Literature Review: Communication Privacy Management Theory

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Communication Privacy Management Theory (CPM) of Sandra Petronio is a theory from the interpretive approach, stemming from the socio-cultural and cybernetic traditions. CPM is a description of a privacy management system that recognizes the way that individuals coordinate privacy boundaries between and among others and suggests ways to understand possible tension between revealing and/or concealing of private information. The system contains three main parts including Privacy Ownership, Privacy Control, and Privacy Turbulence, in which lead to the understanding of the theories five core principles (Griffin et al, 2019, p. 146). Privacy ownership contains our Privacy Boundaries, which are how people think of the border(s) between public and private information, that hold information that we have but others don't. Privacy control is our decision on whether we choose to share that information with another person or not, which reshapes the boundaries in ownership. Lastly, privacy turbulence refers to when managing private information does not go in the way we expected (Griffin et al, 2019, p. 145). The first four principles of CPM deal with ownership and control of private information, whereas the fifth deals with the issues of privacy turbulence. CPM has become a theoretical framework in expanding the way the disclosure of private information is perceived through different people in varying situations. To follow, the development of CMP and how different interpretive scholars have employed the theory are discussed in this essay.

The development of CPM grew from the then new-found focus that Petronio and her colleagues had on discovering more information on the concept and process of disclosure, rather than self-disclosure (Petronio, 2004, p. 194). Petronio (2002) claims that CPM stands on the shoulders of Irwin Altman's Social Penetration Theory, and his argument on privacy presented a way to overcome the lack of understanding on disclosure by studying the process of disclosure with factoring in the concept of privacy as private information (p. 194). This is where privacy

becomes the root of understanding and Petronio's development is shifted away from the self and towards private information. After putting privacy at the focus-point, Petronio (2002) found that it is difficult to understand the disclosure of private information before defining it as a dialectic tension and claimed that disclosure and privacy were joined because "it is problematical to consider disclosure without considering a sense of privateness" (p. 196). Petronio (2002) found that by changing the focal point of self to a wider concept of private information, by defining it as a dialectical tension, and through reflection that self-disclosure was not always positive, patterns were uncovered in the tension between privacy and disclosure (pg. 196-197). In 1991 Sandra Petronio published the first description of CPM in which, of that time was called Communication Boundary Management, focused on the way that married couples manage talking about private information with each other (Petronio, 1991, p. 311). This explication of the theory was critical as it established "the significance of the recipient of the private information as a confidant, highlighted the impact relationships have on the way people manage their privacy, and understand how people are able to regulate the dialectal tension of privacy and disclosure through decision criteria that generates privacy rules" (Petronio, 2002, p. 198). The 1991 theoretical model created a pathway for Petronio and her colleagues to bring the ideas of privacy together cohesively. The study pushed them to explore deeper into "how recipients respond to disclosure and learn to cope with information they did not request", "which rules are used and how they are employed to manage our privacy boundaries", "how do the disclosers expectations influence the strategy they use to communicate private information", and "are there elements that influence a receiver's way they respond to the disclosure?" (Petronio, 1991, pg. 330-331). Petronio (2002) opted for the name Communication Boundary Management because the title fit the main purpose of the theory, however, "the change to Communication Privacy

Management Theory was more precise because the theory was now explaining privacy management not just the way boundaries functioned in general" (p. 201). Petronio (2002) claimed that an issue she ran into called for a "type of privacy management structure that not only acknowledged the dialectal tension but also isolated the way people regulated this privacy-disclosure tension" (p. 202). This led to development of the first principle (or assumption) of the theory that "individuals believe they own their private information" and "individuals need to control that information because it has the potential to make them feel vulnerable" and "feel they have the right to determine what happens to their private information" (Petronio, 2002, p.202). According to Petronio (2002) those who reviewed the manuscripts applying CPM questioned what the meaning of privacy rules are and how they originate (p. 203). This quest led to the identification of the second principle of the theory and criteria that people use when judging whether to reveal or conceal information and for the basis for rule development (Petronio 2002). The criteria include culture, gender, motivation, context, and risk-benefit ratio (p. 203). The findings of these criteria for privacy rules that expanded Petronio's consideration that the way rules function in different privacy boundaries also helped to develop the notion of her 1991 study on boundary coordination, which ultimately lead to the discovery of the theory's third principle that recipients who are disclosed with private information become a co-owner of that information because of "concomitant expectations that they will keep the information confidential" (Petronio, 2002, p. 203). From the third finding, Petronio (2002) discovered the fourth principle of CPM where co-owners of the private information negotiate rules for disclosures to third parties and the three operations: ownership, linkage, and permeability, that base boundary coordination (p. 203). While the fourth principle found assumed that each boundary coordination was successful, Petronio (2002) calls that the

theory had to account for when individuals were unsuccessful in their coordination (p. 204). Petronio (2002) and CPM call this linkage failure, and fifth principle, turbulence and describes it as "situations where there are intentional rule violations, privacy dilemmas, and when the boundary lines are fuzzy" (p. 204).

"*Exploring Privacy Management on Facebook: Motivations and Perceived Consequences of Voluntary Disclosure"* by Susan Waters and James Ackerman (2011), examined the "perceived motivations and consequences of voluntary disclosures of Facebook active users" using CPM as the theoretical framework for the study. (Ackerman & Waters, 2011, p. 101). Ackerman and Waters (2011) state that the study focused on the digital generation of millennials who use Facebook more than any other generations, who view technology as integral to their lives (Merritt & Neville, 2002; as cited in Ackerman & Waters, 2011), and explored the motivations for their disclosure and how they perceive possible consequences of the disclosure (p.102). The researchers say the foundation of this study comes from a study done by Lee et al. (2008; as cited in Ackerman & Waters 2011) that identified seven motivational factors backing the voluntary disclosure in blogs; self-presentation, relationship management, keeping up with the trends, storing information, sharing information, entertainment, and showing off, as well as the three consequences of voluntary disclosure; relationship management, psychological well-being, and habitual behavior (Ackerman & Waters, 2011, p.105). Ackerman and Waters (2011) say that because of the similarities in limited privacy between Facebook and Blogs, the reasons why people disclose online and those consequences could be analogous (p. 106). The researchers (Ackerman & Waters, 2011) first proposed research question (RQ1) asks, "What are the motivations for disclosure by users of Facebook?" and they employed CPM's privacy rule factor of risk-benefit ratio to come to conclusions (p. 106). The second research question (RQ2)

Ackerman and Waters (2011) asks, “What are the perceived consequences of disclosures by users of Facebook?” and looks at the discrepancies of disclosure through CPM’s gender factor (p.107). Lastly, Ackerman and Waters (2011) third research question (RQ3) is proposed to understand the said discrepancy and asks, “Is there a difference between males and females who disclose private information on Facebook concerning the four motivation dimensions and the two consequence dimensions?” (p. 107). Ackerman and Waters (2011) sample included a survey that was taken by college students who were enrolled in public speaking courses, 36 female and 23 male, who had a Facebook account that was active within 30 days before the survey was administered (p. 107). Lee et al.’s (2008; as cited in Ackerman & Waters 2011) study provided the 33 questions for the survey, using a qualitative Likert-type scale that contained the previously mentioned seven motivational factors for the first twenty-three questions and the three consequences for the final ten. The results from this study that Ackerman and Waters (2011) found was that there are four main motivators for Facebook users that disclose information in which are sharing information with others, to store information, to keep up with trends, and lastly to show off their popularity (RQ1) (p.110). The study concluded two significant results for RQ2. Ackerman and Waters (2011) found that the first perceived consequence was positive because the individuals that used Facebook for disclosing their private information felt it provided management for their relationships and improved their psychological well-being. The second perceived consequence was negative because those individuals that do use Facebook to disclose felt that they spent too much time on it (p. 111). As for RQ3, Ackerman and Waters (2011) found “the single conclusion from these results is that females we more motivated to disclose private information on Facebook for storing information or using it as a form of entertainment than were males” (p. 111). Additionally, “the study suggested that Facebook users are in contact more with distant friends

than with close friends" which resembles CPM's first principle that intimacy alone is not the only outcome when one is disclosing information (Ackerman & Waters, 2011, p. 112; Griffin et al., 2019, p. 146).

"*Adult Children's Experiences with their Parent's Infidelity: Communicative Protection and Access Rules in the Absence of Divorce"* of Alison R. Thorson (2009) conducted a study, guided by CPM, in which examined parental infidelity with a goal to learn what potential rules were enacted by individuals that provided access to and/or protect the information of the marital issue (p. 32). A previous study done by Thorson (2007; as cited in Thorson 2009), found that when adult children discovered their parents' extramarital relationship, it embodied expectations violations for both the parent and marriage in general (Thorson, 2009, p. 33). More specifically Thorson's 2009 study examined how adult children determine and manage privacy boundaries communicatively that surrounds the parent's infidelity information because it is still unknown "how often this information is discovered or disclosed to children" (pp. 33-34). Thorson (2009) explained that the protection and access rules were both influenced and/or dependent on the factors, culture, gender, motivation(s), context, and risk-benefit ratio, that guide CPM's second principle of concealing or revealing information (p. 34-35; Griffin et al., 2019, p. 147). The specific context of the information being shared, more specifically if it is traumatic, can "temporarily or permanently disrupt the influence of culture, gender, and motivation when people craft their rules for privacy" (Griffin et al, 2019, p. 148). The researcher's RQ1 asks, "how do individuals develop and enact privacy protection rules surrounding the information of their parent's infidelity?", while employing the factors of CPM's second principle and the Vangelisti's (1994) and Vangelisiti and Caughlin's (1997) described motivation functions, "bonding, evaluation, maintenance, privacy, defense, and communication" (Vangelisti, 1994 &

Vangelisiti & Caughlin, 1997 as cited in Thorson, 2009, p. 35; Thorson, 2009, p. 35). For the second research question Thorson (2009) asks, “How do individuals develop and enact privacy access rules surrounding the information of their parent’s infidelity?”, also while utilizing CPM’s second principle’s factors and Vangelisti et al.’s (2001; as cited in Thorson, 2009) motivational drives “intimate exchange, exposure, urgency, acceptance, conversational appropriateness, relational security, important reason, permission, or context” (pp. 35-36). Thorson (2009) used an interview guide and the elaboration of the participants to get an understanding of the participant’s communicative strategy regarding the infidelity information, in which were audio recorded and transcribed (p. 37). Of the original thirty-nine, the study analyzed thirteen interviews that Thorson (2009) says “were only representative of those situations in which participants’ parents remained married” which limited the analysis to “distinguish the findings from other research on family disruption focusing on “outcomes of divorce” (Duncombe & Marsden, 2004, p. 192) (p. 36). Thorson (2009) also claimed that she limited her analysis to the marital issues occurring in original parents because Caughlin et al. (2000; as cited in Thorson, 2009) suggested that “original parents and siblings are more likely to share a family secret” (p. 36). That data was analyzed through two methods Thorson (2009) says, the first being a collaborative date conference with three additional CPM trained researchers and the second being with help from two interview participants to confirm that her interpretations were congruent (pp. 37-38). The results of RQ1 found that participants described three protection rules that fell into internal and external categories and claims internal rules are those “to protect the information of their parent’s fidelity within the family” and external rules are to “protect this information from outsiders” (Thorson, 2009, p. 38). The first internal protection rule Thorson (2009) identified is a maintenance protection rule that participants executed as “an effort to

prevent other family members from becoming upset" and thus, maintaining harmony within the family by not discussing the information (pp. 38-39). The second internal protection rule that Thorson (2009) identified suggested that culture may play a part in how the private information is protected within the family, agreeing with one of CPM's second principle's factors of how one controls their private information (p. 39). Lastly, the external protection rule that was identified resulted from participants describing that they wanted to protect their family from the outside scrutiny others may have (Thorson, 2009, p. 39). The results of RQ2 identified five factors for family access rules that included two consistent in CPM, context and sex, and three additional factors, age, physical environment, and code terms (Thorson, 2009, p. 40). The first two factors, context and sex, determined that the decision whether to discuss or not discuss the infidelity is "contingent upon the context of the situation" and that the sex of the parent is indeed an important factor because "participants reported talking more with their mothers than fathers about their parent's infidelity" (Thorson, 2009, p. 43). The three additional factors: age, physical environment, and code term, are extensions of CPM theory. Thorson (2009) found that age is an important factor because participants described they "were privy to discussions about their parent's infidelity only if they were viewed as an adult" and "in determining whether adult children talked about their parent's infidelity across generations" (p. 44). Within the physical environment access rule, Thorson (2009) found that those who choose to discuss their parent's infidelity in a neutral place helps "believe that they are free of the presence of their parent that existed within the home" (p. 44). Fifth and final, the code terms access rule avoids using terms like cheating or infidelity and allows for a discussion of the events without having to use the emotion-heavy language (Thorson, 2009, p. 44).

"*Blogging, Communication, and Privacy Management: Development of the Blogging Privacy Management Measure"* by Jeffrey T. Child, Judy C. Pearson, and Sandra Petronio (2009), applied CPM to the "context of blogging and developed a validated, theory-based measure of blogging privacy management" (p. 2079). Child et al. (2009) explains the development of the Blogging Privacy Management Measure (BPMM) and defines it as "multidimensional, valid, and reliable construct" (p. 2079). According to Child et al. (2009), blogging disclosures are an important aspect in college students' communication and "we know little about how disclosing private information on blogs influences relationships" (p. 2079). Additionally, Child et al.'s 2009 study "seeks to take the necessary first step in developing needed valid and reliable measures to understand the way that CPM predictions play out in the world of bloggers" and their research provided a "way to measure the three privacy rule operations used when bloggers allow others to co-own private information" (p. 2081). The three privacy rule operations that the researcher's discuss are boundary permeability, boundary ownership, and boundary linkage from CPM's fourth principle. The researchers conducted three separate studies to "create, validate, cross-validate, and examine the predictive validity of such a measure" (Child et al., 2009, p. 2082). The first study conducted assessed a survey that was completed by 125 college students that "blogged an average of 4 hours per week and had been blogging for 2 years" with a purpose to develop a scale of measurement for bloggers (Child et al., 2009, p. 2082). Child et al.'s (2009) preliminary blogging measures were "assessed via participants' responses to 33 items designed to measure the three aspects of boundary coordination processes" by using a seven-point scale (p. 2083). The researchers mention that the three aspects measure the "degree to which privacy blogging rules for each area were coordinated to establish more restrictions to private information or greater public informational

access" (Child et al., 2009, p. 2083). Child et al. (2009) explains that when the submeasures have a higher score, it indicates that there is greater public information access or more disclosures and less privacy (p. 2083). Items presenting each of the three privacy boundary processes included six statements each. For boundary permeability Child et al. (2009) explains that a higher score "mean permeability rules functioned in a more public manner, where greater breadth and depth of disclosure occurs on the blog" (p. 2083). For boundary ownership, Child et al. (2009) explains that a higher score for this submeasure "indicates that an individual freely share the rights and privileges for personal information disclosed on their blog and they are less concerned about who is reading the information posted" (p. 2083). Lastly, Child et al. (2009) explains that a higher score for boundary linkage 'indicate an expends more conscious effort on the use of a blog as a network facilitator" (p. 2084). The results were analyzed through an exploratory factor analysis and a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The results from the first analysis found "the 18-item blogging privacy management scale maintained good reliability" and the CFA analysis found that "model four, with three first-order factors and one second-order factor, demonstrated a good fit" and the "results of the four model tests provide support the validity of the CPM-based three-factor model" (Child et al., 2009, 2086). The second study conducted by Child et al. (2009) served a purpose to cross-validate the previous results with the new sample. This sample included 168 college student bloggers who also completed a survey that used "the updated measure based on the reliability and validity determined in Study One" (p. 2087). This study was analyzed via the strategy utilized for Study One and using model four for the CFA analysis found "the results support substantial replication across the two samples of the BPMM" (Child et al., 2009, p. 2088) The third and final study conducted by Child et al. (2009) served purpose to examine the "discriminant and predictive validity of the measure by examining the relationship

between the BPMM and the private and public self-consciousness scale" (p. 2088). The study consisted of 365 participants who were active bloggers that completed the survey in turn was analyzed through blogging privacy management and self-consciousness measures also through CFA (Child et al., 2009, p. 2089). Child et al. (2009) had the participants also complete a self-consciousness scale that "measures the extent to which individuals explore their own internal private thoughts and the way their interactions come across to others publicly" which maintained a good reliability (p. 2088). The results from the third study found that "the three correlated factors model demonstrated the best overall fit to the data" and since none of the BPMM items cross loaded onto the self-consciousness scale, it indicated "discriminant concepts and supporting the divergent validity of the BPMM" (Child et al., 2009, p. 2089). According to Child et al. (2009), this study also found that "individuals with higher levels of internal self-consciousness also were more likely to enact public blogging privacy management rules, reflective of disclosure" (p. 2089). Overall, Child et al. (2009) explains "we were able to develop a theory-based instrument to assess the way college students manage their private information on blogs" with a measure that "is robust in its goodness of fit and its consistency with CPM theory" (p. 2091).

"Communication Privacy Management Within the Family Planning Trajectories of Voluntarily Child-Free Couples" by Dawn O. Braithwaite and Wesley Durham (2009) uses CPM as their theoretical framework to describe the "intradyadic communication processes that comprised the family planning and decision making of voluntarily child-free (VCF) couples" (p. 43). According to Braithwaite and Durham (2009), the focus of the study stemmed from lack of research that has been done regarding family planning and spouses who have communicated a decision to remain child-free (p. 43). Additionally, Braithwaite and Durham (2009) claim "it is

our aim to discover the ways in which individuals reveal their VCF family planning preferences to their spouse and how disclosure processes lead to a VCF decision for the couple" (p. 45). The research question that guided the researchers' study asked, "How, if at all, do VCF couples disclose and interact during the process of making the decision to remain child-free?" (p. 45). Braithwaite and Durham (2009) approached the study employing a Retrospective Interview Technique (RIT) graph "to serve as a visual model to display turning points reflecting the "child-free" decision" and one-on-one, in-depth interviews with 32 participants from "married heterosexual couples who self-reported that they were physically capable of having children but had chosen not to do so" (pp. 45-46). The data was analyzed using inductive as well as deductive processes. Braithwaite and Durham (2009) analyzed the interviews "line-by-line" for reassurance that they correctly recorded the participants experiences and to monitor for "micro-themes", in which the researchers found "it became evident that the emergent themes reflected particular qualities of four CPM processes comprising the communication of couples choosing to remain child-free" (p. 46). The CPM processes in which were comprising the family planning communication were then analyzed as sensitizing concepts, as well as extending the CPM's theoretical principles: boundary coordination, message-centered coordination fit, issues of satisfaction, and boundary recalibration (Braithwaite & Durham, 2009, p. 47). From here, the researchers analyzed the RIT graphs to categorize and develop four trajectories that resulted from the reoccurring evidence that "the initial family planning preferences within the couple influenced how these individuals disclosed family planning information" (Braithwaite & Durham, 2009, p. 47). The four trajectories that Braithwaite and Durham (2009) determined, accelerated-consensus (AC), mutual-negotiation (MN), unilateral-persuasion (UP), and bilateral-persuasion (BP), represent the varying types of approaches VCF couples take to their

disclosing process (p. 47). The first two trajectories had an intersected boundary coordination occur through goal and identity linkages, while the final two trajectories occur through inclusive linkages. (Table 1, p. 48). According to Braithwaite and Durham (2009) the results of the first trajectory, accelerated-consensus, defined couples in this category as those who "coupled with like-minded individuals" given there is little need to discuss the VCF decision further after it was already made (p. 49). The resulted boundary coordination for AC couples intersected through the process of goal linkages where being "child-free represented a mutual goal for both spouses" and through identity linkages where the couple's boundaries are "coordinated based on similar worldviews or experiences" (Braithwaite & Durham, 2009, p. 50). Braithwaite and Durham (2009) also found that AC couples engaged in satisfactory fit, according to the message-centered coordination, because the "direct, unambiguous set of disclosures" communicated from one spouse will be implied to and in the other's response (p. 51). The results for the second trajectory, mutual-negotiation, found that MN couples can be defined as couples who are also like-minded, though "neither member of the couple has definite initial plans on family planning" and the decision on whether they should remain childless is determined after a significantly longer amount of time or not determined at all (Braithwaite & Durham, 2009, p. 52). The study's results for goal linkage found that those in MN may pro-con the factors that go in and around having children to ultimately determine what the couples want and their identity linkage results found MN couples "analyzed their own abilities as potential parents focusing on how they could nurture a child in a complex society where external forces create problems that remain out of their control" (Braithwaite & Durham, 2009, p. 54). According to Braithwaite and Durham (2009), MN couples use satisfactory fit, on rare occasions, and use equivocal fit majority of the time due to their belief that ambiguous responses will allow their position to possibly change on

the topic of VCF (p. 55). Results for the third trajectory, unilateral persuasion, found that UP couples are formed when a spouse that wishes to be child-free manages an uneven amount power on the disclosure and control of the information over the undecided spouse and ultimately persuades them to agree that that is the best decision for the couple (Braithwaite & Durham, 2009, pp. 56-57). The researcher's examined UP couples through inclusive role linkages and found that the decision to remain child-free is usually determined by the spouse that is definite in remaining VCF (Braithwaite & Durham, 2009, p. 57). However, Braithwaite and Durham (2009) found that UP couples use both satisfactory and deficient fits due to the variance of directness or ambiguity that either spouse chooses to communicate with (pp. 58-59). The final trajectory, bilateral-persuasion, Braithwaite and Durham (2009) found that BP couples exist when a married couple consists of spouses with opposing viewpoints when disclosing the decision on whether have children and that it usually results with the child-willing spouse failing due to the power of the VCF spouse (pp. 60-61). Braithwaite and Durham (2009) examined the use of inclusive coercive linkages in BP couples and found that the "VFC-wanting spouse not only controlled the family planning decision, but also controlled how the couple disclosed about the topic", in which further resulted in relational stress that "was derived not from the actual family planning decision, but rather the disclosive and communicative moves made by their partners that confined their communication to uncertain and ambiguous responses" (p. 60). Braithwaite and Durham (2009) found that BP couples result in a deficient fit due to the "direct, unambiguous, and often heated disclosures made by the child-free wanting spouse that restricted the other spouse from revisiting the family planning topics" (p. 62).

"*A Test of Communication Privacy Management Theory in Cross-Sex Friendships*" by Erin E. Hollenbaugh and Nicole Egbert (2009) employs CPM theory to discover ways cross-sex

friends disclose their romantic feelings to each other (p.113). Egbert and Hollenbaugh (2009) claim that this study "sheds light on the fundamental process of interpersonal relationships and tests a tenet" of one of communications most promising theories (p. 113). Petronio released an initial micro-theory of CPM, previously known as Communication Boundary Management (CBM), in which produced tenets that predicted explicit disclosure messages rely on the need to disclose and the need to control private information (Petronio, 1991). The study Egbert and Hollenbaugh (2009) focuses specifically on these explicit demand messages because "conversational partners manage dialectical tensions of openness and closedness through decisions about whether to disclose *and* how they disclose" (p. 117). The researcher's used the five variables that Petronio's 1991 study identified: "need to disclose, predicted outcomes of demand, degree of risk associated with disclosing, privacy level of information, and discloser's level of emotional control" and produced five hypotheses from them, relating them positively or negatively to the explicitness of demand messages (Egbert & Hollenbaugh, 2009, p. 117). Egbert and Hollenbaugh (2009) identified and examined gender and the length/closeness of friendships as factors that potentially influence ones disclosing strategy (p. 118). From these factors, Egbert and Hollenbaugh (2009) posed two research questions (RQ1, RQ2): "Is sex related to participant's demand message explicitness?" and "Does the length and closeness of the relationship affect demand message explicitness?" (pp. 118-119). The study used a cross-sectional survey that Egbert and Hollenbaugh (2009) claim "examined whether people would choose implicit or explicit demand message strategies" when one individual revealed romantic feelings to a cross-sex friend (p.119). Participants of this study were college students, in which the researchers claim is "appropriate when studying cross-sex friendships because young adults typically have more cross-sex friends" (p. 120). The procedural process included the

participants completing two scales, “assessing the demand message explicitness” and measuring the five variables from Petronio’s (1991) initial study (Egbert & Hollenbaugh, 2009, p. 120). Egbert and Hollenbaugh (2009) examined the effects of friendship length and closeness through randomly assigning two different hypothetical scenarios in hopes to “help control extraneous variables particular to each participant’s experiences” (pp. 120-121). Petronio’s five variables (1991) were the prerequisites of demand messages that were measured by participants selecting from six explicit responses that were created for the manipulated length and closeness of the relationship scenarios (Egbert & Hollenbaugh, 2009, p. 121). Egbert and Hollenbaugh’s (2009) study found that although the five variables (or prerequisites) conditions predicted by the hypotheses accounted for 25.6% of the variance in demand explicit messages, Hypothesis 1 was the only one supported because the “need to disclose was the only variable that emerged as a significant individual predictor” (p. 126). Egbert and Hollenbaugh’s (2009) RQ1 posed as an examination meant for finding if there are any differences that existed between gender and the explicitness of the demand messages. The researchers’ found that gender added 4.4% to the variance of explicit demand messages, making it a significant predictor, and found that men were far more explicit than women regarding disclosing feelings ((Egbert & Hollenbaugh, 2009, p. 127). RQ2 implemented the need to consider that the length and the closeness of the relationship also might influence the explicitness of the message. Egbert and Hollenbaugh (2009) found that even though length and closeness resulted 1.4% of the demand variance, neither significantly predicted nor impacted the explicitness of the messages (pp. 127-128).

“*When is Topic Avoidance Unsatisfying? : Examining Moderators of the Association Between Avoidance and Dissatisfaction*” by John P. Caughlin and Tamara D. Afifi (2004) examines the issue that avoiding topics tend to be associated with dissatisfied relationships

through investigating the moderators of the connection between dissatisfaction and avoidance (p. 479). The present study, says Afifi and Caughlin (2004), addresses the inconsistency between theoretical arguments that topic avoidance can be dissatisfying as well as a satisfactory strategy by "examining conditions when topic avoidance is likely to be benign or even helpful in relationships" (p. 480). According to Afifi and Caughlin (2004) the conditions when topic avoidance and dissatisfaction are (or not) tightly bound together depend on the motivations that an individual's privacy rules rely on and there are two ways that they conceptualize these motivations (p. 483). The researchers (Afifi & Caughlin, 2004) first conceptualized individual's motivations from the individual's own perceived reasons for topic avoidance (based on the reasons: "self-protection, relationship protection, prevent conflict, unresponsive reaction, and privacy") and secondly, they look at one individual's perception of their counterpart's reasons for avoidance to see if that relates to the way their avoidance and their relational dissatisfaction (p. 485). The research questions the researchers posed following these motivations asked: (RQ1) "How (if at all) do individuals' reasons for their own topic avoidance moderate the association between their own topic avoidance and relational dissatisfaction?" and (RQ2) "How (if at all) do individuals' perceptions of their counterparts' reasons for topic avoidance moderate the association between their perceptions of their counterpart's avoidance and their own relational dissatisfaction?" (Afifi & Caughlin, 2004, pp. 484-485). The study also focuses on two factors that Afifi and Caughlin (2004) believe to be relevant to individuals perceived topic avoidance, competence and influence power, in which produced four hypotheses that serve as expectancies for individual's concerning their own and their counterpart's perceptions (Afifi & Caughlin, 2004, pp.484-487). The study consisted of "114 parent-child dyads and 100 heterosexual dating dyads" whom all completed a survey separate from one another, that measured topic avoidance,

reasons for topic avoidance, perceptions of communication competence, influence power, and relational satisfaction by assessing reasons for avoidance for both pairs of dyads (Afifi & Caughlin, 2004, pp. 484-491). The results for RQ1 found that the association between dating partners' own topic avoidance and satisfaction was "comparatively less negative to the extent that they both were high in their ratings of relationship protection" and more negative when relationship protection was not a reason for avoidance (Afifi & Caughlin, 2004, p. 493). Afifi and Caughlin (2004) also found for the parent-child dyad that the overall connection between topic avoidance and dissatisfaction was stronger for children, however for both parents and children, any negative associations for avoidance between their own topic avoidance and satisfaction was due to an unresponsive partner (p. 496). RQ2 provided results for dating partners that found that "the connection between perceptions of the partner's topic avoidance and relational dissatisfaction was less negative" due to one partner believing that the other avoided to protect the relationship (Afifi & Caughlin, 2004); additionally, the results found a significant difference in gender perceptions and reported that girlfriends connected their dissatisfaction and their perceptions of their boyfriend's avoidance due to their belief their boyfriend's topic avoidance was "due to a lack of closeness" (p. 497). Afifi and Caughlin (2004) claim for parent-child partners there are "negative interactions pertaining to the perceptions that the partner avoided" a topic for the reasons including self-protection, viewing the other as unresponsive, conflict prevention, and lack of closeness, in which "the overall inverse association between relational satisfaction and perceptions of the other's topic avoidance tended to be more negative" due to one partner believing the other avoided out of self-protection (p. 500). The researchers also included the results for their four hypotheses that aimed to predict the relationship between avoidance, and competency and influence. For hypothesis one, the prediction that an individual

avoidance and dissatisfaction would be moderated by their perception of both their own and partner's competence, Afifi and Caughlin (2004) found that overall there was "negative association between own topic avoidance and relational satisfaction was moderated by perceptions of counterparts' communication competence" (p. 501). For hypothesis two, the prediction that individuals' perceptions of their own and partner's competence moderates the association of avoidance and satisfaction, Afifi and Caughlin (2004) found that overall there is a "negative association between perceptions of the partner's avoidance and satisfaction tended to be less negative to the extent that girlfriends, children, and parents perceived that their counterpart was a competent communicator" (p. 501). For hypothesis three, the prediction that the partner with a stronger power of influence would indicate a weaker association in avoidance and satisfaction, Afifi and Caughlin (2004) found the interactions were only significant for parent-child partners (p. 501). For the fourth and final hypothesis, the prediction that an individuals' own avoidance and perception of their influence power will moderate the association of their perception of their partner's avoidance and satisfaction, Afifi and Caughlin (2004) found that "the association between perceptions of the other's topic avoidance and relational satisfaction tended to be less negative to the extent that parents and children thought they had power to influence the other" and there was no additional support for dating partners (p. 504).

Communication Privacy Management Theory of Sandra Petronio can be classified as a good interpretive theory due to the success Petronio had with meeting five out of the six standards that determine how well a theory fits the interpretive category. Although Petronio met multiple standards, the theory best meets the standard of *Community of Agreement*, which Griffin et al. (2019) defines as "the amount of support it generates within a community of scholars who

are interested in and knowledgeable about the same type of communication" (p. 31). Petronio's theory meets this standard through the theoretical void it fills (Griffin et al., 2019) by providing a needed focus on privacy and by using both qualitative and quantitative research methods to conclude the principles. According to Griffin et al. (2019), Petronio's CPM worthiness gained the attention of other communication scholars and even extended to objective theorists, which is extremely uncommon for interpretive theories (p. 155). However, there is attention needed to one standard of interpretive theories that was the single standard that CPM did not meet, which is *Aesthetic Appeal*. Griffin et al. (2019) says, "although the elegance of a theory is in the eye of the beholder, clarity and artistry seem to be the two qualities needed to satisfy this aesthetic requirement" (p. 31). CPM theory consists of many lists that lead to additional lists of classifications which can become confusing and loses sight of an artistic style. Additionally, CPM's fourth principle is an example of the clarity that this theory lacks. The fourth principle claims that people are co-owners of private information and that they must negotiate mutual privacy rules (Griffin et al., 2019), however, Petronio also claims that the co-owner should follow the direction in which the original owner of the information wants to go, which contradicts this principle (p. 155).

The future of this theory has many promising aspects to it, given what other researchers and scholars have already discovered and/or set the groundwork for future discoveries through CPM's framework. Originally, this theory provides a way to recognize and understand the different strategies that individuals choose, or not, to share their private and personal information with others, however, there are additional directions that CPM can go. For example, Thorson's (2009) study on adult children's experiences with their parent's infidelity found reasons for why privacy rules and boundaries developed, or didn't, within biological families that experienced

infidelity. However, the study neglected to extend to families whose parent's separated, families including step siblings/parents, and even families with parents of the same sex, in which leaves the door open for further CPM research on these types of families (p. 45). Additionally, families of different ethnicities and cultures could and should also be examined due to the different values that they may share on this topic. This direction of analysis could and should also be applied to the studies that focused on individual's disclosure of private information online. Although there are different cultural motivators found that influence one's decision to disclose or not online, there is much room to explore what potential motivating factors (if there are any) of those individuals who stray from their cultural norm of not disclosing and choosing to, and vice versa.

A research question that I am interested in that could be used and tests CPM asks: "Can eye contact be used as an indication of boundary linkage (or turbulence) between co-owners and a third party?" More specifically, I am interested in discovering if eye contact made between co-owners can be a factor in deciding who else gets to know the information. For example, if two co-owners of said information were approached by a third party who asked a question in relation to the said information, can the direct and/or wide eye contact given by the original owner to the co-owner serve as an indication that the information can be revealed or should remain concealed, and vice versa. CPM research provides reasons for why one chooses to or not to disclose information and how they deliver it, however, I believe there is much to discover regarding non-verbal disclosure and boundary coordination. Petronio developed CPM using both qualitative and quantitative research methods (Griffin et al., 2019), and I believe the same could be done for this particular study. Qualitatively, I would conduct open-ended interviews with participants who considered themselves in a close relationship (platonic and/or intimate) on what (if any) non-verbal que, specifically eye contact, they use/ have used when they're in a situation

involving private information where they know a third-party member does not know the information and shows interest in it. The results from this method may potentially indicate that these relationships use another and/or different non-verbal que other than eye contact in which would also be recorded. This type of research method can also extend to an original owner who creates a boundary link with another individual when the original owner may be more comfortable disclosing to one person but not the other, indicating to the one person they're comfortable with through eye contact that there is in fact information to share, just not in the presence of the assumed third-party individual. Next, a quantitative method would be used to help determine the additional non-verbal ques that participants indicate they use for private disclosure. I would provide a survey that uses a 7-point Likert-type scale (this method idea was taken from the studies included in this essay due to the efficiency and success it granted for other researcher's) ranging from 1 = *least likely* to 7 = *most likely*. Hypothetically for the purpose of this essay, let's say that the open-ended interviews found that 'foot tapping', 'hand waving', and 'physical touch', more specifically a tap on the shoulder or thigh, were the additional non-verbal indicators that one uses when communicating with their co-owner on revealing or concealing information. An example of the statements I'd include in the survey are: (1) I widen my eyes when I want my co-owner to conceal/reveal information; (2) I tap my foot when I want my co-owner to conceal/reveal information; (3) I use physical touch when I want my co-owner to conceal/reveal information. By utilizing both methods of research, I believe that the predictions/assumptions for how and why individuals use non-verbal ques as indicators would have the best as well as the largest amount of evidence to support them.

Communication Privacy Management Theory provides a way for individuals to recognize the rules and regulations that go into the process of sharing private information. Additionally, the

theory offers a new perspective with a focus on privacy and disclosure (Petronio, 2004) that brought a new light into the communicative world of how people coordinate privacy boundaries with each other. Not only has this theory been successful in supporting its own original claims, but CPM has also successfully helped other researchers in further supporting and expanding the theory, as well as developing additional disclosive strategies that individuals use for an array of situations. From framing the groundwork for a whole new measure that studies blogging and its privacy management (Child et al., 2009), to identifying reasons for why and how couples who are voluntarily child free disclose and interact (Braithwaite & Durham, 2009), CPM has proven itself to be a theory of ambiguity that can be applied to any situation of disclosure.

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