Rapid #: -8952158

CROSS REF ID: **549773**

LENDER: **AZN :: Main Library**

BORROWER: **NJR :: Main Library**

TYPE:	Article CC:CCG
JOURNAL TITLE:	Journal of managerial psychology
USER JOURNAL TITLE:	Journal of managerial psychology
ARTICLE TITLE:	Younger workers' metastereotypes, workplace mood, attitudes, and behaviors
ARTICLE AUTHOR:	Ryan, K. M., King, E. B., & Finkelstein, L. M.
VOLUME:	30
ISSUE:	1
MONTH:	
YEAR:	2015
PAGES:	54
ISSN:	0268-3946
OCLC #:	

Processed by RapidX: 2/18/2015 12:25:22 PM

Received 15 October 2013
Revised 15 February 2014
14 April 2014
Accepted 6 June 2014

Younger workers' metastereotypes, workplace mood, attitudes, and behaviors

Katherine M. Ryan and Eden B. King
Department of Psychology, George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia, USA, and
Lisa M. Finkelstein
Department of Psychology, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois, USA

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to examine the influence of age-related stereotyping processes on younger workers' mood, attitudes, and impression management behaviors at work.

Design/methodology/approach – Using survey data from 281 younger workers, the hypothesized model was tested using structural equation modeling.

Findings – As younger workers are more self-conscious about being age stereotyped, they are less likely to be satisfied with older co-workers, which is partly explained by negative mood associated with that metastereotype consciousness. Also, chronological age, age-group identification, and age prejudice, were critical influences on the emergence of metastereotype consciousness.

Research limitations/implications – Unexpected findings point to: experiences of younger workers which may not follow the same patterns found with older groups and unique operation of age as a dynamic social category that may not parallel findings regarding other social categories.

Practical implications – There is clearly potential for younger workers to be concerned they are viewed "stereotypically" and this metastereotype consciousness influences how they feel, think, and behave at work. Organizations should be aware of the potential antecedents and consequences, as well as the nature of metastereotypic perceptions, to better facilitate positive and productive interactions across age groups at work.

Originality/value – This research contributes to an understanding of younger workers' experiences at work, highlights the role of mood in the operation of metastereotypes on attitudes and behaviors in age-diverse contexts, and improves our understanding of social biases and inequality associated with age-based groups.

Keywords Satisfaction, Stereotypes, Mood, Age diversity, Impression management, Younger workers

Paper type Research paper

Young workers are subject to "all manner of negativity, maligning, scape-goating, and criticism" (Keene and Handrich, 2010, p. 1). This is not a new phenomenon beginning with the current generation of younger workers (Millennials/GenY); when Baby Boomers entered the workforce in their twenties, they were disparaged as "hippies" and 20-something GenXers were called "slackers." Yet, very little attention is paid to stereotypes of younger workers (Finkelstein *et al.*, 2013); the focus of research is on biases facing older workers (Posthuma and Campion, 2009). The current study answers critical questions: "Do younger workers feel stereotyped (because of their age)?" and, "If yes, how might that impact the way they feel, think, and behave at work?"

We improve the understanding of the experiences of younger workers using the lens of metastereotypes, "beliefs regarding the stereotype that out-group members hold about his/her own group" (Vorauer *et al.*, 1998, p. 917). We contribute to the literature by: exploring expectations derived from stereotypes from the younger worker's

Journal of Managerial Psychology
Vol. 30 No. 1, 2015
pp. 54-70

0268-3946
DOI 10.1108/JMP-07-2014-0215

perspective, introducing the concept of metastereotype consciousness and relevant predictors, and considering mood's role in the relationship between metastereotyping and attitudes and behaviors at work.

Metastereotypes

The metastereotype literature illustrates that people not only question, "what do *they* think of *me*?" but wonder by extension, "do they see me stereotypically?" Such concerns can induce anxiety, deplete cognitive resources, and disrupt interpersonal interactions (King *et al.*, 2008) all of which are problematic at work. This research investigates how two metastereotype factors – the content of metastereotypes and self-consciousness about being judged according to those stereotypes – operate and the extent to which they influence mood, attitudes toward older coworkers, and workplace impression management behavior.

Metastereotype content

In investigating the influence of metastereotypes at work, it is important to understand the content of those metastereotypes. For instance, do younger workers believe they are stereotyped as aloof or incompetent? Or, perhaps, they think they are stereotyped as friendly and capable? We apply the stereotype content model (SCM; Fiske *et al.*, 2002) to examine the content of younger workers' metastereotypes. The SCM shows that people appraise others along two dimensions, warmth and competence, because: people need to know others' intent (i.e. warmth) and capability (i.e. competence) for goal accomplishment and those judgments of warmth and competence lead to intergroup emotions. It follows that younger workers would react differently depending on how they believe they are stereotyped on those dimensions.

Metastereotype consciousness

In addition to metastereotype content, it seems important to know whether people are actually concerned about being judged stereotypically. Research shows that people expect to be viewed in terms of their group's stereotypes (Frey and Tropp, 2006), and stigma theorists have found that people differ in awareness of their stigmatized status across situations, a phenomenon called "stigma consciousness" (Pinel, 1999). We introduce the term metastereotype consciousness – the degree to which individuals are self-conscious about the stereotypes of their in-group held by members of the out-group – to build understanding of others' views of group membership. Here, metastereotype consciousness represents younger workers' perceptions of the pervasiveness of their age-group stereotypes in interactions with older workers (their age out-group; Finkelstein *et al.*, 2013). We examine the effects of three individual difference factors on metastereotype consciousness: in-group identification, age prejudice, and chronological age.

1. *In-group identification*. Foundational to social identity is self-identification as a member of a group or social category (Tajfel and Turner, 1986). Stereotype research regarding gender and racial categories points to the strength of group identification as a critical factor in social identity threat, and ultimately, prejudice and discrimination (Sellers and Shelton, 2003). Research illustrates that identifying more strongly with one's in-group is related to heightened concerns over being evaluated on stereotypes of that in-group (Vorauer *et al.*, 2000). Therefore, we predict (age) in-group

identification will be positively correlated with younger workers' metastereotype consciousness (Path No. 1, Figure 1).

2. Chronological age (of younger workers). While age group social categorizations may be blurrier than other social identity categories, scholars generally agree that the younger worker age group falls between approximately 18 and 30 years (Finkelstein *et al*., 2013). Hence, we consider "younger workers" (in-group) as those between 18 and 30 years of age, and "older workers" (out-group) as those 31 years of age and older.

Position along the age-continuum within the age-group may affect one's self-consciousness over being stereotyped. Research shows that being more dissimilar to one's coworkers in terms of age makes age more distinctive or salient (e.g. Avery *et al.,* 2007). Perhaps younger younger workers (e.g. 18-19 year olds) think being age stereotyped is unavoidable because they are so dissimilar (e.g. physical appearance, values/interests) to their coworkers who are over 30. Likewise, perhaps older younger workers can more legitimately distance themselves from age metastereotypes (e.g. "I'm not *that* young"). Therefore, we predict a negative relationship between chronological age and younger workers' metastereotype consciousness (Path No. 2, Figure 1).

3. Age prejudice. Although counterintuitive, research suggests highly biased people tend be concerned with how other people *reciprocate* that bias; high-prejudiced individuals are more likely than low-prejudiced individuals to expect to be stereotyped by members of an out-group (Vorauer and Kumhyr, 2001). This may be explained by assumptions of congruence between one's own and others' beliefs, whereby low-prejudiced individuals resist stereotype-based judgments and assume others do too (Gaertner and Dovidio, 2000). Therefore, we predict that younger workers who exhibit greater prejudice against older workers will report greater metastereotype consciousness (Path No. 3, Figure 1).

Consequences of metastereotypes

Proximal outcome: negative mood

According to affective events theory (AET), work events lead to affective reactions, which in turn influence both work attitudes and affect-driven behaviors (Weiss and

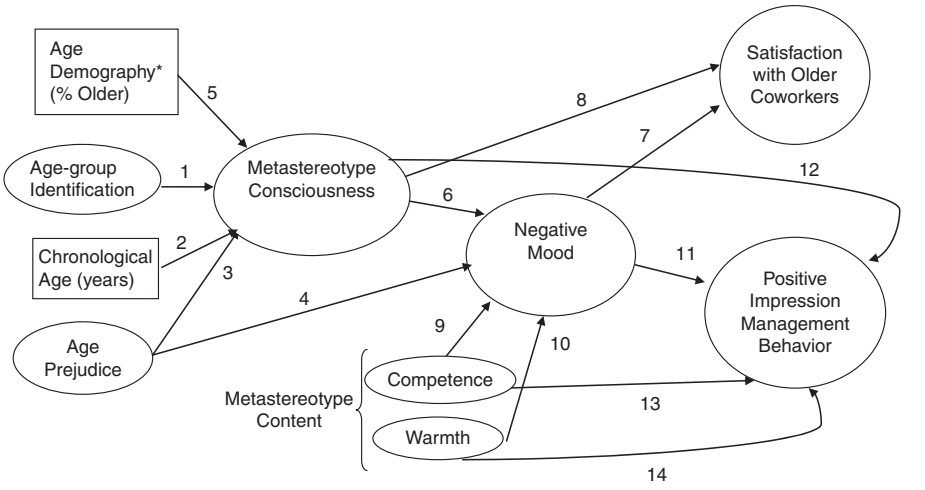


Figure 1.
Hypothesized model

Cropanzano, 1996). The diversity literature shows that anticipation of being judged stereotypically induces feelings of threat and anxiety (Hebl and Dovidio, 2005) and stereotype content research shows that stereotypic judgments of warmth and competence lead to affective responses (Fiske *et al.*, 2002). Thus, it is clear that affect plays a significant role in work events and experiences of stereotyping processes, and we predict that negative mood is a critical proximal outcome of metastereotypes (King *et al.*, 2008). Negative affect represents a variety of steady aversive mood states including anger, contempt, disgust, guilt, fear, and nervousness (Watson *et al.*, 1988, p. 1063).

We extend several predictions drawn from the social identity threat and stereotyping literatures to metastereotyping processes and affect. The primary means by which social identity threat (Tajfel and Turner, 1986) operates is through the devaluation of a person's social in-group; this threat can produce a variety of negative affective reactions like anxiety or anger (King *et al.*, 2008). Therefore, we first predict that younger workers are likely to experience negative affect in response to the content of metastereotypes (Path Nos 9 and 10, Figure 1) about their age in-group, particularly as that content indicates a less positive portrayal of their in-group.

Second, stigma consciousness research shows that people who are self-conscious about being judged stereotypically experience negative affect, regardless of whether the content of the stereotype is positive or negative (Son and Shelton, 2011). In fact, anxiety induced by self-consciousness over being stereotyped has been shown to be significant enough to have spillover effects in a diverse array of non-stereotyped domains (Inzlicht and Kang, 2010). Therefore, we predict that younger workers are likely to experience negative affect in response to metastereotype consciousness (Path No. 6, Figure 1).

Third, negative mood can heighten intergroup anxieties and make people motivated to increase the value of their in-group (Esses *et al.*, 1993). Also, attempts to regulate negative emotion in an intergroup interaction can exact a cognitive toll and contribute to more negative impressions of people with whom one interacts (Pearson *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, we predict that negative affect will relate to increased age prejudice against older workers (Path No. 4, Figure 1).

Distal outcomes: attitude and behavior

If younger workers believe older coworkers stereotype them, they might be annoyed, angry, or anxious and those negative moods would influence distal outcomes like attitudes and behaviors. We focus on attitudes toward coworkers and impression management behaviors because they are necessarily social (concerned with others), meaningful for metastereotype processes, and common in work environments. Coworker satisfaction is relevant because it is related to organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviors, which impact productivity and organizational performance (Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012). Positive impression management behaviors are important because they are socially desirable behaviors that improve work outcomes (Stevens and Kristof, 1995).

1. Satisfaction with older coworkers. As individuals feel more self-conscious about being judged stereotypically on the job, they will experience negative affect and likely apply that mood-as-information (Schwarz and Clore, 2003) to their older coworkers, thus indicating lower satisfaction with their older coworkers (Path Nos 6, 7, Figure 1). Prior metastereotype research shows that members who anticipate being judged by

out-group members directly reciprocate that judgment (Vorauer, 2006), so perhaps metastereotypes consciousness also has a direct effect on attitude toward out-group members (Path No. 8, Figure 1). Applying mood-as-information, we also predict that younger workers' metastereotype content (competence and warmth) will relate to satisfaction with older coworkers through the mood generated from feeling stereotyped by them (Path Nos 9, 10, 7, Figure 1).

2. Impression management behaviors. Drawing upon AET, we hypothesize that negative mood plays a role in a positive relationship between metastereotype consciousness and impression management behaviors (Path Nos 6, 11, Figure 1), while it also plays a role in a negative relationship between metastereotype content and impression management behaviors (Path Nos 9, 10, 11, Figure 1). However, we acknowledge the possibility of direct relationships between metastereotyping processes and behavior without the need for mood. Perhaps, to the extent younger workers are self-conscious about being viewed stereotypically, they will respond by directing others' attention to positive individuating behaviors (Hilton and von Hippel, 1996) in order to discourage older workers from stereotyping them (Path No. 12, Figure 1). Likewise, perhaps the extent to which younger workers believe others view them as lacking warmth or competence directly prompts impression management behaviors that build positive image and relationships (Path Nos 13, 14, Figure 1).

Method

Participants and procedure

In total, two samples were recruited for this study with the intention of combining them. In all, one sample was recruited using an online academic service ("Study Response") with a database of nearly 100,000 members. A random sample of Study Response members working at least 35 hours per week and between the ages of 18 and 30 were recruited. They learned that: the study involved "perceptions of younger workers in organizations," participation was voluntary, and they would receive a $5 gift card for completing the survey.

The second sample consisted of students at a mid-Atlantic university recruited through the psychology department participant pool. Eligible students were 18-30 years old and working for pay at least 25 hours per week. The content and presentation of the survey was identical for both samples. Whereas the Study Response participants received $5 gift-cards, the University student sample received course credit for participation.

In the University sample, 98 people completed the survey. In the Study Response sample, 881 younger workers were invited to participate with a response rate of 22 percent ($n = 202$). List-wise deletion of participants with incomplete surveys resulted in a combined sample of 281 younger workers (Study Response $n = 196$; University $n = 85$) with an average age of 25.2 years (SD = 3.8). The final sample was approximately 40 percent male, and participants reported working in a variety of occupations: technology (10 percent), administrative support (9 percent), education/training (7 percent), accounting/financial (6 percent), retail/wholesale (6 percent), and managerial (4 percent).

Measures

1. Metastereotype content. Warmth and competence scales from Study 2 of Cuddy *et al.* (2009) were used. Competence items (traits) were "competent," "confident," "capable," and

"skillful" ($\alpha = 0.79$), and warmth items (traits) were "friendly," "warm," "good-natured," "sincere" ($\alpha = 0.84$). Participant instructions read: "We would like you to think about how MOST older workers view MEMBERS OF YOUR AGE GROUP. We are not interested in your personal beliefs, but in how you think members of YOUR age group are viewed by another age group." For each trait listed, they were asked to "think of the stereotypes that MOST older workers hold regarding people in your age group. According to THEIR stereotypes of younger workers, please indicate the extent to which each of the following traits is characteristic of your age group." Respondents then rated the eight traits, presented in random order, from 1 "extremely uncharacteristic" to 7 "extremely characteristic" (4 = "uncertain").

2. Metastereotype consciousness. An adaptation of Pinel's (1999) Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire was used as the eight-item Metastereotype Consciousness Scale ($\alpha = 0.74$). An example item is "I never worry that my behaviors will be viewed as stereotypical of younger workers" A five-point Likert-type scale (1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree") indicated responses.

3. Age-group identification. This scale was an adaptation of the short form of Finkelstein *et al.* (1999) Age Identity Scale ($\alpha = 0.86$). An example item is "I'm glad to belong to my age group." The six items were scored on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree").

4. Chronological age. Participants were asked to indicate their current age in years. The average age of the participants was 25.2 years (SD = 3.8).

5. Age prejudice. This scale was adapted from the Fraboni Scale ($\alpha = 0.90$) (Fraboni *et al.*, 1990). An example item is "I personally would not want to spend much time with an older worker." The nine items were scored on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree").

6. Negative mood. Negative mood was assessed using the ten-item Negative Affect scale ($\alpha = 0.92$) of the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) (Watson *et al.*, 1988). Participants were asked to indicate, on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = "very slightly or not at all" to 5 = "very much"), the extent to which they have felt this way at their job in the past two to three weeks. Example items include "angry," "nervous," or "upset."

7. Satisfaction with older coworkers. Satisfaction with Coworkers Scale was adapted from Bishop and Scott (2000). Participants indicated satisfaction with their older coworkers according to four items ($\alpha = 0.85$) measured on a five-point scale (1 = very dissatisfied to 5 = very satisfied). An example item asked their satisfaction with "how well they got along."

8. Impression management tactics. The three positive dimensions from Bolino and Turnley's (1999) Impression Management Scale were used to assess positive impression management tactics ($\alpha = 0.86$). Participants responded to statements by thinking about how often, within the last six months, they had behaved in a particular way work (1 = "never behave this way" to 5 = "often behave this way") along items across three dimensions: self-promotion (four items, $\alpha = 0.80$) such as "Talk proudly about your experience or education," ingratiation (four items, $\alpha = 0.81$) such as "Compliment your colleagues so they will see you as likable," and exemplification (three items, $\alpha = 0.70$) such as "Stay at work late so people will know you are hard-working."

9. Sample source. The source (Study Response/University) was used as a control variable in this study. Participants from Study Response were assigned a "1" and those from the University were indicated by "2."

10. Control variable. While we are primarily interested in consistent thought patterns or dispositional tendencies toward metastereotype consciousness, in conditions of underrepresentation, age-group membership salience (Vorauer *et al.*, 2000) impacts self-consciousness about being age stereotyped. Therefore, we controlled for age demography (Path No. 5, Figure 1). Participants indicated, on a five-point scale (1 = "none or almost none" to 5 = "all or almost all") the approximate proportion of employees at their organization ages 31 or over.

Results

Structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis approach

To test our hypothesized model, we used SEM via maximum likelihood using LISREL Version 8.72 (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 2005). Before model testing, we confirmed that our total sample size ($n = 281$) met the commonly accepted guidelines for an SEM approach (Jackson, 2001).

1. Preliminary analyses. Before beginning SEM, we first conducted a MANOVA with sample source as the independent variable, and all other study variables as dependent variables. No differences between the covariance matrices emerged, $F(66, 91552) = 1.54$, $p = 0.00$. Therefore, the samples were combined.

Next, with an a priori notion of the factor structure, we conducted a CFA to determine the extent to which scales were successful indicators of their respective constructs and exhibited adequate internal consistency reliability. Single factor CFAs were conducted for each scale, poorly performing items (which failed to load onto the latent variable at less than 0.40 or which did not significantly relate to the latent factor ($p > 0.05$)) were dropped and reliability analyses were conducted on the modified scale.

2. Indicators. Then, prior to testing our measurement model, we refined indicators. Because of the length of the scales and the relatively small sample size compared to the complexity of the model, we followed techniques described by Williams and O'Boyle (2008) to create either item parcels or aggregated single scale mean scores corrected for reliability. This reduces the sample size to parameter ratio, which impacts the standard errors and stability of the estimates (Landis *et al.*, 2000). For the measures of latent variables that were longer than four items we chose a partial disaggregation method using parcels (e.g. Williams and O'Boyle, 2008). The disadvantage of using this method is diminished ability to examine item-level relations, but that concern was mitigated because we wanted to examine relations among latent variables.

For the latent variables of warmth and competence (Cuddy *et al.*, 2009) we used total aggregation with reliability correction method for creating indicators (Williams and O'Boyle, 2008, p. 236). This strategy was chosen because research shows the two scales are sufficiently reliable and they exhibited excellent internal consistency reliability in our sample. Single items were used to measure sample source, age, and age demography since they are objective constructs. Their factor loadings onto their respective latent variables were fixed to 1.0 while they were assumed to be measured without error (fixed to 0) (Kelloway, 1998, p. 135). The four items from the scale measuring satisfaction with older coworkers were used as single indicators, rather than combining them into a totally aggregated indicator with reliability correction, because the data for these items showed negative skew. Not surprisingly, RMSEA (which bases its fit on an assumption of normal population distribution) was not adequate (RMSEA = 0.15), but according to other χ^2-based indices ($\chi^2 = 15.22$ (df = 2, $p < 0.05$), CFI = 0.98, SRMR = 0.036, NFI = 0.98) the model fit was adequate.

Step 1: measurement model. Beginning with an assessment of the measurement model, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis. This measurement model evidenced "good" fit (MacCallum *et al.*, 1996). $\chi^2 = 459$ (df = 204, $p < 0.01$), RMSEA = 0.07, CFI = 0.95, SRMR = 0.06. All loadings were in the expected direction, above 0.40 and significantly different from zero ($p < 0.05$). Analyses showed the indicators captured at least half of the variance (ρ_v) in the latent construct (see Table I). We also compared fit of this measurement model with a three-factor model with the age prejudice, age-group identification, age demographics, and sample source variables loading on the first factor, a second factor consisting of metastereotype consciousness, metastereotype content and negative mood and the attitude and outcome variables loading onto a third factor. Fit of this model was poor and significantly worse than the measurement model $\chi^2 =$ 2,827 (df = 249, $p < 0.01$), RMSEA = 0.19, CFI = 0.56, SRMR = 0.19.

Step 2: structural model. Upon confirming acceptable convergent and discriminant validities in the measurement model, we tested the structural model (in LISREL), specifying the hypothesized relations of the constructs to one another (depicted in Figure 1). The hypothesized model evidenced acceptable fit, $\chi^2 = 640$ (df = 229, $p < 0.01$), RMSEA = 0.07, CFI = 0.93, SRMR = 0.10. Overall, the hypothesized linkages were significant, but sometimes opposite predictions (see Figure 2). Controlling for sample source (Study Response/University) yielded the same pattern in the data.

1. Antecedents to metastereotype consciousness. Parameter estimates for the exogenous variables hypothesized to influence metastereotype consciousness were all significant, although not always in the hypothesized direction. There was a significant effect of age identification on metastereotype consciousness (Path No. 1, Figure 1), but opposite the predicted direction. Age identification was negatively related to metastereotype consciousness ($\Gamma = -0.22$, $p < 0.01$); as younger workers identify more with their age group they are less self-conscious about being age stereotyped. Consistent with our hypothesis (Path No. 3, Figure 1), age prejudice was positively related to metastereotype consciousness ($\Gamma = 0.19$, $p < 0.01$); greater levels of prejudice against older workers meant more self-consciousness about older coworkers' stereotypes. The path (Path No. 4, Figure 1) indicating the direct effect of age prejudice on negative mood was significant ($\Gamma = 0.31$, $p < 0.01$). And, supporting our prediction that younger workers' age negatively relates to metastereotype consciousness (Path No. 2, Figure 1), as younger workers get older they are less self-conscious about being stereotyped as members of the younger worker age group ($\Gamma = -0.25$, $p < 0.01$). Our hypothesized model explained 11 percent of the variance in metastereotype consciousness ($R^2 = 0.11$, Figure 2).

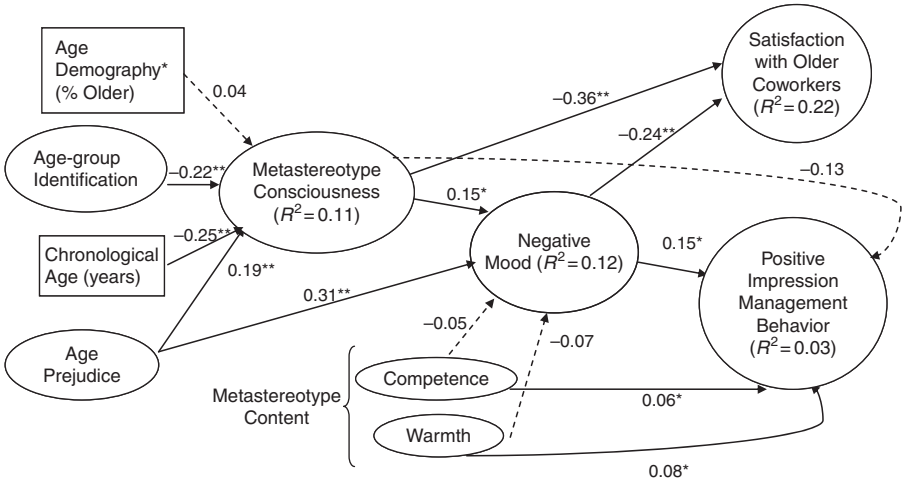
2. Metastereotypes, mood, and satisfaction with older coworkers. As younger workers increased in metastereotype consciousness, they were less satisfied with their older coworkers. As hypothesized (Path No. 6), negative mood significantly influenced by metastereotype consciousness ($\beta = 0.15$, $p < 0.05$) and negative mood significantly influenced satisfaction with older coworkers (Path No. 7) ($\beta = -0.24$, $p < 0.01$). There is also a strong direct relationship (Path No. 8) between metastereotype consciousness and coworker satisfaction ($\beta = -0.36$, $p < 0.01$).

Our results did not support the prediction that younger workers' metastereotype content (competence and warmth) is related to satisfaction with older coworkers through negative mood (Path Nos 9, 10, 7, Figure 1). Metastereotype warmth was not significantly related to negative mood ($\Gamma = -0.07$, $p > 0.05$) and the hypothesized path

Table I.
Descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and correlations among study variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Sample	1.30	0.46	–										
2. Age in years	25.15	3.75	−0.70**	–									
3. Age demography	3.49	0.98	−0.08	0.16**	–								
4. Age identification	3.48	0.73	0.03	−0.09	−0.08	*0.86*							
5. Age prejudice	2.44	0.83	−0.10	−0.02	−0.07	0.25**	*0.86*						
6. Metastereotype consciousness	2.85	0.61	0.18**	−0.20**	0.02	−0.03	0.12	*0.74*					
7. Competence metastereotype	5.01	1.01	−0.06	0.06	−0.03	0.41**	0.06	−0.21**	*0.79*				
8. Warmth metastereotype	4.82	1.01	−0.07	−0.03	−0.08	0.41**	0.12*	−0.27**	0.68**	*0.84*			
9. Negative mood	1.77	0.74	−0.06	0.03	0.00	−0.22**	0.29**	0.14*	−0.18**	−0.18**	*0.92*		
10. Satisfaction with older coworkers	3.95	0.66	−0.08	0.11	0.17**	0.19**	−0.29**	−0.34**	0.20**	0.24**	−0.27**	*0.85*	
11. Positive impression management	3.12	0.73	−0.02	−0.07	−0.12*	0.287**	0.139*	−0.03	0.17**	0.195**	0.12*	0.13*	*0.86*
11a. Self-promotion	3.14	0.86	−0.02	−0.05	−0.08	0.23**	0.16**	0.01	0.17**	0.14*	0.10	0.08	0.84**
11b. Ingratiation	3.36	0.83	−0.05	−0.03	−0.07	0.25**	−0.05	−0.03	0.11	0.14*	0.05	0.24**	0.82**
11c. Exemplification	2.76	1.02	0.01	−0.09	−0.15*	0.22**	0.23**	−0.07	0.13*	0.21**	0.15*	−0.01	0.78**
Variance extracted (ρ_v)						0.77	0.81	0.65	–	–	0.86	0.71	0.60

Notes: Italics indicates reliability of the scale (along the diagonal). *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$



Notes: ---, Non-significant ($p > 0.05$) relationship. *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$

Figure 2.
Test of hypothesized relationships

between metastereotype competence and negative mood also failed to reach significance ($\Gamma = -0.05$, $p > 0.05$). Our hypothesized model explained 22 percent of the variance in satisfaction with older coworkers ($R^2 = 0.22$).

3. Metastereotypes, mood, and impression management. As hypothesized, negative mood helped explain the relationship between metastereotype consciousness and impression management (Path Nos. 6, 11). As younger workers' metastereotype consciousness increased, so did their negative mood ($\beta = 0.15$, $p < 0.05$), and as younger workers experienced more negative mood they were more likely to engage in impression management ($\beta = 0.15$, $p < 0.05$). In total, our hypothesized model explained 12 percent of the variance in negative mood ($R^2 = 0.12$). Results did not support a direct effect (Path No. 12) of metastereotype consciousness on impression management ($\beta = -0.13$, $p > 0.05$), illustrating the critical role of mood in the relationship between metastereotype consciousness and impression management.

Because the relationships between metastereotype content (warmth, competence) and negative mood failed to reach significance ($\Gamma = -0.07$, $p > 0.05$, and $\Gamma = -0.05$, $p > 0.05$, respectively), the predicted influence of negative mood in the relationship between metastereotype content and reported impression management was not supported (Path Nos. 9, 10, and 11). Results did support a direct relationship between metastereotype content (competence, warmth) and impression management, but opposite the predicted direction. Warmth metastereotypes were positively related to impression management ($\Gamma = 0.08$, $p < 0.05$) (Path No. 14) and so were competence metastereotypes ($\Gamma = 0.06$, $p < 0.05$) (Path No. 13). Younger workers were more likely to positively manage impressions when they thought older workers viewed them more positively (as warm/competent). The hypothesized model explained 3 percent of the variance in positive impression management ($R^2 = 0.03$).

Step 3: Comparison to alternative nested models. We compared our hypothesized structural model to two alternative models. The first alternative model tested the impact of negative mood by removing paths from negative mood to all other

endogenous variables: $\chi^2 = 672$ ($df = 234$, $p < 0.01$, RMSEA = 0.08, CFI = 0.91, SRMR = 0.12). Results showed our model was significantly better than the alternative with the paths removed ($\chi^2_{diff} = 32$, $df_{diff} = 5$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that mood added to our understanding of these relationships.

Given the unexpected direction of effects of metastereotypes on impression management behaviors, we tested a second alternative model where impression management influences metastereotypes (reversed paths from impression management behavior to metastereotype content). This alternative model did not result in better fit $\chi^2 = 818$ ($df = 234$, $p < 0.01$, RMSEA = 0.09, CFI = 0.88, SRMR = 0.11); it was significantly worse that our hypothesized model ($\chi^2_{diff} = 178$, $df = 5$, $p < 0.05$) indicating that the effect is better explained in the hypothesized direction where metastereotypes influence behavior.

Discussion

We found that younger workers do feel self-conscious about being stereotyped because of their age at work, affecting how they feel, think, and behave. The results highlight the importance of metastereotype consciousness and the role of mood in the relationship between metastereotypes and work outcomes.

Potential limitations

It is important to acknowledge the potential limitations of our design before determining the conclusiveness of the findings. First, the data were collected through self-report. However, the perspective of the self most appropriately captures our central constructs (i.e. metastereotype consciousness, content, mood, prejudice, age identity, coworker satisfaction). Ideally, one may argue, measures of impression management behaviors should be from an observational perspective. Yet, the focus of this is study is on the person's own perception of their attempts to perform those behaviors, making self-report appropriate.

Speaking methodologically, we addressed some concerns pertaining to common method variance (Conway and Lance, 2010). Each scale begins with clear directions on the focus of the (non-overlapping) items and the scale anchors, which vary among some of the scales. An alternative measurement model from the one proposed did not fit the data. Not all of the self-reported variables were correlated to one another. Although these facts temper common method bias concerns, the last, and perhaps, more serious limitation of the study is its cross-sectional nature. We cannot argue for causal linkages, but our methodology has provided evidence of a pattern of relationships among variables that indicate an important first step in understanding the viability of this new model of metastereotype consciousness in the workplace. Experimental research shows there are behavioral outcomes of thought processes in stereotyping which supports the causal direction of our hypothesized model (Wheeler and Petty, 2001). While we tested the most logical reverse relationship in our causal model, we do acknowledge that there may be a more dynamic interplay among the variables that only longitudinal work could unveil.

Theoretical implications

Our results have important theoretical implications. First, we found that several individual differences impact self-conscious about being stereotyped as a younger worker: one's chronological age, age-group identification (with younger workers), and

age prejudice (against older workers). Second, we showed younger workers' metastereotype consciousness, either directly or indirectly via negative mood, influences both attitudes and behaviors at work. The significant relationships between metastereotype consciousness and coworker satisfaction extend previous research on metastereotypes of racial groups (Vorauer and Kumhyr, 2001). Additonally, the influence of metastereotype consciousness on impression management contributes to our understanding of the processes involved in creating and maintaining one's professional image (Roberts, 2005).

The finding that negative mood has a significant impact in the relationship between metastereotype consciousness and both attitudinal and behavioral outcomes is particularly informative. Affect driven by metastereotypes did influence proactive or compensatory (positive) behaviors in this study, but the hypothesized model ultimately only explained 3 percent of the variance in positive impression management behavior (Figure 2). Because stigma research (Hebl and Dovidio, 2005) suggests that negative affect driven by metastereotypes could also lead to defensive or avoidant behaviors (which went unexamined in this study), we believe future research should investigate the potential for metastereotypes to "set into motion defensive reactions, avoidance, and self-fulfilling behaviors that further handicap" interactions in age-diverse groups (p. 170).

Third, despite a lack of influence on mood and attitudes, this research suggests a direct link between metastereotype content and positive impression management. The professional image literature suggests it is easier to maintain positive impressions than to change others' negative impressions (see Roberts, 2005). The current and unexpected finding of a positive relationship between metastereotype content (warmth and competence) and positive impression management behaviors suggests that younger workers may deem impression management worthwhile when confirming positive stereotypical traits (Klein and Azzi, 2001) as opposed to overturning negative ones.

Practical implications for researchers

The current study underscores the importance of studying age diversity with respect to younger workers. First, despite a lack of attention paid to younger workers in age research (Fiske *et al.*, 2002), there is clearly potential for younger workers to think they are viewed "stereotypically." More research on younger (and middle-aged) groups would facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of age-diverse workplace interactions (Finkelstein *et al.*, 2013). Second, our findings support research that suggests the effects associated with an age-group membership may not operate in the same way for younger and older individuals (Garstka *et al.*, 2004) because younger workers can "escape" their social category simply by growing older. Moreover, the inherently changing nature of age is in stark contrast to research on other more permanent social categories such as gender and race. Some of the unexpected relationships (e.g. age-identification) or lack thereof (e.g. age demography) found in this study point to: the distinctive experiences of younger workers that do not follow the same patterns as those found with older groups and the unique operation of age as a dynamic social category that may not parallel the experiences of other social identity groups.

Third and finally, our research shows that negative mood plays a role in the impact of metastereotype consciousness on younger workers' attitudes and behaviors at work. It seems that mood may transmit the negative effects of self-consciousness

on distal outcomes, but mood does not transmit effects of metastereotype content on those same outcomes. This finding is in line with emerging research on self-consciousness associated with positive stigma (Son and Shelton, 2011); it is the self-consciousness about being stereotyped that induces negative affect (anxiety), not necessarily the content of the stereotype itself.

Practical implications for employees and organizations

Recently, the changing nature of work in terms of demographics, economics, culture, and technology has catalyzed attention to workplace age dynamics in relation to concerns of the aging workforce and older workers (Finkelstein *et al.*, 2015). It is important to recognize the impact of age diversity on all age groups, including younger people, in today's multigenerational workforce (Hertel *et al.*, 2013). Managers should be aware that the age composition of the contemporary workforce could give rise to metastereotyping processes. For example, economic realities are resulting in older workers staying longer by necessity and younger workers struggling to find employment that befits their education level (Erdogan *et al.*, 2011). These struggles over resources are bound to increase the likelihood that age is a salient characteristic for interpersonal evaluations. Moreover, managers should be aware that stereotyping processes can pervade not just older, but also younger workers' experiences at work. The ubiquity of team structures where employees must problem solve and innovate in diverse environments requires attention to age dynamics. In these mixed-age and high-pressure situations, the negative metastereotypes of younger workers could disrupt communication and block maximal performance.

Organizations and leaders may be able to diminish the negative effects of metastereotypes by helping younger and older workers see each other's perspectives (King *et al.*, 2008). Also, sharing metastereotypic beliefs (this is how I/we believe you see me/us) may lead to rapid correction, provided facilitators of such interventions can create an environment where people can safely express these beliefs. Moreover, as our findings indicated, if people feel less prejudiced toward other age groups they may feel less self-conscious about being stereotyped in the reverse. Interventions targeted at reducing age prejudice in the workplace could indirectly mitigate the negative outcomes associated with metastereotype processes. Diversity and inclusion initiatives too rarely include age diversity, and typically focus on older workers. We argue that not only should age be a focus, but that any consideration of age diversity issues should include all age groups and utilize the knowledge of metastereotyping processes in addition to stereotyping processes to help increase the likelihood that any interpersonal or organizational consequences are mitigated.

References

Avery, D.R., McKay, P.F. and Wilson, D.C. (2007), "Engaging the aging workforce: the relationship between perceived age similarity, satisfaction with coworkers, and employee engagement", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 92 No. 6, pp. 1542-1556.

Bishop, J. and Scott, K.D. (2000), "An examination of organizational and team commitment in a self-directed team environment", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 85 No. 3, pp. 439-450.

Bolino, M. and Turnley, W. (1999), "Measuring impression management in organizations: a scale development based on the Jones and Pittman taxonomy", *Organizational Research Methods*, Vol. 2 No. 2, pp. 187-206.

Conway, J.M. and Lance, C.E. (2010), "What reviewers should expect from authors regarding common method bias in organizational research", *Journal of Business and Psychology*, Vol. 25 No. 3, pp. 323-334.

Cuddy, A., Fiske, S., Kwan, V., Glick, P., Demoulin, S., Leyens, J., *et al.* (2009), "Stereotype content model across cultures: towards universal similarities and some differences", *British Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 48 No. 1, pp. 1-33.

Erdogan, B., Bauer, T.N., Peiró, J.M. and Truxillo, D.M. (2011), "Overqualified employees: making the best of a potentially bad situation for individuals and organizations", *Industrial and Organizational Psychology: Perspectives on Science and Practice*, Vol. 4 No. 2, pp. 215-232.

Esses, V.M., Haddock, G. and Zanna, M.P. (1993), "Values, stereotypes, and emotions as determinants of intergroup attitudes", in Mackie, D.M. and Hamilton, D.L. (Eds), *Affect, Cognition and Stereotyping: Interactive Processes in Group Perception*, Academic Press, New York, NY, pp. 137-166.

Finkelstein, L., Gonnerman, M. and Johnson, B. (1999), "The development of measures of age and generation identity", paper presented at *14th Annual Conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Society for Industrial Organizational Psychology, Atlanta, GA, April 30-May 2*, available at: www.siop.org/conferences/99Con/99ConProg/SaturdayAM.aspx (accessed June 2, 2013).

Finkelstein, L., Ryan, K.M and King, E.B. (2013), "What do the young (old) people think of me? Content and accuracy of age-based meta-stereotypes", *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, Vol. 22 No. 6, pp. 633-657.

Finkelstein, L., Truxillo, D., Fraccaroli, F. and Kanfer, R. (2015), "Facing the challenges of a multi-age workforce: a use-inspired approach", in Finkelstein, L., Truxillo, D., Fraccaroli, F. and Kanfer, R. (Eds), *An Introduction to Facing the Challenges of a Multi-Age Workforce: A Use-Inspired Approach*, Taylor Francis, New York, NY, in press.

Fiske, S., Cuddy, A., Glick, P. and Xu, J. (2002), "A model of (often mixed) stereotype content: competence and warmth respectively follow from perceived status and competition", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 82 No. 6, pp. 878-902.

Fraboni, M., Saltstone, R. and Hughes, S. (1990), "The Fraboni Scale of Ageism (FSA): an attempt at a more precise measure of ageism", *Canadian Journal on Aging*, Vol. 9 No. 1, pp. 56-66.

Frey, F.E. and Tropp, L.R. (2006), "Being seen as individuals versus as group members: extending research on metaperception to intergroup contexts", *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, Vol. 10 No. 3, pp. 25-280.

Gaertner, S. and Dovidio, J. (2000), "The aversive form of racism", in Stangor, C. (Ed.), *Stereotypes and Prejudice*, Psychology Press, New York, NY, pp. 289-304.

Garstka, T.A., Schmitt, M.T., Branscombe, N.R. and Hummert, M.L. (2004), "How young and older adults differ in their responses to perceived age discrimination", *Psychology of Aging*, Vol. 19 No. 2, pp. 326-335.

Hebl, M. and Dovidio, J. (2005), "Promoting the 'Social' in the examination of social stigmas", *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, Vol. 9 No. 2, pp. 156-182.

Hertel, G., van der Heijden, B., de Lange, A. and Deller, J. (2013), "Facilitating age diversity in organizations – part II: managing perceptions and interactions", *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, Vol 28 Nos 7/8, pp. 857-866.

Hilton, J. and von Hippel, W. (1996), "Stereotypes", *Annual Review of Psychology*, Vol. 47 No. 1, pp. 237-271.

Inzlicht, M. and Kang, S.K. (2010), "Stereotype threat spillover: how coping with threats to social identity affects aggression, eating, decision making, and attention", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 99 No. 3, pp. 467-481.

Jackson, D. (2001), "Sample size and number of parameter estimates in maximum likelihood confirmatory factor analysis: a Monte Carlo investigation", *Structural Equation Modeling*, Vol. 8 No. 2, pp. 205-223.

Jöreskog, K. and Sörbom, D. (2005), *LISREL 8.72 [Computer Software]*, Scientific Software International Inc., Lincolnwood, IL.

Judge, T.A. and Kammeyer-Mueller, J.D. (2012), "Job attitudes", *Annual Review of Psychology*, Vol. 63, pp. 341-367.

Keene, D.L. and Handrich, R.R. (2010), "Between coddling and contempt: managing and mentoring millennials", *American Society of Trial Consultants, The Jury Expert*, Vol. 22 No. 5, pp. 1-14.

Kelloway, E.K. (1998), *Using LISREL for Structural Equation Modeling: A Researcher's Guide*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

King, E.B., Kaplan, S. and Zaccaro, S. (2008), "Metaperceptions in diverse workgroups: intrapersonal perspectives and intragroup processes", in Mannix, B., Neale, M. and Anderson, C. (Eds), *Research on Managing Groups and Teams*, Elsevier, Oxford, pp. 109-142.

Klein, O. and Azzi, A.E. (2001), "The strategic confirmation of metastereotypes: how group members attempt to tailor an out-group's representation of themselves", *Britsh Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 40 No. 2, pp. 279-293.

Landis, R.S., Beal, D.J. and Tesluk, P.E. (2000), "A comparison of approaches to forming composite measures in structural equation models", *Organizational Research Methods*, Vol. 3 No. 2, pp. 186-207.

MacCallum, R.C., Browne, M.W. and Sugawara, H.M. (1996), "Power analysis and determination of sample size for covariance structure modeling", *Psychological Methods*, Vol. 1 No. 2, pp. 130-149.

Pearson, A.R., Dovidio, J.F., Phills, C.E. and Onyeador, I.N. (2013), "Attitude – goal correspondence and interracial interaction: Implications for executive function and impression formation", *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol. 49 No. 5, pp. 907-914.

Pinel, E.C. (1999), "Stigma consciousness: the psychological legacy of social stereotypes", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 76 No. 1, pp. 114-128.

Posthuma, R.A. and Campion, M.A. (2009), "Age stereotypes in the workplace: common stereotypes, moderators, and future research directions", *Journal of Management*, Vol. 35 No. 1, pp. 158-188.

Roberts, L. (2005), "Changing faces: professional image construction in diverse organizational settings", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 30 No. 4, pp. 685-711.

Schwarz, N. and Clore, G. (2003), "Mood as information: 20 years later", *Psychological Inquiry*, Vol. 14 Nos 3/4, pp. 296-303.

Sellers, R. and Shelton, J. (2003), "The role of racial identity in perceived racial discrimination", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 84 No. 5, pp. 1079-1092.

Son, D. and Shelton, J.N. (2011), "Stigma consciousness among Asian Americans: impact of positive stereotypes in interracial roommate relationships", *Asian American Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 2 No. 1, pp. 51-60.

Stevens, C. and Kristof, A. (1995), "Making the right impression: a field study of applicant impression management during job interviews", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 80 No. 5, pp. 587-606.

Tajfel, H. and Turner, J.C. (1986), "The social identity theory of intergroup behavior", in Worchel, S. and Austin, W.G. (Eds), *Psychology of Intergroup Relations* 2nd ed., Nelson-Hall, Chicago, IL, pp. 7-24.

Vorauer, J. and Kumhyr, S. (2001), "Is this about you or me? Self-versus other-directed judgments and feelings in response to intergroup interaction", *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, Vol. 27 No. 6, pp. 706-719.

Vorauer, J.D. (2006), "An information search model of evaluative concerns in intergroup interaction", *Psychological Review*, Vol. 113 No. 4, pp. 862-886.

Vorauer, J.D., Main, K.J. and O'Connell, G.B. (1998), "How do individuals expect to be viewed by members of lower status groups? Content and implications of metastereotypes", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 75 No. 4, pp. 917-937.

Vorauer, J.D., Hunter, A.J., Main, K.J. and Roy, S.A. (2000), "Metastereotype activation: evidence from indirect measures for specific evaluative concerns experienced by members of dominant groups in intergroup interaction", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 78 No. 4, pp. 690-707.

Watson, D., Clark, L. and Tellegen, A. (1988), "Development and validation of brief measures of positive and negative affect: the PANAS scales", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 54 No. 6, pp. 1063-1070.

Weiss, H. and Cropanzano, R. (1996), "Affective events theory: a theoretical discussion of the structure, causes and consequences of affective experiences at work", in Staw, B.M. and Cummings, L.L. (Eds), *Research in Organizational Behavior: An Annual Series of Analytical Essays and Critical Reviews*, Vol. 18, Elsevier/JAI Press, New York, NY, pp. 1-74.

Wheeler, S.C. and Petty, R.E. (2001), "The effects of stereotype activation on behavior: a review of possible mechanisms", *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 127 No. 6, pp. 797-826.

Williams, L. and O'Boyle, E. (2008), "Measurement models for linking latent variables and indicators: a review of human resource management research using parcels", *Human Resource Management Review*, Vol. 18 No. 4, pp. 233-242.

Further reading

Steele, C., Spencer, S. and Aronson, J. (2002), "Contending with group image: the psychology of stereotype and social identity threat", in Zanna, M.E. (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol. 34, Academic Press, San Diego, CA, pp. 379-440.

About the authors

Katherine M. Ryan is currently a Manager in the Human Capital Practice of Deloitte Consulting, LLP. She received her PhD in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from George Mason University. Her research focusses on age diversity, gender representation, and cross-generational issues at work and has been published in the *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* and the *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*. In her consulting work, Dr Ryan applies data-driven and innovative approaches to helping her clients build robust talent programs and leadership capabilities. She is a Member of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology and the Personnel Testing Council of Metropolitan Washington, DC. Katherine M. Ryan is the corresponding author and can be contacted at: katherinemryan@gmail.com

Eden B. King is currently an Associate Professor in the Psychology Department at the George Mason University. She received her PhD in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Rice University. Dr King's research seeks to guide the equitable and effective management of diverse organizations. Her research appears in outlets like the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Human Resource Management*, and *Perspectives of IO Psychology* and integrates organizational and social psychology in conceptualizing social stigma and the work-life interface. Dr King is currently an Associate Editor at the *Journal of Management* and

the *Journal of Business and Psychology*. She also serves on the *Academy of Management Journal*'s editorial board.

Dr Lisa M. Finkelstein is a Professor of Psychology at the Northern Illinois University. She received her PhD in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Tulane University. Dr Finkelstein's research interests include age and generation issues in the workplace, mentoring relationships, and stigma. Her research has been published in journals such as the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, the *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, and *Human Resource Management*. She serves on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Management*, the *Journal of Business and Psychology*, and *Work, Age, and Retirement*, and is an incoming Associate Editor at Group and Organization Management. She is a Fellow of SIOP.