards a physical space became associated with social and communal functioning, as well as individual behavior.

This research on human territoriality has produced a variety of definitions of the concept (c.f., Brown, 1987 for a review), which vary particularly in their emphasis on either (1) attachment to, and organization of, territories (Altman, 1975; Sack, 1983) or (2) the occupation and defense of territories (Altman & Haythorn, 1967; Dyson-Hudson &
Smith, 1978; Goffman, 1967). For our purposes, we use a definition of territoriality that integrates these two aspects and expands the potential focus of territoriality beyond physical space. We define territoriality as an individual’s behavioral expression of his or her feelings of ownership toward a physical or social object. It includes behaviors whose purpose is to construct, communicate, maintain, and restore territories around those objects in the organization to which one feels proprietary attachment toward.

In unpacking our definition of territoriality, we begin by building upon, and distinguishing it from, the concept of psychological ownership, which Pierce et al. (2001: 299) define as “the feeling of possessiveness and of being psychologically tied to an object.” This concept parallels the idea of proprietary attachment from territoriality research, and so we adopt psychological ownership here as a key psychological foundation for our model. Pierce et al. (2001; 2002) argue that psychological ownership has its “roots” in three fundamental human drives that provide the reasons for why individuals experience psychological ownership. First, psychological ownership fulfills the need for efficacy: individuals are motivated to be efficacious and competent and consequently desire to control their environments in ways that might facilitate this. Second, psychological ownership is rooted in the need for self-identity: through connections to organizational objects, one can communicate one’s identity, as well as explore and reflect on one’s own understanding of one’s identity. Finally, psychological ownership is rooted in the inherent need of people to have a place of their own (Duncan, 1981; Weil, 1952) – a home, whether physical or metaphorical, can provide physical and psychological security that can serve as a foundation for a variety of positive experiences and behaviors (Brown, Brown & Perkins, 2003).
The concept of territoriality makes a powerful addition to research on psychological ownership by providing a means of exploring the social and behavioral dynamics that sometimes follow from employees' sense of psychological ownership. Psychological ownership refers to feelings of possessiveness and attachment toward an object. Territoriality, in contrast, refers to actions or behaviors that often emanate from psychological ownership for the purposes of constructing, communicating, maintaining and restoring one's attachment to an object. Whereas psychological ownership is a psychological state, territoriality is a social-behavioral concept, which has at least two key aspects. First, territoriality involves social actions that flow from psychological ownership in a social context. There is no point in territorial behavior if one has psychological ownership to objects that are not in a social realm. People feel attached to all sorts of objects in the world, but it is only those objects to which individuals feel a proprietary attachment that will lead to territorial behaviors. Territoriality is not simply about expressing some form of attachment to an object (e.g., I love my office!) but is centrally concerned with establishing, communicating and maintaining one’s relationship with that object relative to others in the social environment (e.g., This is my office and not yours!). Second, territoriality reflects the social meanings of actions regarding claiming and protecting objects as they are negotiated in a given social context. It is only when one publicly claims and protects an object as his or her own in a social environment that it is transformed into a territory. Thus, territories are social constructions (Berger & Luckmann, 1967) that only come into being through the territorial behaviors of individuals. As with all social constructions, an object only exists as a territory to the
extent that is reproduced in social interaction among relevant actors (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Fairclough, 1992); one cannot simply think a territory into existence.

We should stress the point that, unlike traditional studies of territoriality, we are not limiting our examination of territoriality to that associated with physical space or even physical objects. Consequently, our use of the term “object” is a very general one: territoriality can involve tangibles such as physical space and possessions, intangibles such as ideas, roles, and responsibilities, as well as social entities such as people and groups. Indeed, organizational members can develop, maintain and defend relationships with many aspects of organizational life. As Pierce et al. (2001; 2002) discuss, individuals can feel ownership toward their work (Beaglehole, 1932), their organization (Dirks, Cummings & Pierce, 1996), the products they create (Das, 1993), their jobs (Peters & Austin, 1985), and even specific issues within their organization (Pratt & Dutton, 2000).

The final point we want to clarify with respect to the concept of territoriality is its relationship to power and politics in organizations. This relationship is a complex one because they are closely related concepts but are also clearly distinct from one another. The connection between them is based on their similar concern with the distribution and management of organizational resources. Power in organizations stems from the control of scarce, valuable resources, and the ability to exploit that control through various strategies (Hickson, Hinings, Schneck & Pennings, 1972; Pfeffer, 1981). Similarly, territoriality is concerned with the control of organizational resources – territories represent valued organizational objects over which members make proprietary claims (Esser, 1968, 1973). Moreover, one of the reasons that individuals may be motivated to
engage in territorial behaviors is to gain the influence and strategic advantage that control of some object may afford them in the organization. Consequently, the study of territoriality may provide valuable insights to our understanding of power and politics in organizations: it may, in particular, highlight the dynamics associated with political strategies that have so far been relatively ignored.

Territoriality is not, however, simply a subset of political behavior in organizations. Territoriality is the behavioral expression of psychological ownership, and thus the motivations for territorial behaviors are far more varied than simply the desire for influence and strategic advantage: the search for personal efficacy may be quite separate from the ability to influence others; moreover, the construction and expression of identity, as well as people’s need for a sense of place, stimulate territorial behaviors that may be largely unconnected to patterns of power and influence in organizations. Similarly, organizational politics often occur without involving the construction, negotiation or defense of territories; members of organizations draw on a wide variety of strategies and tactics to influence each other, such as ingratiation, coercion, and rational persuasion (Kipnis, Schmidt & Wilkinson, 1980) that do not rely on or involve territorial behaviors. The distinctiveness of territoriality and power-oriented behavior can be illustrated by the relatively common occurrence of individuals behaving territorially over objects that are only subjectively or symbolically valuable. University students, for example, may extend significant effort to protect a particular library carrel or seat in the classroom as their own and likewise experience a sense of emotional indignation or loss if that carrel or seat is used by another, simply because of a sense that it belongs to them, independent of any material or strategic value it may have over any other carrel or seat.
Thus, the concept of territoriality provides a useful complement to studies of power and politics in organizations; it can highlight and explain some forms of political behavior, while at the same time examining and explaining what is a distinct phenomenon.

**TERRITORIAL BEHAVIORS**

Territorial behaviors are used to construct, communicate, maintain, and restore territories. These behaviors fall in to two main categories: marking and defending. In this section, we clarify how psychological ownership is directly related to territorial behavior in general. We then introduce the specific territorial behaviors – marking and defending – and discuss potential moderators of the relationship between psychological ownership and these specific types of territorial behaviors. As we will explain, these specific types of territorial behaviors differ from one another in terms of their overt manifestations as well as the functions they serve.

**Psychological Ownership as an Antecedent of Territorial Behavior**

Prior research on territoriality regarding physical space reveals that the degree of proprietary attachment is directly related to the degree of territorial behavior (Altman, 1975; Barbey, 1982; Brown, 1987; Czikszentmihalyi & Rochberg Halton, 1981; Gifford, 1997; Knapp, 1978; Ley & Cybriwsky, 1974; Tuan, 1980). This relationship occurs for several reasons. The greater one’s psychological attachment, the more it fulfills the basic needs of efficacy, self-identity and having a place of one’s own. The fulfillment of those needs means that the territory in question has stronger psychological value to the individual, motivating him or her to communicate to others (through marking) and to protect it and keep it (through defending) as his or her own. Relatedly, potential invasions to that particular territory are perceived as more potentially harmful with infringement
potentially threatening one’s sense of self-efficacy, one’s ability to express their identity, and one’s sense of security. Consequently the more psychologically valued the territory, the more effort will be made to mark it, and the more energetically it will be defended (Taylor & Brooks, 1980). Thus we propose the following:

Proposition 1: The stronger an individual’s psychological ownership of an object, the greater the likelihood that he or she will engage in territorial behaviors toward that object.

The preceding discussion lays out the key antecedent of territorial behaviors. We now turn attention to specific types of territorial behavior - marking and defending - and we discuss several critical factors that moderate their occurrence in organizations.

Marking: Constructing and Communicating Territories

Marking refers to the territorial behaviors of organizational members that construct and communicate to others at work their proprietary attachment to particular organizational objects. Marking involves the social construction of objects as “territories”, as organizational members negotiate to whom the territories belong and the boundaries around them (Brown, 1987; Sommer & Becker, 1969). Marking requires the skilled use of locally meaningful gestures or symbols to signal one’s territory and the boundaries around it (Blumer, 1969; Goffman, 1967). Examples of markers include physical symbols, such as a nameplate on an individual’s door, pictures of one’s children on a computer screen, or a coat thrown onto a chair, as well as social markers, such as titles used by certain employees, social rituals that convey belonging and access, or public pronouncements of one’s idea to ensure everyone knows to whom it belongs.

Although there are numerous examples of territorial marking, we are not suggesting that
all of the ways in which and occasions on which individuals might alter an organizational object are territorial. For example, some organizational members will alter organizational objects such as posters or brochures to ridicule the boss or the company itself, and although this is important symbolic behavior, it does not express feelings of psychological ownership or mark an object as a personal territory.

Marking can be relatively permanent, establishing enduring boundaries and proprietary control of a territory for an indefinite period of time (Becker, 1991; Donald, 1994). Examples of this behavior might include hanging paintings in one’s office or filing for a patent for one’s invention. Marking is also done on a more *ad hoc* basis, when the need is temporary (Becker, 1991; Sundstrom, 1987). For example, one may claim a meeting room simply by leaving his or her file folders on the table or one may mark their informal role on a committee by giving the role a nickname, such as “the skeptic”. Ad hoc marking may also occur, such as when the boundaries or ongoing control of a territory are somewhat ambiguous (Brown, 1987): in an open plan office, for instance, employees might mark space around their cubicles by spreading out belongings, or by using audible markers, such as music or their voice on the telephone (Ruback, Pape, & Doriot, 1989).

Organizational members tend to use a form of marking that reflects the basis of psychological ownership. This can communicate territoriality that is either identity-oriented (e.g., indicating personal aspects of oneself by displaying family pictures or diplomas) or control-oriented (e.g., regulating access to oneself by a sign saying “do not disturb”) (Brown, 1987). Both control- and identity-oriented marking serve to socially construct an organizational object as a territory by clarifying to others what are its
boundaries and to whom it is attached. However, as we will explain below, each form of marking is distinct.

**Identity-oriented marking.** The first major form of territorial marking involves marking an organizational object with symbols that reflect one's identity (BOSTI, 1981; Sundstrom, 1987). Specifically, identity-oriented marking or personalization is the deliberate decoration or modification of an environment by its occupants to reflect their identities (Sommer, 1974; Sundstrom & Sundstrom, 1986).

Identity oriented marking serves the function of enabling individuals to both construct, and express, their identities to themselves and to others. With this form of marking, individuals can express a variety of facets of their identities, including their professions (e.g. degrees and diplomas on the wall), their status (e.g. long-service awards or titles after their names), or aspects of their personal lives (e.g. children’s art, travel photos adorning their desks) (Wells, 2000).

The relationship between identity-oriented marking and the social identities of individuals is not unidirectional, however. At the same time that identity-oriented marking expresses identity it also works to define and redefine the identities of the actors involved. Through the processes by which symbolic expressions of identity are produced, accepted or rejected by others, revised and refined, actors come to understand and make sense of their own identities (Gioia, Schultz & Corley, 2000; Pratt, 2000; Weick, 1995). Thus, through the symbolic interaction associated with identity-oriented marking, situational and self-definitions emerge and may change (Ashforth, 1985; Reichers, 1987). Moreover, the impression management literature (Asch, 1946; Schneider, Hastorf, & Ellsworth, 1979) would suggest that individuals are likely to engage in identity-oriented
marking in ways that are specific to particular situations and social contexts. One's personalizations of an object may or may not communicate the same aspects of identity that would be communicated in other settings. Thus, personalizations are an important type of marking that allow a person to express his or her identity and foster a sense of belonging to the organization.

As with all forms of territoriality, we argue that the likelihood of identity-oriented marking is directly influenced by the degree of psychological ownership one has to the territory one is marking. We further argue that this main effect relationship is moderated by at least one critical variable: the degree to which an individual relies on identity-oriented marking in order to be distinctive. Distinctiveness theory suggests that people define themselves in part by the features of the self that distinguish themselves from others (McGuire, 1984; McGuire & McGuire, 1981; McGuire & Padawer-Singer, 1976). This perspective suggests that, "[t]he need to see oneself as unique is a potent and continuous force in our society" (Synder & Fromkin, 1980: 3), and that being distinct is an essential "basis of a sense of I" (Erikson, 1959: 45). Successfully distinguishing oneself from others, therefore, maintains one's self esteem (c.f., Breakwell, 1993; Vignoles, Chryssochou, & Breakwell, 2000) whereas extreme similarity to others leads to the experience of negative affect (Fromkin, 1972).

For these reasons, people actively try to distinguish themselves from others. One of the important ways through which people at work can distinguish themselves from others is through the identity-oriented marking of their territories. We argue that those most motivated to express their distinctiveness through personalizations of their territories will be those who perceive they are otherwise less able, for a variety of
reasons, to be distinct from those with whom they work. A number of factors in the workplace may increase the perceived similarity among employees, and limit opportunities for self-expression, and thus lead individuals to personalize their territories to express that distinctiveness. In a general sense, employees with higher status positions tend to have fewer structural equivalents than those of lower status and so their position alone may help to create distinctiveness. Relatedly, job standardization may increase similarity among those in the same position and consequently limit the degree to which employees in those standardized roles can differentiate themselves from others in the same role. Other homogenizing factors, such as identical cubicle spaces and enforced dress codes, also provide potential methods of standardization that may limit the expression of self and have significant deindividuation effects on some employees (Rafaeli & Pratt, 1993). Employees in environments in which their similarity to others is enhanced and their opportunities to be distinctive are limited will be more likely to engage in identity-oriented marking with the objects over which they feel ownership. These arguments lead us to our next proposition.

Proposition 2: The relationship between psychological ownership and identity-oriented marking of a territory will be stronger to the extent that the individual believes they are otherwise unable to express their distinctiveness from others at work.

Control-oriented marking. This second form of marking involves marking an organizational object with symbols that are not personalized but that communicate the boundaries of a territory and who has psychological ownership over it (Altman, 1975; Becker & Mayo, 1971; Smith, 1983). The function of control oriented marking is to
communicate to others that a territory has been claimed by the marker so that it
discourages access, usage and infringement attempts by others. Whereas identity-oriented
marking involves marking an organizational object to express one’s identity or self,
control oriented marking is used to control access or usage of the object in question
(Brown & Altman, 1981, 1983). Examples of control-oriented marking might include the
manager who positions his desk in a shared office to differentiate between his proprietary
space and that of others and the nurse who sticks a post-it note with her name on it on a
shared terminal at the nurse’s station.

As already stated under our first proposition, control-oriented marking will be
influenced by the degree of psychological attachment. We believe, however, that this
relationship will be critically dependent upon the degree of ambiguity regarding the
ownership and boundaries of the object in question. Control-oriented marking organizes
and brings meaning to space, roles, and other objects that may be potential territories, and
so greater ambiguity will trigger higher levels of control-oriented marking.

Ambiguity will be greater when there is the absence of pre-existing territory
markers: when control-oriented markers do not already exist for objects to which
individuals feel psychological ownership then they will work to create them. For
example, in traditional office space, physical walls demarcate private work areas
whereas, in open-plan contexts, employees’ energy will be more focused on control-
oriented marking because the differences between private and public space are more
ambiguous. Ambiguity may also stem from organizational change. During an
organizational restructuring, for instance, organizational members may find themselves
working in new departments with new colleagues, and consequently traditionally
established territories will likely be upset, and even meaningless. At such times, organizational members are likely to engage in significant amounts of control-oriented marking, as they try to re-establish shared understandings of territories in connection with particular roles, spaces, relationships and objects. The impact of territorial ambiguity on control-oriented marking leads to our next proposition.

Proposition 3: The relationship between psychological ownership and control-oriented marking of a territory will be moderated by the ambiguity regarding the ownership of the object, such that the more ambiguity, the stronger the relationship.

Defenses: Maintaining and Restoring Territory

Although marking demarcates territorial boundaries and indicates the relationship between a territory and an individual, the socially defined nature of these boundaries and attachments means they will sometimes be under conflict or subject to differing interpretations (Brown & Altman, 1981, 1983; Lyman & Scott, 1967; Wollman et al., 1994). Organizational members may disagree about who has ownership over what objects. In some cases, organizational members may differ in their perceptions of the boundaries around territories: adjacent territories may have overlapping perceptual boundaries and thus create a zone of potential conflict. For example, some formal roles may be clearly delineated by organizational title but when it comes to extra-role behaviors, several members may repeatedly vie for ownership.

Lyman and Scott (1967) describe the act of encroaching on another person’s territory or property as an “infringement”. For our purposes, we define infringements based on the perception of the person who is experiencing the infringement; in other
words, if an organizational member feels that their territory has been infringed upon by another, then an infringement has occurred. Infringements have the potential to elicit territorial behaviors on the part of those experiencing the infringement, whereby they defend their territories in a variety of ways that serve to prevent or respond to infringements (Knapp, 1978). Fear of infringement and anger resulting from infringement lead to two basic types of territorial defenses: anticipatory, which occur before an infringement, and reactionary, which occur after an infringement. Although both are frequently used, and generally increase with increasing psychological ownership, other factors will influence the implementation of each defense.

**Anticipatory defenses.** Anticipatory defenses are actions by organizational members that are non-communicative in nature, which are taken prior to an infringement, for the purposes of thwarting infringement actions that are taken by others (Dyson-Hudson & Smith, 1978; Edney, 1975, 1976; Knapp, 1978). Examples of anticipatory defenses might include a lock on a door to prevent illegitimate entry or use of the office contents, or an attentive receptionist who prevents access to a particular senior executive.

Control-oriented marking and anticipatory defenses are different in their nature. Control-oriented marking is behavior that is a form of overt communication to others showing that the marker has claim to a territory. Anticipatory defenses are those actions that are not communicative in nature but that prevent infringement when it is attempted. These two types of territorial behaviors also vary in their function. Control-oriented marking functions through persuading others *not to attempt* to gain access to the marked territory; that is, it discourages others from making attempts to infringe by communicating the boundaries and ownership of a territory. A "private" sign, for
example, discourages others from attempting to enter that space; similarly, announcing one's ownership of an idea discourages others from trying to lay claim to that idea later on. In contrast, anticipatory defenses function to *thwart actual infringement*; that is, they stop someone from being successful at their infringement. Locking a door, for example, is a type of anticipatory defense because it prevents someone from opening it when they try.

Thus control-oriented marking depends on establishing visible, meaningful communication markers (e.g., a high-visibility sign or a large, conspicuous lock) that are overt and social in nature. Anticipatory defenses depend on establishing impermeable, resilient boundaries (e.g., a strong door or a large security guard with a gun) and thus are not communicated per se.

Given the distinctive nature of anticipatory defenses, one critical factor that will uniquely moderate its occurrence is the belief and fear that marking by itself will be ineffective and thus infringement attempts will be likely despite marking. This fear will be more likely in some social contexts than others. First, in some cases, the boundaries of territories may be difficult to define and relatively hard to mark. In such situations, organizational members may expect infringements to occur because others will not realize the boundaries or ownership of a territory. For example, a file on a shared computer network is hard to mark. However, it is relatively easy to stop others from accessing the file through the use of passwords. Second, some social contexts make marking difficult because the people in that context lack a shared set of symbols to meaningfully establish territorial boundaries. This might be the case when organizational members are new to one another, such as during a merger, or when organizational
members are from highly diverse backgrounds. Finally, high levels of attempted infringement might be anticipated when the potential costs of infringement are relatively low. Such a situation might occur when territories are exposed to transient populations (such as customers and temporary workers) over whom social or cultural sanctions may be relatively ineffective. Low costs of infringement might also occur when surveillance is difficult – many organizational objects cannot always be monitored, and so covert infringement may occur despite clear marking. The effect of these conditions leads to our next proposition.

Proposition 4: The relationship between psychological ownership and anticipatory defenses will be stronger to the extent that the individual perceives a greater likelihood of infringement despite marking.

Reactionary defenses. Despite organizational members attempts to mark their territories and establish anticipatory defenses infringements still occur. Reactionary defenses are actions by organizational members that are taken after and in reaction to an infringement attempt (Brown, 1987; Wollman et al., 1994). They function to provide an emotional expression of one’s feelings toward the infringement, undermine the infringement, and restore the territory to the actor.

Reactionary defenses were first observed in animal territoriality, where “fight or flight” responses to territorial infringement were noted (Edney, 1974). Although organizational members are unlikely to respond to infringement with physical violence, there is a range of reactionary defenses that are commonplace in organizations: informal reactions, such as glaring, expressing irritation, yelling and slamming doors, firing off
protective emails, seeking the support of coworkers, as well as more formal responses, such as lodging a complaint with superiors or writing a letter of protest.

Reactionary defenses may serve multiple purposes. First, they may provide an outlet for frustration or outrage. Indeed, individuals often experience significant negative emotions when their possessions are threatened or their space violated (Pierce et al., 2001). For example, feelings of anger from infringements may lead the territory holder to act irrationally and make poorer decisions (Pillutla & Murnighan, 1996; Richards & Gross, 1999; Mikulincer, 1996). Aside from initial feelings of anger or fear, the grief over the loss of a territory can also be significant and can be exacerbated if people do not react (c.f., Brown & Perkins, 1992 for a review). Suppressing these emotions (emotional regulation) may impair organizational performance (Brief & Weiss, 2002). Second, reactionary defenses may be intended to reclaim the infringed upon territory: glaring, yelling, and complaining to a superior may re-establish territorial control. Finally, reactionary defenses may deter future infringements: organizations might encourage the lodging of formal complaints, for instance, in order to establish a new norm of respect for organizational members’ privacy or space.

As noted, psychological ownership will positively influence reactionary defenses when they perceive an infringement has occurred. Infringements most likely evoke an immediate emotional response (Zajonc, 1984) followed by cognitive rationalizing. Given the nature and purpose of reactionary defenses, we posit that a critical moderator of this relationship will be the attributions one makes regarding the infringement. When faced with undesirable outcomes, such as infringed upon territory, individuals will search for explanations to enable them to assign responsibility and blame (Wong & Weiner, 1981).
That assignment of responsibility will affect the emotional intensity of their reaction (Frijda, 1988; Ortony, Clore, & Collins, 1988) and their subsequent reactionary defense. According to attribution theory, the assignment of responsibility is based on an analysis of the following factors: causality, control, foreseeability, and intentionality (Bell & Tetlock, 1989; Heider, 1958). At a minimum, an organizational member must believe that an infringement was caused by the other party (Heider, 1958). If she perceives that it is due to a misunderstanding over proprietary ownership or her own misperception of boundaries, she is less likely to blame the infringer.

Moreover, reactionary defenses will be more likely to the extent that the individual feels that the infringer could have controlled or foreseen the infringement. Thus, when infringement involves territory that is poorly marked or the infringer was unable to interpret the symbols of territoriality, one might assume the infringer had no control or foreseeability regarding the infringement and thus the reaction is less strong. Thus an organizational newcomer is less likely to be blamed for taking over a role that belongs to someone else than an established employee who obviously knows better. Similarly, an apparently unused meeting room that is taken over by an infringer is less likely to lead to a reactionary defense by its rightful owner than when the room was clearly occupied with one’s belongings.

Finally, one of the most important factors affecting this attribution process is perceived intentionality (Bell & Tetlock, 1989; Heider, 1958); in this case, the degree to which it is perceived as intentionally harmful. Even if an infringement is perceived as purposeful and under the control of the infringer, a reactionary defense will only be likely when the organizational member perceives it as intendedly malicious, rather than helpful.
Such attributions are often dependent on the outcome—individuals are more likely to attribute malice to the extent that the outcome is negative (Harvey, Ickes & Kidd, 1981; Heider, 1958). An extreme case of a purposeful, helpful infringement would be the breaking down of a door in a fire or medical emergency. Organizational life, however, is full of more mundane helpful infringements, as when organizational members barge into colleagues’ offices to notify them of some development or the arrival of a client, or when a well-meaning coworker interjects into a private conversation

*Proposition 5: The relationship between psychological ownership and reactionary defenses will be moderated by an individual's attributions about the infringement such that the relationship will be stronger to the degree that the organizational member holds the infringer responsible for the infringement.*

**ORGANIZATIONAL CONSEQUENCES OF TERRITORIALITY**

We now turn our attention to an examination of the consequences of territorial behaviors for organizations. In studies of human territoriality outside of organizations, it has been found to have a variety of important individual and collective effects (Brown, 1987; Malmberg, 1980). Since a thorough exploration of all of the consequences of territoriality for organizations is beyond the scope of this paper, we follow traditional research on territoriality in highlighting two areas in which territoriality has important impacts: the relationship between an individual and the social unit (the organization in our case); and the relationship among members of a social unit. Drawing on traditional research, as well as contemporary organizational behavior scholarship, we argue that territoriality can have significant positive consequences for organizations by increasing the commitment of members to the organization and by reducing conflict among
organizational members. Although traditional human territoriality research has tended to emphasize only its positive consequences, we believe that it can also have negative consequences for organizations. Thus, we also discuss the potential for territorial behaviors, particularly when engaged in excessively, to lead to ego-centered preoccupation, such that individuals neglect their relationship to the organization, and to social fragmentation, where organizational members isolate themselves from one another.

**Organizational Commitment**

We argue that an important positive consequence of territorial behavior on organizations is its influence on the organizational commitment of individual members who engage in such behaviors. For the organization, individual members who are more committed, produce higher levels of job performance (Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin & Jackson, 1989; Steers, 1977), are more likely to engage in organizational citizenship behavior (Organ, 1988), and have lower rates of absenteeism (Mathieu & Kohler, 1990) and turnover (Williams & Hazer, 1986). We argue that territorial behaviors can have both immediate and also lasting effects on the organizational commitment of members who engage in such behaviors.

First, both marking and defending territories often require significant personal investments of time and energy, which research has shown to increase the organizational commitment of individuals making such investments (Becker, 1960; Meyer & Allan, 1984; Wallace, 1997). Moreover, marking and defending often involve investments which are made publicly and voluntarily – factors which have long been understood as increasing commitment levels (Salancik, 1977). Thus, the investments of time and energy
associated with territorial behavior will have immediate positive effects on actors' organizational commitment.

In addition, we argue that to the degree that territorial behaviors are effective in establishing territories, we can expect these behaviors to have lasting effects on organizational commitment. Identity-oriented marking, or personalization, when effective, increases the degree to which members identify and attach to those organizational objects they mark (Brown, 1987). To the extent that they perceive those objects as organizational, this attachment is also likely to extend beyond the immediate territory to the organization as a whole (Brown et al., 2003; Wells, 2000). Relatedly, social identity research suggests that people seek to accentuate their own distinctiveness in interpersonal contexts (Tajfel & Turner, 1985), and thus, individuals are drawn to organizations in which they can express themselves, rather than those in which they need to suppress or hide their self-concepts (Dutton, Dukerich & Harquail, 1994). Thus, individuals are more likely to identify with their organization if they believe they can effectively express characteristics they value about themselves through identity-oriented marking (Kunda, 1992).

Relatedly, territorial behaviors that are able to create and maintain socially agreed upon territories will root individuals more firmly in the organization. The development of such territories not only defines the boundaries around organizational objects but establishes their meaning as well – their value and their ownership. These territories root the person in the organization more than if they did not have these objects of belonging (Vinsel, Brown, Altman, & Foss, 1980). Research in psychological ownership suggests that one critical need satisfied by ownership is the need to have a place of one’s own.
Behaviors, such as effective marking and defending, that increase the sense that one has a place of one’s own will increase the rootedness and sense of belonging that an individual member will have with the organization. The increasing strength of the defenses and markings deepen this embeddedness. These dynamics lead to our next proposition.

*Proposition 6: To the degree that territorial behavior involves or creates socially agreed upon territories, it will increase the commitment of actors engaged in those behaviors.*

**Conflict**

The second positive organizational consequence of territoriality is its potential effect on conflict. Beginning with studies of animal populations, research has indicated the functional potential for territoriality to reduce conflict (Edney, 1974; Freedman, 1979). We argue, that to the degree that territorial marking behavior involves, or creates, a socially agreed upon territory, it is likely to reduce "process conflict" (Jehn, 1997; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999) among organizational members. Process conflict involves organizational members clashing over the allocation of responsibilities, relationships and resources. Eliminating such process conflict has been shown to increase morale (Jehn, 1992), increase organizational effectiveness (Jehn et al., 1999) and increase productivity (Jehn, 1997). The relationship between territorial behaviors and conflict may appear somewhat paradoxical: territorial behaviors may emerge in response to conflict over organizational objects, and may even increase that conflict in the short run (and thus may be positively associated with conflict at a point in time), but we argue that over time, territorial behaviors will reduce process conflict as organizational members establish and maintain their own territories.
Territorial marking, for instance, allows individuals to avoid conflict because they are able to make the boundaries and proprietary nature of territories clear to others (Becker & Mayo, 1971; Brown, 1987). Although territorial marking may be likely to occur under conditions that promote conflict (where there are limited valuable resources available to organizational members), the marking itself will, we argue, lessen the likelihood of conflict. As in the animal kingdom, organizational members who clearly perceive a territory as belonging to someone else will often respect those boundaries and search for resources or space elsewhere, in order to avoid the practical and emotional costs of conflict. Thus, territorial behaviors can create a shared social map that will subsequently lessen the degree of process conflict.

Similarly, the construction of anticipatory defenses may reduce the level of conflict in organizations through their ability to prevent organizational members from infringing (accidentally or intentionally) on others’ territories. We argue that anticipatory defenses may reduce levels of conflict because they enhance the ability of organizational members to control access to themselves and their belongings without engaging in direct confrontation with others. Locks on doors, policies restricting access to certain areas, and secretaries outside offices all work to minimize the degree to which territory holders need to deal directly with those who might want to enter (Knapp, 1978; Sundstrom & Sundstrom, 1986). In contrast, people who share offices are less able to regulate access to themselves and their space, and more likely to perceive territorial invasions which, in turn, creates conflict (Wollman et al., 1994). Even reactionary defenses, which often involve a certain amount of direct conflict, are likely to reduce conflict over the long term if they clarify territorial boundaries and the costs of infringement, so that organizational
members will respect those boundaries in the future. The key to understanding the relationship between conflict and territorial behaviors is to consider the dynamics of the relationship over time: without clearly marked and actively defended territories, the legitimate access to and control of those organizational objects would remain a contested issue; territorial behaviors establish, communicate and maintain territories and consequently reduce this conflict.

*Proposition 7: To the degree that territorial behavior involves or creates socially agreed upon territories it will decrease the level of process conflict among organizational members.*

**Pre-occupation**

Along with its positive impacts, we argue that territoriality can also have important negative consequences for organizations. First, it can lead employees to become self-focused, taking away from their ability to connect with, and focus on the goals of the organization. This self-focus emanates from worrying about, and being preoccupied with, marking and defending territories. To the extent that one is engaging in behaviors aimed at constructing, communicating, maintaining, and restoring his organizational territories, one has less time, energy, and capacity to focus on higher priority issues regarding the job and organizational goals. When individual's resources, be they physical, intellectual, or emotional, are depleted, individuals are less able to be psychological present in specific work situations (Hall & Richter, 1989; Kahn, 1992). Just as other discretionary organizational behaviors, such as organizational citizenship behaviors, may deplete one's ability to fully engage in in-role performance (Smith, Organ & Near, 1983), so too may territorial behaviors.
Proposition 8: Territorial behavior will distract organizational members from in-role performance.

Isolation

Territoriality can also create isolation among organizational members, undermining the necessary connectedness among them for optimal organizational functioning. We believe that territoriality can lead to isolation among organizational members by affecting the territorial individual and by affecting how others perceive the territorial individual. First, territoriality may lead organizational members to seek out less interaction from others and behave in ways that work against the knowledge sharing, cooperation, and flexible movement of resources that facilitate organizational productivity and innovation. Territoriality may push organizational members to become preoccupied with protecting their own 'turf' or focusing their attention within their narrow 'silos'. This may lead them to be less cooperative with others who request help from them. On the other hand, territoriality may also affect others perceptions of the individual. Highly territorial individuals may be seen as less cooperative or approachable. Prior experience with an individual may lead others to believe that they are less willing to cooperate. Likewise, organizational members may become too concerned with maintaining territorial boundaries and respecting others' territories that they do so at the expense of organizational goals. Because of shared norms governing territories, boundaries, and the costs of infringement, organizational members may be reluctant to venture into certain areas, take on certain roles, or engage with particular colleagues out of respect for another's ownership of those territories (even though to do so would be in the interest of the organization). For example, graduate students may be reluctant to work
with faculty members who other students have already claimed as 'their own' even though that behavior is counterproductive to both the student's development and the goals of the faculty.

*Proposition 9: Territorial behavior will increase the degree to which organizational members are isolated from one another.*

**CONCLUSION**

In this paper, we have introduced and examined territoriality in organizations. We began by establishing psychological ownership as leading to a series of territorial behaviors, including control-oriented and identity-oriented marking, and anticipatory and reactionary defending. Together, these behaviors socially construct and maintain organizational objects as territories. We have also explored some of the potential organizational consequences of territorial behavior. We have argued that territoriality has important positive consequences for organizational commitment and the reduction of process conflict. We also noted the potential for territoriality to negatively affect organizations by deterring from in-role performance and increasing the isolation among individual members. To conclude, we will discuss future directions for territoriality research, methodological issues in studying territoriality, and its managerial implications.

**Future Research Directions**

The first issue to confront in territoriality research stems from the infancy of this research domain in organizational behavior. In order to progress, basic questions about the nature, causes and consequences of territoriality need to be empirically explored. We believe that this paper provides a theoretical foundation for such studies. Some basic descriptive studies might address the range of tactics that employees use to mark and
defend their ownership over space, possessions, ideas, roles and relationships. Additionally, research is needed to study individual differences in how, and how much, employees engage in these territorial behaviors. Although it is beyond the scope of this paper, interesting differences in territorial behaviors have been found in gender (Smith, 1981; Wells, 2000), status and power (Esser, 1968; Esser, Chamberlain, Chapple & Kline, 1965), different ethnicities (Smith, 1981; 1983; Worchel & Lollis, 1982), and personality traits such as dominance (Sundstrom & Altman, 1974; Taylor & Lanni, 1981), to name just a few examples. Other basic issues for empirical research that are suggested by our paper include the effectiveness of different marking and defense strategies, the dynamics of infringement, including its emotional and psychological impacts on employees.

A second research direction concerns territoriality at different levels of analysis. Although we believe addressing territoriality from an individual level provides a good foundation for understanding this phenomenon, we also see value in extending our analysis to include groups and organizations, both of which also exhibit territoriality. Groups mark territories in similar ways to individuals, such as claiming group membership through nicknames, passwords, special gatherings and pre-determined membership lists. Groups also defend territories, such as valued projects, by blocking other groups access to their resources and ideas. Similarly, organizations mark their territories to express identity through company logos and architecture, or through norms regarding organizational dress (Pratt & Rafaeli, 1997). Organizations may exhibit control oriented marking by placing security at the front of a building, or with the use of corporate policies, departmental rules and even contracts regarding proprietary
information. Examining territoriality at the organization level may facilitate our understanding of such issues as the dynamics of knowledge transfer in organizations (Szulanski, 2003) and how mergers, takeovers and other significant organizational changes affect organizations and its members.

A third important research direction involves the relationship between territoriality and emotion. Many of the experiences we have associated with territoriality involve discrete emotions of fear, anger and jealousy, as well as a wider range of emotions related to marking, defending, creating, holding, and losing territories. Affective Events Theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) may provide a useful framework to explore many of these connections and understand the role of territoriality in emotions and vice versa. For example, infringements may lead to feelings of victimization or emotional losses that transcend the material loss (Gifford, 1997). Understanding the emotions surrounding territories will help us understand why people defend territories that seem, to observers, relatively unimportant and replaceable. Similarly, feelings of loss, fear of infringements, and threats to identity that lead to additional fears, are all directly and indirectly related to territoriality. CEOs, company founders, and retirees from companies often suffer grief when they leave a company. We argue that territoriality offers insight in this area because it considers the emotional loss that is accompanied with losing a territory (a mechanism by which to express identity, be efficacious, and feel connected).

A fourth important research direction involves the interaction between organizational change and territoriality. Today's corporate environment is filled with events that fundamentally disrupt organizational territories: mergers, acquisitions, plant
and office relocations, reengineering of work flow layoffs, and temporary projects all force organizational members to redraw territorial boundaries and reinterpret the meanings attached to a variety of organizational spaces, relationships, roles and possessions. Organizational change threatens to disrupt existing territories and individuals' identities. These conditions provide excellent opportunities for examining territoriality in action: it may be much easier to observe the social construction and defense of territories in unstable, conflicted spaces than when most territories are well established and taken-for-granted. Moreover, the study of territoriality in conditions of organizational change may provide useful insights into the change processes themselves. Territories and territorial behavior help organizational members define their identities, which are often at risk in times of significant organizational change. Thus, the processes through which territories in organizations change and the consequences of those changes are important areas for future research (Donald, 1994).

A final research direction is the exploration of what we refer to as “negative territoriality.” Individual's identity and self-esteem are affected by what individuals see themselves as attached to (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991). Because spoiled organizational images may transfer to organizational members (Sutton & Callahan, 1987), it is important for organizational members to control what is and is not associated with them as individuals. For these reasons, individuals may develop psychological ‘disownership’ and actively try to communicate to others that they have no relationship with those objects or entities in order to protect their self-image. In a sense, these avoided objects may be viewed as “hot potatoes” in that they are not only undervalued but that one may experience a loss or detrimental effects from having a relationship with them. Examples
of such hot potatoes might involve involvement on committees that are onerous and
association with individuals who have bad reputations. As with psychological ownership,
there are likely territorial behaviors that people use to communicate to others what does
not belong to them. Examples of “negative” territoriality might include public
announcements that one is not involved with a particular issue or strong reactions to
suggestions that one may be involved with a particular colleague or issue.

Methodological Issues

A critical first step to empirically studying territoriality in organizations is to
develop sound methods for doing so. We believe that the study of territoriality is
amenable to a variety of methodological approaches. To assess the psychological
concepts in territoriality, such as psychological ownership and perceived infringement,
some form of self-report instruments would be appropriate. Similarly, the study of many
of the social variables of territoriality, such as territory itself, and agreements and
disagreements over territory, could involve the comparison of self-reports across
organizational members.

These self-report instruments could take the form of a validated survey instrument
using a list of behaviors and Likert-type scales that ask organizational members to report
the extent to which they (or specific others) have engaged in each behavior in a specified
time frame. Several considerations are required in the development of these scales of
territoriality. First, in the item development phase it will be critical to capture behaviors
that are closely aligned with each definition of the four types of territoriality, both in
terms of the nature of the behavior, as well as the function that it serves. Second, it is
critical to capture a wide range of behavior for each type of territoriality so as to ensure
content validity. Third, the behaviors must be specific enough so that actors can remember and report on engaging in them; yet they must be general enough so that the scales can be applied to a wide range of employees and contexts. Although the development of such instruments is not a simple task, it will likewise not be particularly onerous if one follows the direction of the many published scale development studies on behaviors in organizations, such as those measuring OCB, workplace deviance, influence tactics, and whistleblowing.

These self-report instruments, for at least some types of territories, could also take the form of a graphical or map-oriented instruments similar to those used in environmental psychology (c.f., Sebba & Churchman, 1983). Thus, for example, organizational members could mark on a map those territories they perceive to belong to themselves or others, those territories that they perceive to be shared, and those that are public. Comparisons across organizational members in terms of their perceptions of the nature and size of territories could be readily examined with this method.

There are also a variety of methods that could be used to study territorial behavior, such as how organizational members mark their territory and how often they engage in defensive territorial behavior. Again, traditional survey instruments could be used to assess the frequency of specific territorial behaviors, using both self reports as well as reports from other organizational members. Additionally, the use of event sampling methods (see, for example Diener, Smith, & Fujita, 1995) might be particularly helpful for capturing frequent but otherwise unmemorable territorial behaviors in real time: for example, at set intervals, study participants would be primed on their hand-held computers to provide a brief report about specific territorial behaviors they or others have
engaged in during the last time period. Observations and interviews of organizational members could provide rich behavioral data. These qualitative methods could be used, for instance, to study a move from traditional offices to open-floor plan cubicles, and provide rich theoretical insights into the creation and conflict over territory in organizations. At the other end of the methodological spectrum, some research questions may be more amenable to experimental designs involving either the observation or manipulation of marking, invasion and defense of territories; environmental psychology provides strong examples of how experimental methods can profitably be used in the study of territoriality (e.g., Taylor & Lanni, 1981).

Managerial Implications

We believe that territoriality has significant implications for managers and organizations. First, it is imperative that managers understand that territoriality is an inherent, inevitable and prevalent element of organizational life, and consequently an important part of their day-to-day jobs. As we have attempted to clarify above, territorial behaviors potentially have both positive and negative implications for organizations. Thus, managers should embrace and even encourage territorial behavior such as marking and personalization that can increase commitment to and identification with the organization. Moreover, managers should find ways to foster effective territorial behavior, so that identity and control oriented marking quickly resolve territory, making the boundaries of ownership explicit and clear. This can reduce conflict and make the sharing of resources more efficient so that employees can remain task-focused.

A second implication for managers concerns the design and arrangement of physical space in organizations. In the last few decades, many organizations have gone
from private offices to primarily open plan offices with few partitions. ‘Hotelling’ has also become more popular, an arrangement whereby individuals who are working away from their primary office space borrow whatever office space is available. One of the explanations for these changes in the arrangement of working space has been cost reduction. Our discussion of territoriality suggests, however, that some costs have not been entered into the equation, such as a loss of employee commitment, or the potential increase in conflict when employees’ territories are threatened, lost, or non-existent.

Finally, organizations need to carefully consider their policies on workspace personalizations. Some organizations do not allow personal displays because of a fear they will compete with organizational identity. Organizations must recognize, however, that people strive for balance between inclusion in the group and individuality (Hogg & Terry, 2000). Expression of oneself in territories through marking enables organizational members to participate and belong to the organization while maintaining their individuality. Additionally, employees are generally happier if they are allowed to personalize (Wells, 2000). Thus, norms and policies that suppress identity-oriented marking may lead to frustration and dissatisfaction by some members.

In conclusion, the study of territoriality in organizations offers a practically important and theoretically exciting area for organizational research. It complements the growing interest in psychological ownership by providing a foundation for examining its behavioral manifestations. In this paper, we have introduced a set of concepts that can provide the foundation for work in this area, and we have articulated a set of relationships among those concepts that can anchor empirical research. The relationships between individuals and objects in organizations have a clear and significant impact on the
relationships among individuals, and the relationships between individuals and organizations. Thus, we feel that research on territoriality is important and offers a promising area of enquiry for organizational scholars.
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75 per cent of office workers admitted to marking company stationery and other items with their own names. 49 per cent always used the same mug. Some had even personalised the bathroom – around 49 per cent had a favourite cubicle, which they’d wait to use if necessary. It all helps people stay in control of working life: over 50 per cent thought that dropping their habits would cause ‘depression’ and ‘make their productivity suffer’.

(Nathan, 2002)

We make ownership claims on a wide variety of physical and non-physical objects at work including spaces, roles, and ideas. Once we claim an object as our own, we engage in a variety of territorial behaviors that serve to communicate that ownership to others and, if necessary, defend our claim over the object.

Everyday life is filled with examples of territorial behavior. A jacket on a chair signals that someone has claimed the seat. A patent serves to protect intellectual property. A lock on a door prevents others from easily entering private spaces. Requiring memberships to clubs similarly prevents the unauthorized access and use of the facility. Decorating one’s home can function as mechanism by which to express aspects of the owner’s identity (Brown & Werner, 1985). Gangs use graffiti as a symbol that is both expressive of the group’s identity and which serves to mark the boundaries of the group’s claim (Ley & Cybriwsky, 1974). All of these mechanisms are territorial behaviors that “owners” use to signal to other the boundaries of a territory and, if necessary, prevent others from accessing the territory.
Within organizations, however, we have failed to recognize and address territorial behavior. This does not mean that these behaviors do not exist in organizations but rather they have been either ignored or miscategorized. In fact, territoriality in organizations is likely very prevalent. As Pierce, Kostova, and Dirks (2001) discuss, research shows that individuals can feel ownership toward their work (Beaglehole, 1932), their organization (Dirks, Cummings & Pierce, 1996), the products they create (Das, 1993), their jobs (Peters & Austin, 1985), and even specific issues within their organization (Pratt & Dutton, 2000). Because most work environments are inherently social environments, employees need to establish the boundaries of ownership and come to some common agreement on the arrangement of space and distribution of resources. We accomplish this through territorial behavior.

The importance of understanding territoriality is born out by research in fields outside of organizational behavior. Territoriality has a variety of potential significant effects on the behavior and well being of individuals. Territoriality has also been established as an important variable in understanding relationships between people. For example, research on the territoriality of physical space has shown that territoriality may engender a sense of belonging to social groups (Altman, 1975), and may clarify and simplify social interactions (Altman & Haythorn, 1967; Rosenblatt & Budd, 1975). Anthropologists have similarly noted the importance of territoriality to efficiently distribute resources and reduce conflict (Cashdan, 1983).

Within organizations, territoriality may be equally important. Territoriality may explain a wide range of emotions, behaviors and problems in organizations ranging from conflict among individuals and groups, to resistance to knowledge sharing, to the hidden
impact of employees working in cubicles or shared office space. Moreover, territoriality may help us better understand what is often times thought of as irrational behavior that runs counter to organizational goals.

Despite its prevalence and potential influence, however, there has been virtually no empirical research to date on territoriality in work organizations. Although recent theoretical work has looked at the nature and antecedents of psychological ownership in organizations (e.g. Pierce, et al., 2001), I believe that researchers need to further consider how organizational members express psychological ownership: that is, how they communicate, maintain, and defend the territories to which they feel ownership. Although Brown and colleagues (2005) recently developed a theory of territoriality, empirical research in this area is limited to the extent that validated measures of territoriality do not yet exist. An instrument measuring territoriality in organizations is necessary to help bring the topic of territoriality in organizational settings within the realm of empirical research and create interest in an important topic that remains under researched.

One of the first steps in studying territoriality in the workplace is to identify and understand the different ways that organizational members are territorial. Thus, in the current study, I seek to identify commonly used territorial behaviors that employees engage in while at work. Moreover, I seek to provide a theoretical framework that integrates these various behaviors into a meaningful whole. This study, which will clarify the meaning and nature of territorial behavior in organizations, is a critical first step to a systematic examination of this important and prevalent phenomenon in organizations.
TERRITORIALITY DEFINED

Territoriality has been defined as an individual's behavioral expression of his or her feelings of ownership toward a physical or social object (Brown et al., 2005). Territoriality is a social-behavioral construct that includes behaviors whose purpose is to construct, communicate, maintain, and restore one's ownership over organizational objects to which one feels a proprietary attachment. The social interdependence inherent in territoriality cannot be underscored enough. For territoriality to exist, the relationship between the individual and an object must occur in a social context. Indeed, territories would not need to be defended or marked as one's own if others did not exist in that environment. Although one may have feelings of ownership to an object, it is the manifestation of claiming in the form of territorial behavior that brings it from the individual to the social realm.

Although the range of possible specific territorial behaviors at work is potentially large, in the current study, I focused on four primary types of territorial behavior that I believe capture the spectrum of these specific behaviors: identity-oriented marking, control-oriented marking, anticipatory defending, and reactionary defending. Thus the purpose of this study is to generate behavioral exemplars that typify and can be used to measure each of these four primary types of territorial behavior. Each of these forms is discussed below.

Control and identity oriented marking refer generally to the territorial behaviors of organizational members that construct and communicate to others their proprietary attachment to particular organizational objects. Control-oriented marking involves marking an organizational object with symbols that communicate the boundaries of a
territory and who has psychological ownership over it (Altman, 1975; Becker & Mayo, 1971; Smith, 1983). It serves to communicate to others that someone has claimed a territory so that other people are discouraged from accessing or using the territory. An example of a control-oriented marker might include creating a physical border to demarcate the boundaries of the territory.

Identity-oriented marking, or personalization, is the deliberate decoration or modification of an object by its owners to reflect the owner’s identity (Sommer, 1974; Sundstrom & Sundstrom, 1986). Identity oriented marking serves the function of enabling individuals to both construct, and express, their identities to themselves and to others through the ownership of objects at work. An example of an identity-oriented marker might include a photo of a family member or favourite hobby on a desk.

Although marking demarcates territorial boundaries and indicates the relationship between a territory and an individual, the socially defined nature of these boundaries and attachments means they will sometimes be under conflict or subject to differing interpretations (Brown & Altman, 1981, 1983; Lyman & Scott, 1967; Wollman, Kelley, & Bordens, 1994). As a result, individuals may take actions to prevent others from successfully taking over their territory. Anticipatory defenses are actions by organizational members that are taken prior to an infringement, for the purposes of thwarting infringement actions that are taken by others (Dyson-Hudson & Smith, 1978; Edney, 1975, 1976; Knapp, 1978). An example of an anticipatory defense might include a lock on a door or a password preventing access to computer files.

Finally, despite individuals’ markings and attempts to thwart infringement through the use of anticipatory defenses, infringements still occur. Reactionary defenses
are actions by organizational members that are taken after, and in reaction to, an infringement (Brown, 1987; Wollman et al., 1994). They function to provide an emotional expression of one’s feelings toward the infringement, undermine the infringement, and restore the territory to the actor.

The purpose of this study is to identify ways that people mark and defend their territories. I believe that the range of behaviors will be captured by the four types of territorial behavior, outlined above, and that these factors represent separate (albeit related) constructs. The goal is to develop measures of these constructs that are reliable and valid and which will be useful for studying territoriality in organizations.

**PRESENT STUDY**

To develop a measure of territoriality, I conducted several studies and followed the guidelines set forth by Schwab (1980) and used in the development and validation of other organizational behavior measures such as deviant behavior (Robinson & Bennett, 2001), organizational commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990), and political behavior (Kumar & Beyerlein, 1991; Schriesheim & Hinkin, 1990). In the first study a pool of territorial behaviors was generated. In a separate procedure, these behaviors were reviewed and assessed by an independent panel of judges. A subset of territorial behaviors was further refined by analyzing the variances and inter-item correlations between the territorial behaviors. The remaining items were then analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to verify the four hypothesized types of territoriality. Finally, following Schwab’s (1980) recommendation for construct validity, I tested the internal reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the scales.
Although the range of objects at work to which people can feel ownership towards and thus express territoriality is large, I limited the focus of this study to physical workspaces. Thus, in generating the items and for the purposes of establishing the dimensionality of the territoriality construct, I specifically focused on the marking and defending of one's workspace. I chose workspaces primarily because most employees have workspaces. These can be shared or private but most employees still have a space that they can potentially feel is theirs. Thus, although limited to physical space, most people should be able to respond to questions about workspaces. Moreover, as scholars have noted, workspaces are a dominating feature of one's work experience and represent an important object to study (BOSTI, 1981; Sundstrom & Sundstrom, 1987). For the purposes of this study, whenever I asked people to report on their territorial behaviors to the workspace I provided them with the following definition:

"the physical area where you spend most of your time doing your job. This may include but is not limited to, a computer, a physical office, or a place on the assembly line."

STUDY 1: INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT

Generation of Behavioral Exemplars

Sample. I recruited 106 respondents, 54 men and 52 women, from several sources. First, data were gathered from respondents in two MBA classes (n=24) and three undergraduate classes (n=65) at a large public Canadian university. Second, data was gathered from 17 full-time employees working for a government agency. Collectively, the average age of the sample was 29 (s.d. = 9.60) and the mean years of work experience was 6.7 (s.d. = 5.82) years.
Procedure. Respondents were provided with definitions of each of the four primary types of territorial behaviors (see Appendix for the definitions used). For each type of territorial behavior, they were asked to provide examples of ways in which they had engaged in such a behavior or witnessed another person at work engaging in the behavior. From this procedure, an initial pool of 57 separate territorial behaviors was generated. I then reviewed the behavioral items. For those behaviors that were very detailed and yet very similar to other detailed items, I translated the behaviors into more broadly described behavioral exemplars (ones that would capture a set of more detailed ones). For example, detailed behavioral items such as “display a photo of a friend”, “display a photo of a family member,” and “display a photo of sailing”, were grouped into a single exemplar that read “display personally meaningful photographs (i.e., friends, family, pets, activities).” A research assistant checked each item to confirm that the exemplar covered the pool of items from which it was generated. When there was disagreement, I either created an additional exemplar or rewrote the item until the research assistant agreed that the behavioral exemplar adequately covered the items from which it was generated. Following this procedure, 38 distinct behavioral exemplars of territorial workplace behavior were identified.

Item Review

The 38 items were then compared to the four definitions used in phase 1 (the item generation phase). Nine undergraduate students were asked to match each item with only one of the four definitions. Items that did not match the intended definition at least 66% of the time were excluded. From this procedure, I identified 4 problematic items. I reworded 2 of these and dropped 2 others, leaving 36 items.
Seven independent judges then reviewed the remaining 36 items. Of the seven judges, two were PhD students, two were university professors, and the remaining three were employees from three different organizations. Using a 7-point Likert scale, judges reviewed the items on two criteria: the extent to which each item was a behavior as opposed to an attitude, an idea, etc.; and the extent to which the item wording was clear. Behaviors that did not average at least 4.0 on either criteria were dropped. Using these criteria, no items were dropped.

STUDY 2: INSTRUMENT VALIDATION

The construct-validation approach consists of several stages: (a) demonstrating dimensionality and internal consistency of the instrument, (b) demonstrating convergent validity of the instrument by showing high correlations with alternative measures of similar constructs, and (c) demonstrating discriminant validity of the instrument by showing not-too-high correlations with unrelated constructs (Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Schwab, 1980). Each of these stages is discussed below.

Procedure and Sample Information

Through an online survey company, 5000 employed people were sent an invitation by email to participate in the study. Respondents completed the survey online and the results were collected in a database downloadable from the survey company. Of the 5000 people contacted, 1126 viewed the invitation\(^2\) and a smaller subset actually

\(^2\) Individuals were sent an email inviting them to visit the website where a survey on attitudes and behaviors in organizations was being conducted. No other information about the purpose of the survey was included. Of the 5000 people who were sent an invitation email, our server statistics, indicate that 1126 actually visited the survey site.
completed the survey. In total, 806 people who opened the invitation completed the survey for a response rate of 80% (16% of the original 5000).

As previously outlined, territoriality is a social-behavioral construct. Organizational members engage in territorial in a social context. Therefore, one of the criteria for a subject’s inclusion in this study was that they worked in an office setting with at least three people. Following this guide, I excluded 143 respondents. Thus, my final sample was 663.

Of the remaining 663 participants, 55% were female. The average age was 46 years old (s.d. = 8). Participants worked in a variety of occupations with the largest single categories being “managers/ supervisors” (27%), “office/ clerical” (15%), and engineers (14%). Not surprisingly, given the range of occupations, this sample was well educated with 55% completing at least a bachelor degree. The average length of employment with their current company was 9.41 years (s.d. = 8.08).

Respondents filled out the territoriality questionnaire online and were asked to indicate on a 7-point scale to what extent they had engaged in each behavior in the past year. The response choices ranged from 1 = not at all to 7 = all the time. Respondents also completed several other scales for the purposes of establishing construct validity.

**Dimensionality and Reliability**

An important step in establishing the dimensionality of an instrument is to check the individual items for item-total correlations and item variances (Schwab, 1980). Inter-item correlations are important because these indicate the degree to which the behaviors belong together. Following this guideline, five items that had low inter-item correlations were eliminated. I also eliminated four items that had a variance below 1.5 (DeVillis,
Table 1 provides the final list of items included in the study along with means, standard deviations, and participation rates.

As shown in Table 1, the participation rates were quite high. The most commonly engaged in behaviors were identity-oriented markings. Nearly 88% of the respondents indicated that they “brought in personally meaningful photographs (e.g., friends, family, pets, activities you enjoy)”. The most common control-oriented marking was “created a border around my workspace”; 53% of the participants indicated that they engaged in this behavior at least once in the past year. In general, anticipatory defending behaviors were the least used behaviors. The most common anticipatory defense was “used locks and passwords so others cannot access my workspace”; 44% of the participants indicated that indicating they engaged in this behavior at least once in the past year. Among those that had experienced an infringement, 64% indicated that they “used facial expressions to express disagreement or dislike towards the infringer”. Responses such as “physically confronted the infringer” were less common but still 25% of the sample indicated that they reacted this way at least once in the past year.

To validate the distinction between the four types of territorial behavior, I conducted a confirmatory factor analysis using AMOS 5 (Arbuckle, 2003) allowing the factors to be correlated. I began with a one-factor model representing all territorial behaviors. I then created a two-factor model with identity-oriented and control-oriented
marking as one factor and anticipatory and reactionary defending as a second factor. The two-factor model was a significant improvement over one-factor model ($\Delta \chi^2 = 755.16$, $\Delta df = 1$, $p < .01$). I then tested a three factor model treating identity-oriented marking and reactionary defending as separate factors and recombining control-oriented marking and anticipatory defending as one factor. I tested this three-factor model because of the potential overlap between anticipatory defending and control-oriented marking (Brown, et al., 2005). Chi-square difference tests indicated that the three-factor model had significantly better fit than the two-factor model ($\Delta \chi^2 = 892.55$, $\Delta df = 2$, $p < .01$). I then tested a four-factor model with each set of territorial behaviors as a separate factor. As expected, the four-factor model was a significant improvement over the three-factor model ($\Delta \chi^2 = 246.66$, $\Delta df = 3$, $p < .01$).

Although the chi squared difference tests supported the four-factor model, some scholars have suggested that it is only appropriate where the models are nested in one another (Byrne, 2001). By adding a new latent construct, the four-factor model is not truly nested in (a more restricted version of) the three-factor model. Fortunately, models can also be compared by examining the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) 90% confidence intervals. The RMSEA confidence intervals (Table 2) indicated that none of the four different models overlapped. This further suggests that the four-factor model reflects a significant improvement over the three-factor model, which in turn is better than the two-factor model, and so on. Moreover, the 90% confidence interval was very narrow (.62; 70). This further indicates high precision of the model fit to the population (MacCallum, Browne, & Sugawara., 1996).
I used a variety of fit indices (Table 2), to test the fit of the model to the population. The $\chi^2$ to degrees of freedom ratio for the four-factor model was 3.85, which is indicative of an acceptable fit between the hypothetical model and the sample data (Carmines & McIver, 1981). The RMSEA also suggested reasonable fit (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). However, both the IFI and CFI were slightly lower than the recommended .90 thresholds (Bentler, 1990).

Collectively, the fit indices supported using the four-factor model; however, the indices also suggested there was room for improvement. Therefore I examined the modification indices paying particular attention to the error covariances. Error correlations between item pairs are particularly important to examine because high error correlations may be an indication of perceived redundancy in item content (Byrne, 2001). Although there were several pairs that had high error covariances, Joreskog (1993) argued that only error covariances that make substantive sense should be allowed to be estimated as free parameters. Thus I looked for pairs of items that had high error correlations but that also seemed to have redundancy in item content. In the model, only two pairs of items fit these criteria. The first pair was “created a border around my workspace” and “put up physical barriers around my workspace”. The second pair of correlated errors that substantively made sense to estimate freely was “used locks and passwords so others cannot access my workspace” and “made my workspace unusable by others (e.g., by hiding files, locks, passwords)”. The resulting change led to a significant
improvement in model fit ($\Delta \chi^2 = 309.49, \Delta df = 2, p < .01$). The fit indices also improved with the IFI and CFI meeting the .90 thresholds and the RMSEA dropping to .054 (Table 2). Collectively the fit indices indicate that the revised model indicates reflects a good fit to the data. Table 3 lists the paths for each item based on the final four-factor model. All the factor loadings were significant at $p < .01$.

Based on the paths (Table 3) indicating which items loaded on which factor, I created simple composite variables for each type of territorial behavior. I also created a simple composite variable for overall 'territorial behavior' by averaging the four types of territorial behavior.

I also checked each composite for internal reliability. Internal consistency is a necessary, although not sufficient, condition for construct development (Schwab, 1980). The internal consistency (Cronbach, 1951) for each scale was quite acceptable ranging from .79 for control-oriented marking to a high of .88 for identity-oriented marking (Table 4).

The correlations between the different types of territorial behavior provide a picture of nomological validity suggesting that the different types of territorial behavior
are related but distinct (Table 4). Table 4 also lists the correlations among the latent constructs from the structural model. The correlations between the latent constructs from the structural model were higher than the correlations among the simple composite variables. This is not surprising because the simple composite variables are created from observed variables with error.

The strongest relationship was between control-oriented marking and anticipatory defenses ($r = .61, p < .01$). Although the correlation suggests that these are highly related, in line with Brown and colleagues (2005), the factorial structure supported separating these constructs into different dimensions.

Inspecting the items from Table 3 for each type of territorial behavior also supports treating them as separate constructs. For example, items that define control-oriented marking include “created a border around my workspace” and “told people the workspace is mine” whereas items that represent anticipatory defenses included “avoid leaving my workspace unattended” and “used locks and passwords so others cannot access my workspace”.

Identity-oriented marking was even more clearly distinguishable. Identity-oriented marking had a strong correlation with control-oriented-marking ($r = .41, p < .01$) but weaker correlations with both anticipatory ($r = .23, p < .01$) and reactionary ($r = .15, p < .05$) defending behavior. Items that loaded on identity-oriented marking included “brought in personally meaningful photographs (e.g., friends, family, pets, activities you enjoy)” and “posted personal achievements (e.g., qualifications, awards) in my workspace”. Reactionary defending was correlated similarly with both control-oriented marking ($r = .41, p < .01$) and anticipatory defending ($r = .41, p < .01$). Items that defined
reactionary defending included “explained to the infringer that the workspace was already claimed” and “involved coworkers to help reclaim the workspace”.

Building the Nomological Net

An important step in validating a new measure is to compare it with theoretically relevant constructs. To this end, I compared territoriality to constructs that should overlap but which are conceptually important to distinguish from territoriality. I expected territoriality to correlate more highly with psychological ownership and identification and less strongly with other measures such as power and tolerance for ambiguity. In addition to examining the relationship between territoriality and other constructs, I also looked at the relationships with the each type of territorial behavior. Table 5 reports the correlations between the territorial behaviors and the constructs I used to establish the conceptual uniqueness of territoriality.

Insert Table 5 about here

Psychological ownership. Psychological ownership is a feeling of possessiveness and of being psychologically tied to an object. As Pierce and colleagues detail (2001; 2003) possessions are an important aspect of the human condition. Possessions are an important aspect of the self (Belk, 1988; Dittmar, 1992; James, 1890) and the need to own may be innate (Porteous, 1976). Territorial behavior is also innate and a natural complement to feelings of ownership or possession. In fact, Brown and colleagues (2005) define territoriality in terms of ownership. Formally they define territoriality as “an
individual’s behavioral expression of his or her feelings of ownership toward a physical or social object”. To the degree that people feel they own their workspace, they should also exhibit more territorial behaviors towards the workspace.

The four-item measure of psychological ownership (alpha = .91) used in this study was adapted from Van Dyne and Pierce (2004). Psychological ownership was significantly correlated with all territorial behaviors \( (r = .37, p < .01) \). Identity-oriented marking had the strongest correlation \( (r = .39, p < .01) \), followed by control-oriented marking \( (r = .25, p < .01) \), reactionary defending \( (r = .21, p < .01) \). The smallest correlation was with anticipatory defenses \( (r = .17, p < .01) \).

**Identification.** The motivation for identification includes attraction, affiliation, self-enhancement, and holism (Pratt, 1998) and generally addresses the question “Who am I” (Dutton, Dukerich, & Harqual, 1994). Relatedly, territoriality functions to construct and communicate and even preserve one’s identity in the organization through territories. In particular, people with a higher need to express themselves in their territory may also have a higher need to identify with the organization. Thus I expected that territoriality, in particular behaviors that are related to constructing and communicating identity through one’s possessions (identity-oriented marking), would be related to identification.

The six-item identification scale (alpha = .92) used in this study was adapted from Brown, Condor, Mathews, Wade, & Williams (1986). As expected, identification was significantly correlated with the general measure of territoriality \( (r = .34, p < .01) \) with identity-oriented marking, sharing the greatest variance with identification \( (r = .38, p < .01) \).
In addition to psychological ownership and identification, constructs that should be conceptually similar to territoriality, I looked at constructs that might be easily confused with territoriality but which are conceptually quite different. Specifically, I looked at three variables that fall generally under the category of power and influence. In addition, I also considered the overlap between territoriality and tolerance for ambiguity. Each relationship is discussed in more detail below.

**Power and Influence**

Power is a basic social force in relationships (Fiske, 1993). Power in organizations stems from the control of scarce, valuable resources, and the ability to exploit that control through various strategies (Hickson, Hinings, Schneck & Pennings, 1972; Pfeffer, 1981). Relating this to territoriality, people may seek to control resources because of the power it affords them. Territories represent valued organizational objects over which members make proprietary claims (Esser, 1968, 1973). However, territoriality is not simply an expression of or an attempt to gain power. The reasons for claiming and controlling an object are far more varied than simply the desire for influence and strategic advantage: the search for personal efficacy may be quite separate from the ability to influence others; moreover, the construction and expression of identity, as well as people's need for a sense of place, stimulate specific territorial behaviors that may be largely unconnected to patterns of power and influence in organizations. Thus, in general, I expected territoriality to have only modest correlations with power related constructs.

To examine the relationship between power and territoriality I examined three related aspects of power including the need for power, political behavior, and the personality trait of dominance. As expected, these constructs were highly correlated.
Need for power and dominance were the most highly correlated \((r = .75, p < .01)\).

However, political behavior was also highly correlated with both need for power \((r = .38, p < .01)\) and dominance \((r = .53, p < .01)\). Although the constructs are highly related, each measures a different aspect of power and as such, I tested the unique relationship of each with territoriality. In the sections below, I outline the basis for the potential overlap between territoriality and each aspect of power.

**Need for power.** People with a high need for power attempt to achieve control over their environment and other people. Relatedly, territorial behavior also functions to control an object. This can include simply claiming it (as one’s own through control oriented marking), using it as one chooses or marking it the way one desires (though identity oriented marking), or blocking access to it by others (through anticipatory defenses). The need for power measure (5 items, alpha = .82) adopted in this study comes from the Manifest Needs Questionnaire (Steer & Braunstein, 1976).

Need for power and territoriality were significantly correlated \((r = .18, p < .01)\). Interestingly, it was not control-oriented or anticipatory defenses that were most related to need for power \((r = .09, .10, p < .05, \text{ respectively)}\). Instead, reactionary defending and identity-oriented marking had the strongest associations \((r = .21, .18, p < .01, \text{ respectively)}\).

**Dominance personality.** As the correlations indicated, need for power and dominance are highly related. People who have a dominant personality tend to try to influence or control other people (Taylor & Lanni, 1981). There is some research outside of organizations that suggests there should be an overlap between territoriality and dominance. For example, identity-oriented markings can be used to manipulate and
potentially influence the impression that other's form over the territory holder (Brown, 1987). In addition, both identity-oriented and control-oriented marking may be used to guide interactions by clearly demarcating visitor and resident, with people understanding the appropriate behavior associated with each role (Brown, 1987). Thus, one motivation behind marking may include the desire to influence and control interactions with and impressions of others. To test the relationship between dominance and territoriality, I adapted a measure of dominance (13 items, alpha = .92) from Buss & Craik (1980).

Territoriality and an individual's dominance personality were related \((r = .23, p < .01)\). As with need for power, reactionary defending had the strongest associations \((r = .25, p < .01)\) followed by identity-oriented marking \((r = .18, p < .01)\). Both control-oriented marking and anticipatory defending were also significantly related \((r = .16 \text{ and } 17, p < .01, \text{ respectively})\).

**Political behavior.** People high in dominance and need for power are likely to engage in a variety of political behaviors. Employees use political behavior to influence others and to change their actions in some intended way so as to obtain personal benefits or satisfy organizational goals (Kipnis, Schmidt, & Wilkinson, 1980; Mowaday, 1978). However, organizational politics often occur without involving the construction, negotiation or defense of territories; members of organizations draw on a wide variety of strategies and tactics to influence each other, such as ingratiation, coercion, and rational persuasion (Kipnis et al., 1980) that do not rely on or involve territorial behaviors. The distinctiveness of territoriality and political behavior can be illustrated by the relatively common occurrence of individuals behaving territorially over objects that are only subjectively or symbolically valuable. Individuals, for example, may extend significant
effort to protect a pen or stapler as their own and likewise experience a sense of emotional indignation or loss if that pen or stapler is used by another, simply because of a sense that it belongs to them, independent of any material or strategic value it may have over any object (Brown, Robinson, & Read, manuscript in progress). Indeed, some people are territorial even in the face of negative political ramifications whereby they damage their reputation by refusing to give up control of an object. Thus the concept of territoriality provides a useful complement to studies of politics in organizations; it can highlight and explain some forms of political behavior, while at the same time examining and explaining a distinct phenomenon.

The instrument used to measure political behavior in this study is a 17 item (alpha = .87) version of the Kipnis, Schmidt & Wilkinson (1980) political measure scale (Schriesheim & Hinkin, 1990). There was a moderate correlation between political behavior and territoriality in general (r = .29, p < .01). This association was highest for control-oriented marking (r = .26, p < .01) and reactionary defending (r = .24, p < .01). However, the correlations between political behavior and anticipatory defending (r = .21) and identity-oriented marking (r = .19) were also significant at the p < .01 levels.

**Tolerance for ambiguity.** I also considered the relationship between tolerance for ambiguity and territoriality. People with a low tolerance for ambiguity do not like contradictory information and dislike probabilities. They perceive ambiguous situations as threatening (Norton, 1975). Thus, there is potential overlap between tolerance for ambiguity and territorial behavior in that territoriality serves a social control mechanism that helps clarify social interaction (Altman & Haythorn, 1967). Thus, both marking and defending behaviors serve to help establish the boundaries of ownership and establish
norms and expectations for appropriate behavior. Although territorial behavior may help reduce ambiguity, the reduction of ambiguity is not a key motivator for territorial behavior. Rather, feelings of ownership, and desire to express oneself are core features of territoriality that are conceptually unrelated to tolerance for ambiguity. Thus, I would expect only modest correlations between territoriality and tolerance for ambiguity.

I used the philosophy subscale (7 items, alpha = .65) of the Measurement of Ambiguity Tolerance (MAT-50; Norton, 1975) to measure general tolerance for ambiguity. Not surprisingly, I did not see a large correlation between territoriality and tolerance for ambiguity ($r = .09, p < .05$). Only control-oriented marking ($r = .08, p < .05$) and reactionary defending ($r = .11, p < .01$) were significantly related.

**DISCUSSION**

This study makes several important contributions. First, it identifies a range of territorial behaviors that are commonly used by individuals in organizations but that have thus far been either ignored or miscategorized. These behaviors map onto the theoretical constructs proposed by Brown, Lawrence, and Robinson (2005), and form valid, internally reliable measures of each type of territoriality behavior: identity oriented marking, control oriented marking, anticipatory defending, and reactionary defending. These measures can be used jointly or independently to study territoriality in organizations.

In this study, I have also clarified the relationship between territoriality and related constructs. This is an important feature of this study because it provides insight into territoriality by showing how it is related to and different from other relevant
constructs. Collectively, the territorial behavior measure shows higher correlations with ownership and identification than with the power related constructs and tolerance for ambiguity. However, when examining the individual territoriality types, only identity-oriented marking shows stronger correlations with psychological ownership and identification and weaker correlations with power related constructs. In contrast, the other territorial behaviors do not follow this pattern. The implications of this are discussed below as I consider the relationship between territoriality and the other constructs.

Most significantly, this study helps clarify the relationship between territoriality and ownership. Interestingly, the relationship between ownership and territoriality, and specifically the different territorial behaviors was not as high as originally expected. At least two issues may help explain the attenuated results. First, it appears that there is a disconnect between an individual’s attitudes and their behaviors. This may be particularly true in organizations where factors such as organizational norms and rules may not allow individuals to express ownership. Second, the lower than expected correlation suggests that even if ownership is a necessary condition it is not a sufficient condition to motivate an individual to mark and defend their territory. Other factors obviously influence whether someone can or will engage in territorial behavior, and the degree to which they do so. Rather than simply communicating, “This is mine”, territoriality also signals, “This is not yours”. This important distinction is not captured in measures of psychological ownership and is an important aspect of territoriality addressed in other disciplines (Brown, 1987). Thus, territoriality functions not only to claim an object but also to demarcate and communicate the boundaries of the territory. With that said, psychological ownership is still likely to be a necessary cognitive condition for people to engage in
territoriality. Yet, the results also show that even if ownership is indeed a necessary condition of territorial behavior, it is differentially important for each type. For example, the correlation between psychological ownership and identity-oriented marking was much higher than with any of the other territorial behaviors. This is not surprising given the research that suggests that the more an individual feels they own an object the more likely they are to use personalized items to mark the object (Brown, 1987).

This study also helps situate territorial behavior as non-political behavior. Although political behavior and territorial behavior may at times appear similar or even overlap in function, territorial behaviors that are used to claim an object as one’s own are different from those that are used to influence others. Moreover, the motivation behind territorial behavior goes beyond the need for power or dominance personality. This is particularly important because on the surface, power and territoriality appear quite similar. Nevertheless, it is not surprising that there was a correlation with some types of territorial behavior. There are likely some people who see using barriers and other types of defending as acceptable and are more comfortable engaging in this type of behavior. People with a dominant personality or those who are used to engaging in political behavior may feel more comfortable engaging in certain types of territorial behavior. This may be particularly true for the relationships with reactionary defending. Confronting a person who infringes on one’s territory, even if justified, may be a difficult response for someone who is not likely to take charge or respond well to threats. Nevertheless, the correlations were quite modest with political behavior (the strongest correlation with territoriality) explaining less than 10% of the variance in territorial behavior.
This study also contributes to the territoriality literature by increasing our understanding of how the territoriality factors are interrelated. As expected, the different types of territorial behavior were related. Part of this stems from common underlying motivation, parts of which includes feelings of ownership. However, each type of behavior was clearly defined by different behavioral items. Items in the identity-oriented marking construct were largely about expressing oneself and making the workspace "home". Reactionary defending behaviors are post infringement behaviors that include both immediate reactions to the infringer such as "asked the person why they infringed" and longer-term reactions such as "devised a strategy to get back your workspace from the infringer" or "avoided working with or interacting with the infringer in the future".

Although the correlations between anticipatory defenses and control-oriented marking were more highly related, they also loaded as separate factors with distinct items loading on each dimension. Control-oriented markings were clearly oriented towards demarcating the boundaries of ownership. Sample items included "wrote my name all over the workspace" and "used signs to communicate that the workspace has been claimed". In contrast, the behaviors in the anticipatory defense construct reflected ways to prevent others from successfully using the workspace, thereby maintaining their control of the object. Sample items forming this construct included "made my workspace unusable by others (e.g., by hiding files, locks, passwords)" and "had authorities in the organization identify the workspace as mine". Collectively the types of territoriality behavior form a useful tool for investigating employee's ownership claims and how these claims are communicated and defended vis-à-vis other people in the organization.
Of course, there remains much work to be done. As Schwab (1980) stated, the work of construct development is a lengthy ongoing process. This is particularly true when a construct is new and there is little foundation upon which to build. Also there are several limitations that need to be addressed in future research. The data was entirely self-report and respondents may have been motivated towards socially desirable responses. A second concern with using self-report is the accuracy of the assessments. People may not remember how they responded to an infringement, or whether they told people that the territory was theirs. One way to address both of these concerns is to have observers use the measure developed in this study to provide external assessments of an individual's territorial behavior.

Another potential concern is the generalizability of this measure in that it may be limited to physical space. Even though Brown and colleagues (2005) suggest that the choice of territory is less important at the beginning stage of research in this area, I believe that workspaces are actually an ideal starting point in trying to understand the types of behaviors that people use in marking and defending organizational objects. Almost everyone works in a physical space of some kind. Therefore, contingent upon being in a social environment, everyone has the potential to express territorial behavior over their workspace. Thus, by starting with a measure of territoriality towards workspaces the relevance and applicability of the measure is increased. On the other hand, there are many more objects that employees become territorial over. Future research should consider how the behaviors identified in this study apply to non-physical territories. Based on this instrument, researchers should also consider developing more general territoriality measures - perhaps looking at statements that measure one’s
propensity to mark and defend a territory. The drawback with such an approach is that researchers then run the risk of sacrificing the precision afforded by a behavioral instrument such as the one developed in this study.

Finally, it is important to note that the resulting scales do not include all possible specific examples of territorial behavior. In the item generation phase described above, there were over 57 unique ways of marking and defending territories. In this study, I consciously made a choice to limit this study to the more common forms of territorial behavior. Thus, it is possible that some people express their identity, claim an object, thwart infringement attempts, or even react to infringements in ways that, although conceptually represented by the four factors, would not be captured by this scale. However, because I used a grouping strategy to group a wider range of behaviors, I feel that the items in this study are representative of the family of behaviors for each construct. The relatively high participation rates in terms of engaging in these behaviors further supports the idea that these behaviors are commonly used by people who wish to mark and defend their territories. Moreover, there is strong theoretical reasoning, supported by the results in this study, to believe that all territorial behaviors fall within one of the four types of territoriality: identity-oriented marking, control-oriented marking, anticipatory defending, and reactionary defending.

There are several exciting opportunities for studying territoriality that are now possible by employing this measure, particularly centering around how the self and others perceive and make sense of the territorial behaviors. We need to understand to what extent observers understand and recognize and correctly interpret the territorial behavior of others. How does engaging in these behaviors positively or negatively affect others
perceptions of the territorial individual? From the perspective of the territorial individual, do the territorial behaviors deter or prevent infringement?

In summary, I hope that the instrument developed here proves useful for studying territoriality in organizations. Territoriality is very important and it will undoubtedly reveal interesting and surprising findings. To that extent, I feel this measure can help facilitate such a direction.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Participation Rate*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>brought in personally meaningful photographs (e.g., friends, family, pets, activities you enjoy)</td>
<td>4.92</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>87.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>displayed artwork in my workspace</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>75.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>displayed quotes, expressions, motivational phrases in my workspace</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>75.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>posted personal achievements (e.g., qualifications, awards) in my workspace</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>65.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>put things in the workspace that represent my personal hobbies and interests</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>74.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>made me feel at home</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>83.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>created a border around my workspace</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>53.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>put up physical barriers around my workspace</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>44.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>posted personal achievements (e.g., qualifications, awards) in my workspace</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>65.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>put things in the workspace that represent my personal hobbies and interests</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>74.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>made it hard for others to find things in my workspace</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>43.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>told people the workspace is mine</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>43.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>made my workspace unattractive for others that represent my personal hobbies and interests</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>39.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>used locks and passwords so others cannot access my workspace</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>32.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avoided leaving my workspace unattended</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>44.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>had authorities in the organization identify the workspace</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>34.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>warned my workspace as mine</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>34.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>made my workspace unusable by others (e.g., by hiding files, locks, passwords)</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>31.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>used facial expressions to express disagreement</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>64.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or dislike towards the infringer</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>44.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avoided working with or interacting with the infringer</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>44.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explained to the infringer that the workspace was already claimed</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>53.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>devised a strategy to get back your workspace</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>36.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>displayed hostility towards the infringer</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>42.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complained to your supervisor about the infringement</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>48.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
involved coworkers to help reclaim the
workspace 1.70 1.45 25.00
physically confronted the infringer 1.81 1.62 25.90
verbally challenged the infringer 2.30 1.83 43.00
asked the person why they infringed 3.04 2.20 56.40

Note. Responses ranged from 1 (not at all) to 7 (all the time).
N = 663
*Percentage of respondents who indicated that they had participated in the behavior at least once in the last year
### TABLE 2
Comparison of Different Territorial Behavior Factor Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor Structure</th>
<th>( \chi^2 )</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>( \chi^2 / \text{df} )</th>
<th>IFI</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>RMSEA Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-factor</td>
<td>3119.38</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>9.63</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.114</td>
<td>(.111; .118)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-factor</td>
<td>2364.22</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>7.32</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>(.094; .102)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-factor</td>
<td>1471.67</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>(.070; .078)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-factor</td>
<td>1225.01</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>(.062; .070)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-factor model w/ 2 correlated errors</td>
<td>915.52</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>(.050; .058)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = Note. All \( \chi^2 \) values are significant at \( p < .001 \). IFI = incremental fit index; CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root-mean square error of approximation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>IM</th>
<th>CM</th>
<th>AD</th>
<th>RD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>brought in personally meaningful photographs (e.g., friends, family, pets, activities you enjoy)</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>displayed artwork in my workspace</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>displayed quotes, expressions, motivational phrases in my workspace</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>posted personal achievements (e.g., qualifications, awards) in my workspace</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>put things in the workspace that represent my personal hobbies and interests</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brought in items or changed the workspace to make me feel at home</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>created a border around my workspace</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>put up physical barriers around my workspace</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wrote my name all over the workspace</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used signs to communicate that the workspace has been claimed</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>told people the workspace is mine</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>made it hard for others to find things in my workspace</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>made my workspace unattractive for others</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>used locks and passwords so others cannot access my workspace</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avoided leaving my workspace unattended</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>had authorities in the organization identify the workspace as mine</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>made my workspace unusable by others (e.g., by hiding files, locks, passwords)</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>used facial expressions to express disagreement or dislike towards the infringer</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avoided working with or interacting with the infringer in the future</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explained to the infringer that the workspace was already claimed</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>devised a strategy to get back your workspace from the infringer</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>involved coworkers to help reclaim the workspace</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complained to your supervisor about the infringement</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complained to your supervisor about the infringement</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>physically confronted the infringer</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
26 verbally challenged the infringer   .73
27 asked the person why they infringed .58

Note. For identity-oriented marking, control-oriented marking, and anticipatory defending, the sample size is 663. For the reactionary defending behaviors the sample size is 269.

IM = Identity-oriented marking
CM = control-oriented marking
AD = anticipatory defending
RD = reactionary defending
**TABLE 4**

Correlations Among Latent Variables and Scale Composites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reliability</th>
<th>IM</th>
<th>CM</th>
<th>AD</th>
<th>RD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Territorial Behavior</td>
<td>(.88)</td>
<td>.76**</td>
<td>.84**</td>
<td>.72**</td>
<td>.66**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity-oriented</td>
<td>(.87)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.15*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control-oriented</td>
<td>(.79)</td>
<td>0.52**</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>.61**</td>
<td>.41**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipatory Defenses</td>
<td>(.81)</td>
<td>0.26**</td>
<td>0.79**</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>.41**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactionary Defenses</td>
<td>(.86)</td>
<td>0.22**</td>
<td>0.55**</td>
<td>0.51**</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The bottom diagonal provides correlations between the latent constructs of the structural model. The upper diagonal of Table 3 provides the correlations among the dimensions where the items are averaged into composites (i.e., observed variables with error). I created a simple composite variable for overall Territorial Behavior by averaging the four types of territorial behavior.

IM = Identity-oriented marking  
CM = control-oriented marking  
AD = anticipatory defending  
RD = reactionary defending
TABLE 5
Comparisons Constructs Used to Establish Convergent and Discriminant Validity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Territorial Behavior</th>
<th>IM</th>
<th>CM</th>
<th>AD</th>
<th>RD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theoretically related constructs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Ownership</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>0.39**</td>
<td>0.25**</td>
<td>0.17**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational identification</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>0.38**</td>
<td>0.22**</td>
<td>0.13**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissimilar constructs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political behavior</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>0.19**</td>
<td>0.26**</td>
<td>0.21**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for power</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>0.18**</td>
<td>0.09*</td>
<td>0.10*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominance personality</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>0.18**</td>
<td>0.16**</td>
<td>0.17**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance for ambiguity</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.08*</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05. ** p < .01.

IM = Identity-oriented marking
CM = control-oriented marking
AD = anticipatory defending
RD = reactionary defending
CHAPTER 4: ‘MINE’ AND ‘NOT YOURS’: THE IMPACT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL OWNERSHIP AND TERRITORIALITY IN ORGANIZATIONS

The need to own is innate and universal (Dittmar, 1992). From a young age we exhibit strong attachment to a wide variety of objects. These feelings do not abate and our possessions become a central part of who we are in all aspects of our lives. In tandem with feelings of possessiveness, we often mark possessions to signal to others that they belong to us. We also defend against potential and actual infringements of our possessions. These territorial behaviors, marking and defending, signal and reinforce our feelings of ownership.

Although recent theoretical work has developed theories regarding psychological ownership (Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks, 2001) and the behaviors used to mark and defend our possessions in organizations (Brown, Lawrence, & Robinson, 2005), empirical research on these issues is limited to only a handful of studies. Thus very little is known about the importance of owning and territorial behavior within an organizational context. This is particularly surprising given the inherent need to own and the potential importance of owning and claiming in organizations. The purpose of this study is to advance our understanding of feelings of ownership and territorial behaviors in organizations.

I begin by briefly defining and highlighting key aspects of both psychological ownership and territoriality in organizations and their relationship to one another. I then present arguments suggesting that feelings of ownership and engaging in territorial
behavior may have positive implications for organizational member’s attitudes. I also
explore the potential negative influence that territorial behaviors have on the individual
when considering how other people in the organization view the actor.

**‘MINE’ AND ‘NOT YOURS’**

Psychological ownership is a state where the individual perceives that an object is theirs. Pierce and colleagues (Pierce et al., 2001; 2003; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004) argue that psychological ownership is a feeling of possessiveness and of being psychologically tied to an object. In fact, owned objects are often experienced as part of, and used to describe, the self. James (1890) stated, in his definition of self, that

"a man's Self is the sum total of all that he CAN call his, not only his body and his psychic powers, but his cloths and his house, his wife and children, his ancestors and friends, his reputation and works, his land, and yacht and bank account" (291-292)

Consumer psychologists such as Belk (1988) and child development scholars such as Isaacs (1933) have similarly noted the innate need to possess and define oneself according to what one can call theirs. They argue that possessions become part of the extended self. As Isaacs (1933) declared “what is mine becomes (in my feelings) a part of ME” (225).

Feelings of ownership fulfill several important human needs including the need for efficacy, the need for a sense of place, and the need for self-expression (Pierce et al., 2001; 2003). Ownership is associated with certain rights and gives a person a feeling of control, or efficacy, over the object. A feeling of ownership in the organization also gives rise to the sense that one has a home in the organization. Although usually not in the literal sense of a physical home, feelings of ownership create a psychological place to rest
and feel secure. Finally, as noted above, possessions are also used to define oneself and can be important for developing or maintaining individuality.

Implicit in territorial behavior is the notion of psychological ownership. Brown, Lawrence, and Robinson (2005) define territoriality as “an individual’s behavioral expression of his or her feelings of ownership toward a physical or social object” (p. 2). Territorial behaviors serve to “construct, communicate, maintain, and restore territories around those objects in the organization to which one feels proprietary attachment toward” (Brown et al., 2005: 2).

A key aspect of territoriality is that it is a social behavioral construct. It is only in relation to other people that we mark and defend our claims. Thus, territorial behaviors are not simply about expressing ownership over an object (e.g., this is mine) but are centrally concerned with establishing, communicating and maintaining one’s relationship with that object relative to others in the social environment (e.g., this is mine and not yours!).

In this study I examine three types of territorial behavior: identity-oriented marking (personalizations), control-oriented marking, and anticipatory defending. Marking refers to the territorial behaviors of organizational members that construct and communicate to others their proprietary attachment to particular organizational objects. Identity oriented marking is used to express one’s identity in the organization. An example of such might include marking one’s workspace with photos of family or activities that one enjoys. Control-oriented marking is used to communicate that an object

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3 Brown, Lawrence and Robinson (2005) discuss a fourth type of territoriality: reactionary defences. I had to exclude reactionary defences from this study because it is contingent upon an infringement occurring. People can only react if they experience an infringement. The other types of territorial behavior can occur before an infringement and do not require the occurrence of an infringement in order to study them.
has already been claimed. An example of control-oriented marking in an organization might include announcing that one is in charge of organizing the Christmas party. By making this announcement, others in the organization know that the role or project has been claimed. However, this claim does not necessarily stop an individual from trying to take over the project or role. Anticipatory defences are behaviors that arise from a fear that one’s claims will be unrecognized or ignored. Anticipatory defences serve to maintain a territory by preventing others from infringing. An example of an anticipatory defence might include a password on a computer to stop others from accessing one’s files.

Engaging in territorial behavior helps individuals satisfy similar needs to those satisfied by feelings of ownership. For example, territorial behaviors, and identity-oriented marking in particular, are used to communicate aspects of one’s identity and may help satisfy the need for self-expression. Controlling an object either by marking it or engaging anticipatory defenses may also increase feelings of personal efficacy and control. Finally, individuals who engage in territorial behaviors may satisfy the need to have a place of one’s own in the organization by claiming an object and then signaling that claim to others.

**THEORY & HYPOTHESES**

As evident from the discussion presented above, feelings of ownership and territoriality share much in common. In fact, feelings of ownership and territoriality reinforce one another. Possession can cause people to protect and defend what they feel is theirs (Hall, 1966). Similarly, people who feel they have rights to something are more likely to protect and enhance what they feel is theirs, and even control and limit access to
their possessions (Wilpert, 1991). Thus feelings of ownership may increase territorial behavior.

In addition, territorial behavior may also serve to increase and reinforce feelings of ownership. Research suggests that we are more likely to feel ownership over objects that we control (Prelinger, 1959). Similarly, marking an object with aspects of our identity can lead to feelings of ownership over the object (Rochberg-Halton, 1980).

I expect that both territoriality and psychological ownership will be related to individual's attitudes such as organizational commitment and affective feelings towards the object. Although we have little empirical knowledge of how psychological ownership relates to employee attitudes (Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004), previous research suggests that psychological ownership satisfies several needs that are related to emotions, job satisfaction, and commitment (Porteous, 1976; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004). Thus owning would seem to have several potential positive implications for the individual. Similarly, territoriality should have positive implications for organizational members. In studies outside of organizations, territoriality has been related to a variety of positive outcomes including an increased sense of cohesiveness (Brown & Werner, 1985), reduced desire to withdraw from one's community (Brown, Brown, & Perkins, 2004) and increased efficacy (Taylor & Lanni, 1981).

Although there may be potential benefits for the individual arising from feeling ownership and engaging in territorial behavior, I believe that this view is overly simplistic. I believe that territoriality in particular may also affect the interactions between members in organizations. One way that territorial behavior may do this is through its effect on others' perceptions of the individual engaging in territorial behavior.
If people see territorial behaviors as influence attempts they may attach pejorative meaning to them (Bandura, 1977). For example, territorial behavior may be viewed as an attempt to control resources and thus may relate to the individual’s approachability or perceived power. Anticipatory defending behavior, in particular, may be associated with negative reactions because it is more likely to directly affect the intentions and behaviors of others. For example, if someone marks an object, others can choose to ignore the marking. However, a password on a computer is not easy to ignore if the other person needs access to the computer or some file. Thus, anticipatory defending may be more likely to be seen as an attempt to control the behavior of others. Territorial behavior may also be negatively related to coworker’s perceptions of the territorial individual if the behavior is viewed as self-interested behavior. This may lead others to evaluate more poorly the performance of the territorial individual. Thus the same behaviors that work to increase one’s commitment to the organization and positive feelings for one’s territory, may adversely, and perhaps unintentionally, send negative social cues to others that have negative repercussions for the territorial individual.

In contrast, I do not expect that feelings of ownership will send the same social cues as territorial behaviors. In fact, I expect that feelings of ownership will have little to no association with others perceptions because feelings of ownership are intrinsic to the individual and are not as obvious to others except through territorial behaviors. As Pierce, Kostova, and Dirks (2003) argue, psychological ownership is recognized foremost by the individual. In contrast, territorial behaviors are driven by the social nature of our relationships (Brown, et al., 2005).
Figure 1 summarizes the variables and relationships I consider in this study. I believe that psychological ownership and territoriality will be related to an individual’s attitudes to both the target (affect) and the organization (commitment). However, only territoriality will be related to coworker’s perceptions (coworker evaluations of the territorial individual’s power, performance, and approachability). I believe that ownership and territoriality can be seen as positive aspects to be encouraged when viewed in terms of the individual’s attitudes but that territoriality may be negative when considering coworker evaluations of the territorial individual. In the next section, I outline the specific hypotheses and rationale for the predicted relationships.

**Organizational Commitment**

Organizational commitment refers to the general preparedness to engage in long-term involvement with and exert oneself on behalf of the organization (Ellemers, De Gilder, & van den Heuvel, 1998). It is a psychological state that affects the decision to stay or leave the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Empirical evidence suggests that individuals who are more committed produce higher levels of job performance (Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin & Jackson, 1989; Steers, 1977), are more likely to engage in organizational citizenship behavior (Organ, 1988), report higher levels of job satisfaction (Becker, 1992; Ellemers et. al., 1998), and have lower rates of absenteeism (Mathieu & Kohler, 1990) and turnover (Williams & Hazer, 1986). Thus, commitment is an important variable from an organization’s perspective.
There are multiple dimensions of organizational commitment and these may be differentially related to other behaviors at work (Randall, Fedor, & Longnecker, 1990). In this study, I consider the relationship between psychological ownership, territoriality, and two types of organizational commitment: affective and continuance commitment. In terms of affecting one's decision to stay in the organization, affective commitment is generally interpreted as wanting to stay whereas continuance commitment is seen as needing to stay (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

**Affective commitment.** Mowday, Steers, & Porter (1979: 226) define affective commitment as "the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization". Affective commitment is often used to refer to the affective ties between the individual and the group (e.g., Mael & Tetrick, 1992). This includes feelings of attachment and a sense of belonging to the organization (Becker, 1992; Allen & Meyer, 1996).

To the extent that an individual fulfills their needs in the organization the individual will be more attached to the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991). Meyer and Allen (1991) argue that commitment develops from work experiences that can be roughly divided into those that satisfy the need to be comfortable and those that satisfy the need to competent in their work role.

Pierce and colleagues (2001; 2003) argue that one important need which psychological ownership fulfills is the need to have a place of one's own. Having a 'sense of place' helps establish a sense of belonging and comfort in the organization – an important aspect of commitment (Pendleton, Wilson, & Wright, 1988; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004; Vande Walle, Van Dyne, & Kostova, 1995). Research in hospital and
psychiatric settings suggests that having possessions helps patients adjust and feel comfortable (Haigh, 2002; Shepherd, 1998). Similarly, through territorial behaviors, individuals may create a sense of place. To the extent that one feels their claims are well marked and secure, this may contribute to feelings of psychological and physical comfort.

The second need satisfied by feelings of ownership and territorial behavior and which is related to affective commitment is the need to express oneself. Individuals are more likely to want to stay in organizations in which they feel distinct and in which they believe they can express characteristics they value about themselves (Kunda, 1992). Meyer and Allen (1987; 1988; 1991) argue that expressing oneself is one of several factors that contribute to feeling competent in the organization.

Psychological ownership contributes to fulfilling the need to express oneself because one way through which people define who they are is through their possessions (Belk, 1988). Possessions are often experienced as symbolic expressions of the self (Dittmar, 1992; Porteous, 1976). Thus, objects can communicate aspects of a person’s identity to others and establish the owner’s uniqueness in the organization. For example, many people feel ownership over particular roles in the organization. If the role reflects aspects of the person, then the role becomes an important part of the person’s identity in the organization. The object itself (the role in this case) communicates to other people aspects of the owner’s identity. As noted above, this is an important need, which, if met, will contribute to an individual’s commitment to the organization.

Territorial behavior, and identity-oriented marking in particular, also satisfy the need to express oneself and help establish one’s identity in the organization. Through the marking of territories, people can express aspects of who they are. For example, by
marking one’s workspace, organizational members can communicate particular hobbies, awards, likes and dislikes. Art on walls may help an individual establish an identity of being an art lover. Taking over a project and changing it to reflect one’s personality is also a way for individuals to express themselves in the organization. Individuals can also mark in ways that help establish their identity relative to others. Thus, one may choose to display selective aspects of their identity that are not common to others in the organization. The more that one engages in this type of marking the more likely they will be to feel distinct in the organization. In contrast, research shows that depersonalized settings, where employees cannot display their identity, are viewed as threats to one’s distinctiveness (Elsbach, 2003; Vischer, 1999).

**Hypothesis 1a:** Psychological ownership will be positively associated with an individual’s affective organizational commitment to the organization.

**Hypothesis 1b:** Territorial behavior will be positively associated with an individual’s affective organizational commitment to the organization.

**Continuance commitment.** Farrell and Rusbult (1981) describe the continuance dimension of organizational commitment as "related to the probability that an employee will leave his job and involves feelings of psychological attachment, independent of affect" (79). An important aspect of continuance commitment is the feeling of needing to stay in the organization because of “side bets”. “Side bets” are things that are important to the individual and which are dependent upon the employee staying in the organization.
An example of a side bet is learning a specific skill that is not likely to transfer to another organization. The bet is that learning the new skill will pay off in future but it also represents something that will be lost if the individual leaves the organization. Greater investment in the organization and the presence of side bets are related to increased continuance commitment (Farrell & Rusbult, 1981; Rusbult & Farrell, 1983).

Psychological ownership and territoriality are associated with continuance commitment because of the presence of and investment in establishing side bets in the organization. Feelings of ownership will likely positively increase continuance commitment to the organization because possessions represent side bets that the individual will lose if they leave the organization. Possessions root the person in the organization more than if they did not have these objects of belonging (Vinsel, Brown, Altman, & Foss, 1980). Possessions are important to an individual’s self-esteem (Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004) and are therefore important to maintain. In the case of continuance commitment, ownership of objects in the organization may make one realize that more will be lost if the individual leaves the organization. Thus feelings of ownership towards objects increase people’s feelings of belonging and the significance of what is lost if one leaves the organization.

Territorial behavior may be positively related to continuance commitment because of the significant personal investments of time and energy involved in marking and defending territories. Research shows that such investments are associated with organizational commitment (Becker, 1960; Meyer & Allan, 1991; Wallace, 1997). People who have invested heavily in creating territories for themselves are more likely to
see higher costs of leaving. This is exacerbated to the extent that a person has created an identity in the territory (or used it to express aspects of who they are). In particular, if an individual has marked their territory with aspects of themselves, the object becomes an important part of their identity in the organization (Elsbach, 2003; Sundstrom & Altman, 1989). Thus, leaving the organization means leaving part of themselves. Subsequent employment in another organization does not necessarily guarantee that one will be able to express oneself or create a suitable territory that will fulfill their needs. Finally, territorial behavior often involves investments that are made publicly and voluntarily - factors that have long been understood as increasing commitment levels (Salancik, 1977).

*Hypothesis 2a: Psychological ownership will be positively associated with an individual’s continuance commitment to the organization.*

*Hypothesis 2b: Territorial behavior will be positively associated with an individual’s continuance commitment to the organization.*

**Affect**

Although neglected for many years, organizations are increasingly recognizing affect as a key variable to understand. Indeed there are many positive and negative consequences that stem directly and indirectly from affect. For example, feeling positive affect has been linked with prosocial behaviors (George & Brief, 1992) such as greater helping behavior (George, 1991), increased cooperation (Baron, 1990; Forgas, 1998) and even possibly more citizenship behavior (George & Brief, 1992). Positive feelings may
also reduce aggression (Isen & Baron, 1991), increase performance (Staw & Barsade, 1995) and job satisfaction (Brief et al., 1995; Fisher, 2000), and enhance creative problem solving (Estrada, et al., 1997; Isen, 1999). In contrast, negative affect may lead to negative outcomes. Feelings of anger, for example, may negatively affect rationality and are associated with poorer decisions (Pillutla & Murnighan, 1996; Richards & Gross, 1999; Mikulincer, 1996).

Although there is considerable debate over the specific terms and their meanings, affect is often used as a general term that refers to people’s affective states, encompassing both emotions and moods (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). In the current study, I adopt a general view of affect by considering it as the affective component of an attitude. This conceptualization is consistent with previous work such as Burke and associates’ (1989) Job Affect Scale and builds on the recognition that attitudes are made up of at least two parts. For instance, a number of attitude theorists have argued that a distinction should be made between evaluations based on affective responses to an attitude object (referring to feelings or emotions) and evaluations based on cognitive responses (referring to beliefs, thoughts, or rational arguments) (Breckler & Wiggins, 1989; Chaiken, Pomerantz, & Giner-Sorolla, 1995; Crites, Fabrigar, & Petty, 1994). As outlined by Breckler and Wiggins (1989), the affective component refers to “feelings that are engendered by the attitude object and represents emotional experience associated with the attitudinal object” (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996: 2).

In the current study I wanted to specifically capture the affective dimension of an individual’s attitude towards an object for two reasons. First, despite the recent work on affect, it is somewhat surprising that we know very little about factors that influence
affect. For example, the influence of the work context on affective experience remains largely unexplored (Burke et al., 1989; Burke & Pearlman, 1988). I am particularly interested in the affective evaluation of an object because I believe that the attitude someone has towards objects at work can be a significant factor in their experience at work. As outlined by Affective Events Theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) moods and emotions at work are considered mediating mechanisms through which features of the work environment impact subsequent attitudes and behaviors (Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000). Similarly, I believe that objects in the work environment can engender feelings and that both territoriality and psychological ownership will be related to these feelings. These feelings to objects in the organization may be an important part on an individual’s evaluative experience at work. If one has many objects that are associated with positive or negative feelings, this may influence their feelings at work. Also, specific objects that engender particularly strong feelings may be an important influence on subsequent attitudes and behaviors. I also wanted to specifically focus on affective evaluations as opposed to cognitive evaluations because I was interested in the affect that people associated with an object as opposed to cognitive rationalizations for why an object was important or marked and defended.

For the purposes of this study, I consider both positive and negative feelings associated with an object. Research on affect suggests that it can be conceptualized in two-dimensional space, where one dimension is represented by positive affect, and the other by negative affect (e.g, Watson & Tellegen, 1985). It is important to consider the relationship between psychological ownership and territorial behavior and both positive and negative affect because positive and negative affect are not necessarily polar
opposites (Fisher, 2000). Thus scores high in positive affect are not the same as scores indicating low negative affect.

**Positive affect.** Both feelings of ownership and territoriality will be related to positive affect towards a target for several reasons. First, as outlined in theories of psychological ownership and possession, possessions are central aspects of a person’s work environment and can be a significant influence in the experience of work. Cognitive appraisal theories suggest that we evaluate events for relevance to personal well being (Frijda, 1986). To the extent that feelings of ownership reflect the satisfaction of various needs, in a work setting, possessions may be similarly evaluated or viewed as congruent (beneficial) or incongruent (harmful) to the pursuit of personal goals. Appraisals of benefits (goal facilitation) lead to pleasant affective states; appraisals of impediments (goal obstruction) lead to unpleasant affective states (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Thus, stronger feelings of ownership should be positively associated with positive feelings to the object and negatively associated with negative feelings to the object.

Second, as suggested by psychological ownership theory, people tend to treat possessions as extensions of the self. Thus, objects have the potential to be viewed and treated as an individual would treat and view themselves. The same cognitive biases that are applied to evaluations of the self may extend to objects that are seen as ours. For example, research in positive illusions shows that most people have an overly positive view of the self (Greenwald, 1980) and that this is associated with a variety of positive outcomes including increased positive moods states (Taylor & Brown, 1988; 1994). To the extent that we feel our possessions are a part of us (indicated by stronger feelings of ownership) the more we are likely to apply the same biases, illusions, and protective
mechanisms to our possessions and thus evaluate them more positively. This view is consistent with research that shows that people tend to apply similar biases when evaluating friends and other people who are meaningful to them (Brown, 1986).

Engaging in territorial behavior may also be positively related to feeling positive affect to an object. In studies of physical space territories, identity-oriented marking has been shown to make environments more visually stimulating and pleasing to inhabit (Carrere et al., 1991; Carrere & Evans, 1994). Similarly, marking one's workspace with pictures of family or significant objects may remind one of positive, pleasure inducing, memories and significant attachments. Claiming an object and marking it in ways to express one's identity should also lead to increased feelings of control over the object. These feelings of control help satisfy the need for efficacy. As noted above, research on needs theories suggest that the fulfillment of needs is associated with more positive mood states; in contrast, when an individual's goals are interrupted they experience negative feelings (Finch, Okun, Barrera, Zautra, & Reich, 1989; Mandler, 1984).

_Hypothesis 3a: Psychological ownership will be positively associated with an individual's positive affect felt towards the territory._

_Hypothesis 3b: Territorial behavior will be positively associated with an individual's positive affect felt towards the territory._

**Negative affect.** The same illusions that cause us to inflate perceptions of ourselves (and our possessions) may also work to protect us by minimizing negative
feelings (Taylor & Brown, 1988). As with positive affect and feelings of ownership, I believe that as we increase our feelings of ownership over an object we are more likely to see that object as an extension of our self. Higher feelings of ownership to an object should be associated with less felt negative affect towards the object. People tend to manipulate information to create a more positive picture and filter out information that may cause negative feelings (Fiske & Taylor, 1984). Thus, stronger feelings of ownership may lead people to filter out or reframe information that could cause negative affect towards the target.

Territorial behavior may also be associated with reduced negative affect because territorial behavior secures the owner’s claim over the object. Marking communicates that an object is claimed and discourages others from claiming the object while anticipatory defending actually helps secure the claim and makes it less likely that another person will be able to claim the object even if they try. Thus, territorial behavior should be related to lower felt negative affect such as anxiety or nervousness associated with the claim. For example, if one is afraid of other people reading their files or accessing their computer, they may use passwords to stop people who try. These anticipatory defenses should reduce their fear that others will successfully access their territory.

_Hypothesis 4a: Psychological ownership will be negatively associated with an individual’s negative affect felt towards the territory._
Hypothesis 4b: Territorial behavior will be negatively associated with an individual's negative affect felt towards the territory.

I believe that owning and expressing ownership have important implications for the individual both in term of attitudes towards the organization and feelings towards the target. However, an important aspect of territoriality is its social nature - we are territorial vis-à-vis other people. Territorial behavior becomes something that can affect others and is a source of information upon which others make judgments about the individual engaging in territorial behaviors. This is particularly true in organizations where people are often interdependent.

Unfortunately, we know very little about how people interpret and respond to territorial displays and behaviors. The way that people mark and defend their territories may be perceived by observers in ways that are unknown or not intended by the actor. Although the interpretations and attributions for the territorial behavior may not be accurate, they are the basis for coworker's evaluations and perceptions of the individual, and thus have important consequences. In the following sections I examine and make predictions about the relationship between territorial behavior and coworker perceptions of a territorial individual's power, approachability, and in-role performance.

Power

Power is a basic social force in relationships (Fiske, 1993; Kemper, 1991). In organizations people infer the power of others from multiple sources including symbols, reputational and representational sources, as well as its determinants and consequences (Pfeffer, 1981). Here I consider the relationship between territorial behavior and
coworker' perceptions of one's power as indicated by control, or the ability to influence (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003).

I believe that territoriality, and particularly those behaviors that try to control objects and resources, will be negatively related to perceived power for several reasons. First, overt behaviors that attempt to control resources may signal that the individual using these behaviors actually lacks control. This is similar to the dilemma of the “self-promoters paradox” (Jones & Pittman, 1982) whereby individuals who protest that they are competent are more likely to be seen as incompetent. When confronted with attempts to control access to an object, coworkers will try to make sense of the behavior. In the case of behaviors that are used to stop others from accessing the object, these defending behaviors may result in others inferring that the person lacks power because they need to use these behaviors. Thus, territorial behavior may make others perceive or become aware of a lack of power. This is also consistent with research on organizational legitimization by Ashforth and Gibbs (1990), which suggests that using markers to try and signal status may actively reduce status. Thus, although territorial behavior may be used to increase one's real power, the behaviors themselves may actually signal the reverse.

Hypothesis 5: Territorial behaviors will be negatively associated with the perceived power of a territorial individual.
Approachability

Collaboration is seen as key to organizational success (Visscher, 1999). Eighty-two percent of companies with 100 or more employees reported using team structures which require organizational members to collaborate (Gordon, 1992). Increased collaboration has led to a variety of desirable performance improvements for numerous organizations in a variety of industries (e.g., Banker, Lee, Potter, & Srinivasan, 1996; Wellins, Byham, & Dixon, 1994).

One strategy to increase teamwork and collaboration has been to physically rearrange the office landscape by removing walls and partitions between individual offices. Organizations employing this strategy believe that reducing physical barriers will facilitate and increase collaboration (Visscher, 1999). Although the physical barriers may be removed, there is no guarantee, however, that collaboration will occur. In order for collaboration to occur, organizational members must feel comfortable and willing to approach their colleagues. One factor that may affect the approachability of an individual is the degree to which that individual engages in territorial behavior.

Territoriality may negatively affect the approachability of an individual in several different ways. Marking that creates boundaries will communicate to others a person’s claim to an object. This may then create a symbolic barrier to collaboration. Others may avoid interacting with a territorial individual because of shared norms governing territories and the establishment of boundaries. If the boundaries are clearly marked, in order to avoid infringing on the territorial individual, other organizational members may be reluctant to venture into certain areas, take on certain roles, or engage with particular
Second, engaging in territorial behavior, and more specifically anticipatory defending, may create physical tangible barriers that actually prevent interaction. Anticipatory defenses such as locks on doors may reduce the number of communication opportunities (Szilagyi & Holland, 1980). Reduced contact between individuals may lower their familiarity with the individual which is an important factor in desire or willingness to work with someone (Hinds, Carley, Krackhardt, & Wholey, 2000).

Territorial behaviors may also reduce the attractiveness of the individual as someone to approach and interact with. By claiming and protecting objects, a person may also develop a reputation for being self-interested (Brown, et al., 2005). Anticipatory defenses may also make an individual appear secretive or not trusting of others. Research shows that people avoid working with those who develop secrecy or paranoid reputations (Kramer, 2001).

**Hypothesis 6:** Territorial behaviors will be negatively associated with the perceived approachability of a territorial individual.

**Performance**

Territorial behavior may also negatively affect others perceptions of the actor’s performance. First, territoriality may lower actual performance. Territoriality can lead employees to become self-focused, taking away from their ability to connect with, and focus on the goals of the organization. This self-focus emanates from worrying about,
and being preoccupied with, marking and defending territories. To the extent that one is engaging in behaviors aimed at constructing, communicating, and protecting organizational territories, one has less time, energy, and capacity to perform. Several studies show that inrole performance drops when individual's resources, be they physical, intellectual, or emotional, are depleted (Hall & Richter, 1989; Kahn, 1992; Smith, Organ & Near, 1983).

Territorial behaviors may also negatively affect performance ratings if these behaviors signal that the individual is not focused on the team or organization. Identity-oriented marking may signal that the person is thinking about or focused on things other than the organization or its goals. Elaborate identity-oriented marking of one's workspace, for example, may also communicate to observers that the individual is spending time at work on things unrelated to their actual job. Many organizations policies that try to prevent identity-oriented marking reflect the belief that people who personalize are not as committed and will not take their work as seriously (Sundstrom & Sundstrom, 1987). Finally, territorial behaviors that claim resources or block others from using objects may signal that the individual is more interested in their own preservation and is less team oriented.

Territorial behaviors may also make one appear as an outsider. As already noted, identity-oriented marking one’s territories communicate aspects of the person’s identity. However, in an effort to distinguish oneself from others, they make themselves appear as outsiders. This dilemma has been observed and noted as one of the paradoxes of trying to be an individual and trying to belong to a group (Pratt & Rafaelli, 1997). Research on ingroup-outgroup comparisons suggests that people are biased to evaluate outgroup
members less favorably (e.g., Mehra, Kildruff, & Brass, 1997). Thus, communicating aspects of one’s identity may actually hurt an individual.

**Hypothesis 7: Territorial behaviors will be negatively associated with the perceived performance of a territorial individual.**

To this point, I have discussed the relationship between different variables without specifying a territory or object of ownership. In organizations there are many objects that can be potential territories or possessions. For the purposes of this study I asked people to report on their felt ownership and territorial behavior towards their workspace. Thus, I specifically focused on the marking and defending of one’s workspace. I chose workspaces for several reasons. First, most employees have workspaces. These can be shared or private but most employees still have a space that they feel is theirs. Thus, although limited to physical space, most people should be able to respond to questions about workspaces. Moreover, as several scholars have noted, workspaces are a dominating feature of one’s work experience and represent an important object to study (BOSTI, 1981; Gifford, 1997; Sundstrom & Sundstrom, 1987). Second, workspaces have been shown to provide excellent opportunities for studying coworker’s perceptions (see for example Elsbach, 2003; 2004; Wells, 2000) because workspaces are often visible to other people in the organization. Thus, the territorial behaviors of individuals towards their workspaces should be visible to other people in the organization. As Elsbach (2004) states, “in corporate settings, office décor sits on the front lines of social judgment process” (119).
METHODS

Research Procedure and Sample

I contacted 30 organizations and invited them to participate in this study. Ten organizations agreed to participate (33% response rate). A range of organizations were included in the sample including accounting, engineering, marketing and transportation organizations. The size of the organizations ranged from 22 employees to 110, with the average being 37. In two organizations, I gave a brief presentation to the employees before asking them to participate. In the other eight organizations I sent the surveys to a contact person who distributed the packages to the individual employees. There were no differences in employee response rates between the organizations I presented at and the ones that I did not.

In total, I distributed 372 surveys and received 228 replies for a 61% response rate. One organization had only a 9% response rate. In this organization the surveys were not handed out to the employees (either directly or in their mailboxes) but were left at the receptionist’s desk. The organization sent out an email informing employees of the survey and inviting them to participate. There were no differences between the other organizations in terms of response rate.

Upon completion of the study, I provided each organization with a profile of their organization at which point I was able to confirm that there was no response bias in terms of the gender, age or position of the respondents for all but one organization. In one organization, I only received responses from females (n = 9). There was no apparent reason for this response bias. As explained below, I did check for further differences
between organizations on the key variables and I controlled for gender in all the analyses.

I used the full sample of 228 respondents to test the relationships between the independent variables of psychological ownership and territorial behaviors and self-report dependent variables of commitment and affect. Of the 228 respondents who completed the self survey, 54% of the sample was female and the average tenure with the respective company was 10 years (s.d. = 10.21). Eighteen percent of the respondents were in a managing position or higher and 14% were administrative personnel. Most people had a bachelor’s degree or higher (62%) while many others had some technical training or university experience (26%). The average age was 40.81 (s.d. = 12.74).

Participants were also asked to complete a separate survey about their five spatially closest coworkers. Of the 228 respondents, 94 individuals were rated by at least three coworkers. I used this sample of 94 individuals to test the relationship between the independent variables of psychological ownership and territoriality and the dependent variables measuring coworker perceptions. Of the 94 people who were rated at least 3 times, 46% of the sample was female. There were no other demographic differences between the employees that were rated and the employees that were not. For example, the average tenure with the respective company was 10.21 years (s.d. = 10.27), 17% of the sample were in a managing position or higher and 14% were administrative personnel. The average age was 40.78 (s.d. = 12.65). There were also no differences in the feelings of ownership or territorial behaviors between those who were rated by at least three people and those who were not.
Self Report Measures

Where possible the variables were measured using previously established scales. Both the self and coworker surveys were pre-tested using graduate (PhD and MBA) and undergraduate students. Means, standard deviations, reliabilities and correlations between measures are reported in Table 1.

___ Insert Table 1 about here ___

Psychological ownership. Psychological ownership to one’s workspace was measured using an adapted measure of psychological ownership to the organization. The general measure of psychological ownership was developed by Vande Walle, Van Dyne, and Kostova, (1995) and validated by Van Dyne and Pierce (2004). It has successfully been adapted to study ownership feelings towards one’s job (Pierce, O’Driscoll, & Coghlan (2004). The four items used in this study were “this is my workspace”, “I sense that this workspace is mine”, “I feel a very high degree of personal ownership for this workspace”, and “I sense that this is my workspace”. Respondents indicated their responses on a 7 point Likert scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree.

Territoriality. Respondents were asked to indicate the frequency with which they had engaged in three types of territorial behavior towards their workspace in the past year. This measure was developed and validated by Brown (second paper) for studying territorial behaviors towards workspaces in organizations. There were six items measuring identity-oriented marking. Sample items of the identity-oriented marking
construct include "brought in personally meaningful photographs (e.g., friends, family, pets, activities you enjoy)" and "posted personal achievements (e.g., qualifications, awards) in my workspace". There were five items measuring control-oriented marking. Sample control-oriented marking items included "created a border around my workspace" and "used signs to communicate that the workspace has been claimed". There were six items measuring anticipatory defending. Items from the anticipatory defending measure included "made my workspace unusable by others (e.g., by hiding files, locks, passwords)" and "avoid leaving my workspace unattended". Respondents indicated the frequency with which they had engaged in each behavior in the past year by on a 7-point Likert type scale with 1 = not at all and 7 = all the time.

**Organizational commitment.** Two types of commitment, affective and continuance, were measured using Allen and Meyer's (1990) organizational commitment measure. Responses range from 1 to 7 on a Likert type scale with 1 representing "not at all" and 7 representing "very much". The measure of affective commitment contains seven items such as "this organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me" and "I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization" (reverse scored). The measure of continuance commitment contains seven items such as "It wouldn't be too costly for me to leave my organization now" (reverse scored) and "right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire".

**Affect.** I used the PANAS scale (Watson et al., 1988) to measure both positive and negative feelings to one's workspace. Respondents were asked "To what degree do you feel the following when you think of your workspace". The ten positive affect items are as follows: "attentive, interested, enthusiastic, excited, alert, inspired, active, strong,
proud, and determined”. The ten negative affect items are as follows: “distressed, upset, hostile, irritable, scared, afraid ashamed, guilty, nervous, and jittery”. Respondents rated each item on a 7-point Likert type scale from (1 = very slightly to 7 = extremely) indicating the degree to which they felt each affect item when thinking about their workspace.

**Coworker Report Measures**

Raters rated up to five coworkers on three sets of questions that were used to assess a coworker’s power, approachability, and performance. There was one question assessing an individual’s power, three questions about their approachability, and four questions about their performance. I created a composite score for each rated individual using a two step method. In Step 1, I created a composite score for each rated individual by first aggregating the individual items by rater. At this step, I also calculated the reliability for each variable based on the individual items that comprised each composite. The reliability for approachability was .82 and for performance was .92 (power was measured with a single item and thus did not have a reliability score). In Step 2, I computed an average score for each rated individual by aggregating the rater’s ratings of that coworker for that variable. I also calculated the intraclass correlation coefficient to assess the agreement between raters of rated individuals. I calculated the ICC by taking the composites. The ICC for power was .82, for performance the ICC was .72 and for approachability the ICC was .64.

**Power.** Power was measured by asking employees to rate other coworkers on a potency measure used by Krackhardt (1990). Using the strategy outlined by Krackhardt, I provided the following definition: “Power is the ability to get things done, in spite of
whatever resistance he or she may encounter. People who are powerful can get most of what they want.” Each person rated each their coworkers on a 7-point scale on the ability to get things done. Anchors were 1 = not at all powerful and 7 = highly powerful.

**Approachability.** Approachability of the territorial individual was assessed by asking coworkers to indicate their willingness (or comfort) to a) approach the target individual for help on a work-related issue, b) borrow a work related item from the target individual and c) enter the target individual’s workspace if they were not there. Raters rated their coworkers using a 7-point Likert type scale with 1 = not at all comfortable and 7 = very comfortable.

**Performance.** A measure of inrole performance was assessed using a measure of ability to work with co-workers similar to that used by Welbourne, Johnson and Erez, (1998). Coworkers rated the target individual using a 7-point Likert type scale with 1 = needs much improvement and 7 = excellent. Sample items included “works as part of a team or work group” and “responds to the needs of others in his/ her workplace”.

**Analyses**

Because respondents who were rated by 3 or more ratees represented a restricted subset of the full sample, I tested the individual attitude and coworker perception hypotheses using two types of analyses. I used structural equation modeling (SEM), using AMOS 5.0 (Arbuckle, 2003) to test the individual attitude hypotheses. I tested the coworker perception hypotheses using OLS regression. In both sets of analyses, I examined the relationship between each type of territorial behavior (identity-oriented marking, control-oriented marking, and anticipatory defending) and the specific
dependent variable. I also included the same control variables, gender and position, in all analyses.

For the SEM, I followed a two-step modeling approach recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). This involves first developing the measurement model and then testing the structural and measurement model together.

After confirming the fit of the measurement model, I formed composite variables for each construct from their respective items and used those composites as single indicators of their respective factors. I did this in order to maximize the sample size-free parameter ratio and followed the guidelines set out by Joreskog and Sorbom (1988). They recommend fixing the loadings by the square root of the reliability of the composite scale (sqrt r) and the measurement errors by the product of the unreliability by the variance ([1 - r] X s.d.²).

RESULTS

As noted above, ten organizations participated in this study. There were significant differences between organizations on three key variables: identity-oriented marking, continuance commitment, and positive affect. However, posthoc tests using Scheffe (1959) showed that the only difference between pairs of organizations was in terms of identity-oriented marking. One organization had higher identity-oriented marking than any other organization (mean = 5.50 (s.d. = 1.17), average for the remaining nine organizations was 3.01 (s.d. = 1.60)). The organization with higher identity-oriented marking did not have any policies encouraging marking of workspaces. The difference between the organizations may be that this organization was also the organization where only females responded to the survey. Because there were no other
differences on the key variables and the fact that I controlled for gender in the analyses, I included all the organizations (and hence all respondents) in the remaining analysis.

Descriptive statistics and correlations among variables are presented in Table 1. The mean and standard deviations (Table 1) suggest that many employees do feel ownership over their workspaces (average of 4.7 on a 7.0 scale). As for the territorial behaviors, the average frequency was quite low; however, almost all individuals engaged in some type of marking and defending of their workspace. The most commonly engaged in behaviors were identity-oriented markings. Eighty-nine percent of the respondents indicated that they engaged in some identity-oriented marking in the past year. Sixty-eight percent reported engaging in some type of control-oriented marking in the past year. Consistent with Brown (second paper) anticipatory defending was engaged in the least frequently with only 57% of the respondents indicating that they had engaged in some type of anticipatory defending in the past year.

The different types of territorial behavior were significantly and positively correlated with each other. The strongest correlation was between identity-oriented marking and control-oriented marking ($r = .44, p < .01$). The weakest correlation was between identity-oriented marking and anticipatory defending behaviors ($r = .16, p < .05$). Psychological ownership was significantly correlated with the both identity-oriented marking ($r = .27, p < .01$) and control-oriented marking ($r = .17, p < .05$) but not anticipatory defending behavior ($r = .12, p > .05$).

There were only a couple of significant differences between females and people in different positions in terms of psychological ownership or territorial behavior. Consistent with previous research from environmental psychology (e.g., Wells, 2000), females were
more likely to engage in identity-oriented marking \((r = .16, p < .05)\). Those in higher positions were also more likely to engage in identity-oriented marking \((r = .22, p < .01)\). I controlled for both gender and position in the subsequent analyses.

**Individual Attitudes**

*Measurement model (CFA).* Anderson and Gerbing (1988) recommend that the original model be trimmed before testing the proposed structural relationships of the hypothesized model. To this effect, I checked and confirmed that each indicator significantly loaded on its assigned factor (pattern coefficient was greater than twice its standard error). Following this criterion, I dropped two items, one from each of the commitment scales. The fit statistics for the measurement model indicated reasonable fit and support for the factor structure of the constructs used in the study \((\chi^2 = 2452.48, df = 1332, p < .01; \chi^2 / df = 1.84; IFI = .83; RMSEA = .061)\).

*Structural Model.* As described above, I used composites in the structural model. For each item I fixed the loadings and error terms following the recommendations by Joreskog and Sorbom (1988). To further maximize the sample size-free parameter ratio, I only included paths from the control variables to the other variables (both the independent and dependent variables) that were theoretically related or that had a significant correlation \((p < .05)\) based on the saturated structural model. The correlations among the latent factors from the saturated structural model are reported on the upper half of the diagonal of Table 1.

The chi square test for the theoretical model (Figure 2) was not rejected \((\chi^2 = 22.03, df = 20, p > .05)\) indicating that the observed correlational structure could have been created by the theoretical model represented by the SEM. The fit indices further
confirmed that the hypothesized model was a good fit ($\chi^2 / df = 1.10$; IFI = .99; and the RMSEA = .02). I used the results from this model to evaluate the hypothesized relationships.

As shown in Figure 2, feelings of ownership were significantly related to affective commitment ($\beta = .62$, $p < .01$). No territorial behaviors were related to affective commitment, although identity-oriented marking was positively associated at the $p < .10$ level ($\beta = .16$). Neither feelings of ownership nor any of the territorial behaviors were related to continuance commitment.

In terms of affect felt towards the workspace, there was a significant positive correlation between feelings of ownership and positive affect ($\beta = .33$, $p < .01$). Identity-oriented marking was also positive associated with positive affect ($\beta = .23$, $p < .01$) supporting hypothesis 3. No other territorial behaviors were significantly related to positive affect.

Feelings of ownership were significantly related to feelings of negative affect indicating that higher felt ownership was associated with less negative affect ($\beta = -.24$, $p < .01$). There was also a significant relationship between negative affect and anticipatory defending; however, it was in the opposite direction to my prediction ($\beta = .36$, $p < .01$).
Coworker Perceptions

Using hierarchical linear regression I first entered the control variables gender and position at Step 1 and then feelings of ownership at Step 2. I then entered identity-oriented marking, control-oriented marking, and anticipatory defending at Step 3 (see Table 2 for coefficient values for each outcome).

The model explained a significant amount of variance in the coworker's perceptions of power $F(6, 87) = 4.69, p < .01$. Overall, the model explained 25% of the variance in coworker's perceptions of a target individual's power. In terms of the relationship between territoriality and coworker perceptions of the territorial individual anticipatory defending was significantly associated with power ($\beta = -.41, p < .01$). Thus, hypothesis five was supported. People who engaged in anticipatory defending behaviors were perceived as less powerful. As expected, psychological ownership was not significantly related to coworker perceptions of power.

The model predicting coworker's perceptions of an actor's approachability was not significant, $F(6, 87) = .92, p > .05$. Thus hypothesis six was not supported. In contrast, the model predicting coworker's perceptions of a target individual's performance was significant, $F(6, 87) = 2.42, p < .05$. Overall, the model explained 14% of the variance in coworker's perceptions of a target individual's performance. In terms of the relationship between territoriality and coworker perceptions of the territorial individual, anticipatory
defending was significantly associated with performance ratings ($\beta = -.26, p < .05$). Thus, hypothesis seven was supported. People who engaged in anticipatory defending behaviors received poorer performance evaluations by their coworkers. Again, as expected, psychological ownership was not significantly related to coworker perceptions of an individual’s performance.

**DISCUSSION**

This study is the first to examine both territoriality and psychological ownership in an organizational context. I looked at the relationships between feeling ownership and engaging in territorial behavior with the actor’s attitudes as well as attitudes by others about the actor. The main goal of the study was to begin to map and understand the role of psychological ownership and territoriality in organizations. To this end, this study makes several important contributions to the understanding of these issues in organizations.

This study shows that territoriality and psychological ownership are related to each other but that they also relate differently to various outcomes. In general, I found that both psychological ownership and territoriality are significantly associated with feelings of affect towards the workspace. However, only psychological ownership was related to organizational commitment, while only territoriality was related to coworker perceptions of the territorial individual. In the next sections I elaborate on the observed relationships and discuss the implications of these relationships for future research and practise in organizations.
Findings and Implications for Future Research

The findings in the current study have several implications for the research on individual attitudes, the social work environment, and both the psychological ownership and territoriality literatures.

**Individual attitudes.** The findings in this study suggest that psychological ownership, and to a lesser extent territoriality, has implications for understanding individual-organizational attitudes as well as attitudes towards the object of ownership.

Psychological ownership was significantly related to affective commitment but not continuance commitment. This is interesting because it suggests that psychological ownership may be more related to the affective dimension of attitudes rather than the cognitive aspect of attitudes (in so much as affective commitment reflects the affective dimension of an attitude and continuance commitment reflects the cognitive dimension of an attitude). Future research should examine the extent to which feelings of ownership are related to cognitive evaluations. This will inform psychological ownership theory and further develop its applicability and relevance in organizations.

In terms of the relationship between territoriality and affective and continuance commitment, none of the hypotheses were supported. Although there was a significant bivariate correlation between identity-oriented marking and affective commitment, this relationship was not significant when also accounting for the relationship between feelings of ownership and affective commitment. Of course, it is premature based on only one dependent variable, to assume that territoriality does not relate to individual-organizational attitudes. Future research needs to examine a wider range of potential outcomes but should include psychological ownership in these studies to test whether
territorial behaviors add explanatory power beyond that accounted for by ownership. As discussed earlier, and again below, it is also possible that territorial behavior reinforces feelings of ownership and thus may have important, albeit indirect, effects on individual-organizational attitudes.

In terms of attitudes towards the object as measured by affective feelings towards one's workspace, both identity-oriented marking and psychological ownership were significantly related to feelings of positive affect towards the workspace. This is consistent with previous research that shows that we tend to favourably evaluate objects which we see as ours (Nuttin, 1987). Among the territorial behaviors, identity-oriented and control-oriented marking had significant bivariate correlations with positive affect but only identity-oriented marking was significantly related when the other variables were included in the model.

Psychological ownership and territoriality were also significantly related to negative affect. However, in this case, only anticipatory defending was correlated to feelings of negative affect towards the workspace. Moreover, the relationship between anticipatory defending and negative affect was in the opposite direction to the original prediction. The original argument was that if people use anticipatory defences, it should reduce negative affect because it reduces the fear of infringement. One possible explanation for the observed results may be that by engaging in anticipatory defenses, one becomes aware of their fear or reinforces their fear of infringement. Self-perception theory (Bem, 1972) suggests that our actions can influence our beliefs. By acting territorially, we reinforce our claims and attachments to the territory. However, in defending objects, we may also make ourselves more fearful that the territory may be
infringed upon. This may then lead to heightened negative affect. Consistent with this notion, Bless and colleagues (Bless, Clore, Schwarz, Golisano, Rabe, & Wolk, 1996) found that negative affective states can be induced by troublesome situations, characterized by disappointment or threat.

Coworker perceptions. In sum, both feelings of ownership and territoriality have relevance for the individual level. Yet, within every organization there are multiple levels. A particular strength of this study was the use of both coworker and self-reports. In particular, peer assessments have been found to be a valid and reliable means of measurement (Love, 1981). This allowed me to look at the relationship beyond just the individual and explore the relationship of territorial behavior with coworkers’ perceptions. This is especially important for territorial behavior because it is social by nature.

As expected, only territorial behaviors, and not feelings of ownership were related to coworker perceptions of the target actor. In partial support of my original arguments, I found that territoriality has a negative correlation with coworker’s perceptions of territorial individuals. More specifically, coworkers viewed individuals who extensively used anticipatory defenses as less powerful and as poorer performers than individuals who did not engage in such defenses.

The use of anticipatory defenses appears to have unintended consequences for the individual. I believe that anticipatory defending communicates a lack of power and the negative correlation between perceptions of power and anticipatory defending is in line with this argument. Aside from issues of causality, which will be discussed below, the interpretation is confounded by the fact that these people may actually lack power. Thus,
it is unclear to what extent coworkers are being influenced by a person's use of anticipatory defending. It is possible that, similar to what Ashforth and Gibbs (1990) describe as the dilemma with organizational legitimization, anticipatory defending is used by those who are less powerful to increase their power but that this behavior may communicate to others that they are indeed less powerful. Regardless, the observed relationship is very intriguing and needs to be addressed by future research that can establish the effect, both the magnitude and the direction, of anticipatory defending and perceptions of power.

There are potentially interesting implications that extend from this relationship. For example, it may be that people use anticipatory defenses to thwart infringement attempts. Ironically, these behaviors may backfire if anticipatory defenses communicate a lack of power because other people are likely to ignore/take advantage of those in low power positions (Keltner et al., 2003). For example, people in higher power are more likely to infringe on the territories of those in lower power (Esser, Chamberlain, Chapple, & Kline, 1965). Thus, by communicating a lack of power, anticipatory defending may increase infringement attempts. Further perpetuating this cycle, research suggests that those with less power are more observant and pay increasing attention to the actions and intentions of others (Emory, 1988; Fiske, 1993; Henley & LaFrance, 1984). Thus people low in power may be more motivated to engage in anticipatory defenses but, again, by doing so, they continue to send signals that they are not powerful.

Anticipatory defending was also related to poorer performance ratings by coworkers. Perhaps anticipatory defending behaviors are viewed as attempts to control others and thus they elicit stronger negative reactions. Consistent with this notion,
Elsbach (2003) found that coworkers tend to interpret status displays negatively. Ironically, the motivation for anticipatory defending may have little to do with need for power or trying to gain political advantage (Brown, second paper).

Surprisingly there was no significant relationship between territoriality and approachability. This is surprising given that anticipatory defending in particular would seem to establish barriers to communication. It is possible that the measure of approachability used in the current study was too narrow for what was intended in this study. One of the arguments was that territorial behaviors established barriers that reduced interaction and familiarity. However, it is possible that an individual can be very territorial over what they feel is theirs but go out of their way to interact with others, perhaps in public areas of the organization (i.e., the staff lunchroom). This may offset some of the isolating effects of barriers. It is also possible that the territorial individual might be very approachable if individuals follow correct protocol (i.e., respect the territorial individual’s markings). In fact, this may help make the territorial individual more approachable because they are more predictable or understandable. Altman and Haythorn (1967) argued that territorial behavior helps organize resources more efficiently. Similarly, Brown et al., (2005) argued that, at a social level, territorial behavior may serve to reduce conflict by making clear the boundaries of territories. Future research should address this potential tension between behaviors that create barriers and isolate individuals and behaviors that may actually facilitate communication.

In addition to questions about the relationship between territorial behavior and coworker perceptions, future research is needed to understand further the impact that territorial behavior has on the perceiver in terms of their attitudes and behaviors. If one’s
coworkers are territorial, it may create an uncomfortable work environment because one is constantly infringing or afraid to infringe on another’s territory. Or, as suggested above, territorial behavior may reduce anxiety and may make the territorial individual more approachable.

As a complement to this work, it would be useful to measure territorial behavior from the observer’s perspective. This could be done using the same list of territorial behaviors or through more general assessments such as a question that asked the degree to which the observer felt the person would object to them entering their workspace or doing their job. This would help assess the degree to which territorial behavior is accurately communicated and received. It may be that much territorial behavior goes unnoticed or is processed at a subconscious level or, it may be that it is explicitly recognized. To the extent that we can determine its affects on others we can advance our understanding of territoriality at the social level of the organization.

*Emerging literature on psychological ownership and territoriality.* Finally, my findings are important for both the psychological ownership and territoriality literatures. As noted previously, there is very little empirical work examining issues of psychological ownership and territoriality in organizations. This study contributes to both literatures by showing how they are related to different organizational variables. Additionally, this study is among the first to examine how territoriality and psychological ownership are related to one another.

Somewhat surprisingly, I found that the relationships between feelings of ownership and the different territorial behaviors were not that strong. This is surprising because both constructs deal with the more general issue of proprietary attachment. It
may be that, as Brown and colleagues (2005) discuss, there are factors that moderate the relationship between psychological ownership and territorial behavior. For example, in this study, many people had an office with defined walls. Moreover, very few people shared offices. Because there are already predefined boundaries, people may feel less need to engage in control-oriented marking, even if they have strong feelings of ownership. To the extent that people’s offices have doors that they can close or walls they may also feel less need to use anticipatory defenses. Unfortunately, I am unable to test this in the current study because very few people shared an office (only 36 out of 228). Future research should test these to see if these and other factors moderate the relationship between feelings of ownership and territorial behavior.

Finally, there may also be a range of factors that prevent one from engaging in territorial behaviors towards objects that one feels ownership over. In some situations it may not be possible or justifiable to be territorial. Corporate policies and organizational culture can limit the degree to which one can personalize spaces or objects in the organization (Sundstrom, 1987; Sundstrom & Sundstrom, 1986). To the extent that corporate policies and cultural norms encourage, rather than discourage, such actions, I would expect to see a stronger relationship between feelings of ownership and territorial behavior in the workplace. In the current study, however, I did not observe differences in the frequency of anticipatory defending between organizations.

Differences in cultural backgrounds may also moderate the differences between feelings of ownership and territorial behavior. Although the need to own may be universal (Dittmar, 1992), how people express feelings of ownership may vary between cultures. In the current study I did ask respondents to what ethnic groups they identified
with but this was not significantly related to either feelings of ownership or territorial behavior. I suspect part of the reason for this is that most respondents had likely lived in North America and been influenced by Western values for some time.

In addition to understanding how psychological ownership and territority relate to one another, it is also useful to see how they make different predictions about the same phenomenon. For instance, a recent study by Van Dyne and Pierce (2004) found that psychological ownership was significantly associated with organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (as rated by one’s managers). Yet, in this study, feelings of ownership to one’s workspace were not related to performance (as rated by one’s coworkers). Moreover, territorial behavior, in the form of anticipatory defending, was negatively associated with inrole performance. There are several interesting questions that derive from these findings. For example, do feelings of ownership translate into higher discretionary behavior but not inrole performance? How are feelings of ownership and territoriality interpreted by different sources? These are just a few of the many questions that need to be addressed in future research and which have also have interesting managerial implications.

**Managerial / Practical Implications**

There are several interesting implications that derive from this study. First, this study reaffirms that organizations and managers need to explicitly address and learn to deal with issues of ownership and territoriality. For one thing, it cannot be eliminated. Even in supposedly “non-territorial” office settings people still find ways to display their identity (Elsbach, 2003) and claim objects (Nathan, 2002). The well known story of Chiat/Day’s office redesign (and failure of such) provides an example of how, upon
losing their physical space territories, employees began barring doors, taking over client rooms, and hiding favourite equipment (see Nathan, 2002). In my study, feelings of ownership were common. Moreover, almost all individuals engaged in some type of territorial behavior. To the extent that this study focused only one object, workspaces, it severely underestimates the prevalence of psychological ownership and territorial behavior in organizations.

Second, the results from this study suggest that there may be some potential benefit to the individual (and thus the organization) from owning. There were significant relationships between feelings of ownership and both commitment to the organization and positive attitudes (in terms of affect) towards the individuals workspace. These feelings may extend beyond the workspace and translate into positive action and attitudes towards the organization (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996).

One concern implied at the outset of this study was that the benefits of psychological ownership might be offset by territorial behavior, specifically anticipatory defending. However, at least in this study, the fact that anticipatory defending did not relate strongly to feelings of ownership suggests that organizations can actually encourage owning without negative effects. Moreover, the two territorial behaviors that were related to feelings of ownership did not relate negatively to coworker perceptions. More research is needed to understand how to avoid or manage anticipatory defending. Because of the weak relationships in this study between marking and defending and between feelings of ownership and defending, and based on the theoretical work by Brown, Lawrence, and Robinson (2005) I suspect that the primary motivator behind anticipatory defending is a fear of infringement. Thus, it may be possible to encourage
the positive aspects of ownership if managers are aware that “property rights” in organizations, need to be respected and supported.

Limitations

The biggest issue in the current study is the inability to demonstrate the direction of causality. Due to the cross sectional design of the current study, we cannot determine to what extent feelings of ownership and territoriality change employee’s attitudes or to what extent these attitudes impact feelings of ownership and territoriality. For example, although the argument was made that feeling ownership over one’s territory leads to greater commitment it is also plausible that when one feels committed they are more likely to feel ownership towards objects in the organization. Thus, an important next step is to establish the causality through experimental design and longitudinal studies.

A second potential limitation in this study is the generalizability of the findings. This is a potential limitation because I only examined feelings of ownership and territorial behavior towards a physical object, one’s workspace. In organizations, there are a variety of objects in organizations to which employees feel ownership over including work products (Das, 1993), jobs (Peters & Austin, 1985), and even specific issues within the organization (Pratt & Dutton, 2000). However, I contend that this should not affect the nature of the relationships between the variables in this study. The theoretical arguments should apply to all types of objects. In fact, it is likely that some objects, such as ideas, will hold much more personal significance to individuals than one’s workspace. A bigger issue then is to what extent some of the territorial behaviors apply to these types of territories. Although beyond the scope of this study, new measures
of territoriality towards ideas and roles as territories will need to be developed in order to study territoriality towards these objects.

Finally, although a particular strength of this study was the use of both self and coworker reports, I am unable to eliminate all sources of common method variance. For example, the observed relationships may be somewhat inflated due to the fact that all the measures were assessed using surveys. With territorial behaviors in particular, it may be possible to employ observation (by the researcher) of an individual’s territorial behavior. Of course, this presents its own challenges in terms of access and potential outsider influence but, perhaps, used in conjunction with self-report measures, it may give an interesting comparison and reduce concerns associated with using common methods.

**Conclusion**

Issues of attachment to objects in organizations remain underexplored. Yet, the importance of feeling ownership and being territorial should not continue to be ignored. These are important issues that are germane to organizations. Not only are issues of territoriality and psychological ownership important to the individual, engaging in territorial behavior also affects the social work environment. Although this study looked at both individual and social levels in the organization, the full ramifications of psychological ownership and territoriality are still unclear. Even though researchers in this area may encounter some resistance by people who feel ownership over this topic, there remain many exciting directions, some of which are unmarked and certainly not defended.
REFERENCES


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FIGURE 1
Hypothesized Model

Psychological Ownership

Territorial Behavior

Individual Attitudes

Coworker Perceptions
FIGURE 2
Relationships Between IVs and Individual DVs (Commitment and Affect)

1. For diagram clarity, only significant paths between constructs are shown.
2. Paths = standardized regression coefficients.
3. *p < .05, ** p < .01
4. R² is provided to the right of each DV
## TABLE 1

Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Correlations Among Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Name</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>s.d.</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
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<td>Identity-oriented marking</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control-oriented marking</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>(.66)</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.09</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anticipatory Defending</td>
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<td>0.77</td>
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<td>.29**</td>
<td>(.68)</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Psychological Ownership</td>
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<td>1.44</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>(.90)</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>-.20*</td>
<td>.62**</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive Affect</td>
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<td>1.42</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>(.95)</td>
<td>-.18*</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.08</td>
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<tr>
<td>Negative Affect</td>
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<td>.07</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>-.18*</td>
<td>-.17*</td>
<td>(.89)</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<td>-.13</td>
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<td>.07</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>-.16*</td>
<td>(.80)</td>
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<td>.11</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.05</td>
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<td>(.72)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
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<td>-.15</td>
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<td>.04</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approachability</td>
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<td>.03</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>(.81)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.63**</td>
<td>.58**</td>
<td>(.92)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (1 = female)</td>
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<td>0.50</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>-.02</td>
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<tr>
<td>Position¹</td>
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<td>0.92</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>-.16*</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Bivariate correlations are on the lower half of the diagonal; correlations between latent constructs used in the SEM are on the upper half of the diagonal. Reliabilities, where applicable, are listed on the diagonal.

* p < .05, ** p < .01

¹ Position was an open ended question. Responses were coded into the following categories (1 = student/ intern; 2 = secretary/ administrative assistant; 3 = employee (non secretarial, non managerial); 4 = manager/ owner).

N = 228 for self-report variables. N = 94 for coworker rating variables (power, performance, and approachability).
TABLE 2

The Relationship of Psychological Ownership and Territoriality with Coworkers
Perceptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Power</th>
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<th>Approachability</th>
<th></th>
<th>Performance</th>
<th></th>
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<td>B (SE) β</td>
<td>B (SE) β</td>
<td>B (SE) β</td>
<td>B (SE) β</td>
<td>B (SE) β</td>
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<td>0.37(.16) 0.25**</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.10(.13) 0.08</td>
<td>0.23(.13) 0.18</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings of ownership</td>
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<td>0.01(.05) 0.01</td>
<td>0.02(.06) 0.04</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Step 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.38(.22) 0.19</td>
<td>0.32(.16) 0.22*</td>
<td>0.37(.16) 0.25**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
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<td>0.23(.13) 0.18</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.02(.06) 0.04</td>
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<td>0.37(.16) 0.25**</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.16(.14) 0.14</td>
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<td>0.02(.06) 0.04</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Identity-oriented marking</td>
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<td>-0.06(.05) -0.13</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control-oriented marking</td>
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<td>Anticipatory defending</td>
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<td>-0.11(.11) -11</td>
<td>-0.28(.11) -0.26**</td>
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<td>Model F</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05, **p < .01
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This final chapter provides an opportunity to review the main findings from my dissertation and to discuss limitations and future directions. After each paper I have tried to suggest specific implications, limitations and future directions so in this chapter I will not repeat those statements but rather paint a bigger picture, afforded me now with the dissertation nearing completion.

Main Contribution

The main contribution of my dissertation is the introduction of a new concept to the field of organizational behavior. I have defined and operationalized the construct territoriality and shown that territorial behavior relates to a variety of other variables of interest in organizations. However, this is just the beginning of what I foresee as a long and rich area of study. Territoriality offers a new way of looking at familiar issues. For example, in my dissertation I outlined how territoriality has relevance for studying and understanding power and politics and conflict in organizations. There are many other possibilities as well. Although I drew on some identity theory arguments, this connection needs to be explored further. For example, issues surrounding psychological ownership and territoriality seem relevant for organizational identification research. To what extent should organizations allow individuals to develop and express ownership and territoriality? Elsbach (2003; 2004) also provides good examples of emerging work in the area of identity display. Her work seems to incorporate part of the struggle that organizations face between recognizing individuals need to express themselves and the effects of this identity expression on coworkers. Similarly, although not explicitly stated as such, boundary theory work by scholars such as Ashforth, Kriener and Fugate (2000)
speaks, at least indirectly to territoriality, and perhaps directly to the emerging work on infringement (Brown, Robinson, & Read, in progress). The imagery of mental fences appears relevant to understanding the boundaries of territories between people.

The potential overlap with other theories underscores the need for a better understanding of territoriality. It bears repeating that without the idea of territoriality, behavior that we observe in organizations could largely be ignored or mislabelled. In future research we should consider further the overlap and differences with additional OB theories.

**Future Directions**

Where do we go from here? There are numerous, in fact countless, next steps. Rather than trying to list all the possible next steps, in the next section I discuss what I believe are the three most significant future directions that are critical to successfully developing the theory and application of territoriality in organizations.

One of the most important next steps is to understand better the relationship between psychological ownership and territoriality. This includes looking at moderators of the relationship that might help explain the lower than expected correlations between psychological ownership and territoriality. I suspect that there are several factors that moderate the relationship between territorial behavior and feelings of ownership (I have listed many of these in the previous chapters).

Part of understanding the relationship between territoriality and psychological ownership will require a better understanding of the antecedents of both. Surprisingly, theories of psychological ownership and territoriality have essentially developed independent of one another. Although the constructs seem highly related, I only saw a
few citations of the same authors. Perhaps this is due to the animal roots of territoriality theory and the identity and self-construct history that lays the foundation for psychological ownership. Yet, despite the different backgrounds, they share very similar antecedents. To understand what territoriality is and how it is different or related to psychological ownership, I believe that focusing on the antecedents may allow us to understand when one or both are likely to occur. Looking at the antecedents will also give a better understanding of what each construct is and how they are different.

Second, we need to study territoriality at multiple levels. I believe that territoriality is most interesting as a sociobehavioral construct. It affects not only the individual but also others’ perceptions of the territorial individual. Beyond this, it may also affect the behavior and attitudes of other individuals. Groups can also be territorial and, as with individual territoriality, this may affect perceptions of the group, attitudes towards other groups, and other groups’ attitudes towards the territorial group. Finally, organizations may also be territorial with similar issues. Thus, some of the findings that apply to one level may be a good starting point for extrapolation of the effects of territoriality at other levels.

Part of the levels issue, however, is the fact that the territorial behavior of one level may affect the attitudes and behaviors of other levels. For example, if a group is territorial, it may affect individual’s perceptions of the group and their interactions with the territorial group. This issue comes front and centre when we consider the idea of individual versus shared territory. Again, this may be similar to the identity paradox identified in social identity research and distinctiveness theory whereby people try to balance inclusion in the group while satisfying their need for individuality.
Third, territoriality should be studied using alternate methodologies. I think this is important for several reasons. Most importantly, I think much can be learned about a phenomenon by studying it in different ways. The limitations and biases in one method can be addressed using a different approach. Moreover, territoriality is amenable to a variety of methods. Self-report surveys are an excellent tool for research. Indeed it is hard to measure some things like attitudes using alternate methods. However, territoriality is not limited to particular research designs or methodologies. For example, the instrument developed in this study could be used as a self-report survey or as an observation tool that could be completed by coworkers or the researcher. Some aspects of territoriality can also be studied in controlled lab settings. This would allow more control over external factors and could help establish causality. For example, reactions to infringement lend themselves to studying in laboratory settings.

When considering other methodologies, I would look to environmental psychology studies that adopt a wider range of methodologies than are commonly employed in organizational research. This includes using maps where people could indicate areas that they feel are their individual territory, shared territory, or even places where they are afraid to go because of fear of infringing upon another individual’s or group’s territory. Photographs could be used to study the amount, types, and meaning communicated through identity-oriented marking. Video could be used to show subtle reactions to infringement that an individual may not be consciously aware of or may not feel comfortable reporting on self-report surveys. Scenarios could also be used to understand the acceptability of anticipatory and reactionary defenses. For example, do people support the use of anticipatory defenses in general? Do they support these
defenses when they are potentially affected by them (i.e., a password on a computer). Do they see these behaviors as political behaviors or do they see them as territorial behaviors?

By using different methods, I think we can advance our understanding of territorial issues far faster than if we feel compelled to study it using traditional methods. I also believe that these methods can provide researchers with a greater exposure to alternate strategies for conducting research on more traditional variables.

Main Limitation

Again, ignoring the specific limitations of any one study, a limitation in this dissertation is the fact that I only examined feelings of ownership and territorial behavior towards a physical object, one's workspace. In the theoretical paper I did discuss how people can feel ownership and be territorial over a wide range of objects but for practical purposes I selected a single object (workspaces) for the second and third papers. At issue then, is to what extent territorial behaviors that are used to mark and defend workspaces apply to other types of territories. Obviously people cannot hang pictures on an idea or role. Thus, new measures of territoriality towards ideas and roles as territories will need to be developed in order to study territoriality towards different types of objects.

One of my 'next steps' is to turn the measure developed in chapter three and used in chapter four into a more broadly applicable measure. In the item generation phase (chapter three), I also collected information about territorial behaviors to non-physical territories so I have a basis from which to derive measures to other specific types of objects. However, I think I will try to create a broader measure. Perhaps it will reflect more general behavioral statements (i.e., "I let others know an idea is mine") rather than
specific behaviors. In this case, the object could be easily changed to reflect roles, projects, etc....

Summary

Despite this key limitation, I am quite happy with the specific measure I developed here because it is precise and identifies specific behaviors that are common in organizations. I am also glad that I chose workspaces because workspaces are common to all employees and I believe they form an integral part of an individual’s work experience.

I believe that I have identified an exciting area of research for myself, as well as an area that has the potential to significantly impact the study and practice of organizational behavior. Based on feedback from some of my other projects I am pleasantly surprised by the enthusiasm I receive and the number of stories that people have about other people being territorial. I plan to continue studying territoriality by looking at issues of infringement while also trying to develop additional measures. This may be the final chapter of my dissertation but it is only the beginning of what I hope has many stories.
REFERENCES


Brown, Robinson, & Read, in progress


APPENDIX

Definitions/ descriptions provided to participants to elicit behaviors.

1. Description 1: Please give an example of how you would mark your workspace to express yourself (your identity) to others.

2. Description 2: Please give an example of how you would mark your workspace so that others knew it belonged to you and would not attempt to claim that workspace as their own

3. Description 3: Please give an example of how you would prevent others from successfully claiming your workspace if they tried to.

4. Description 4: Please give an example of how you would react if someone else actually claimed your workspace. This may include actions to reclaim the workspace.