

## L10 – What is the self?

### Background

- The Self is an enormous topic in psychology as a whole
- Everything that you think about in relation to yourself can actually shape the way that you perceive the world, other people and your behaviours
- All of these things about the world can also shape your self-perceptions
- A topic that is fundamental and central to psychology
- We see the self everywhere – throughout history, culture, people have grappled with the question of what is the self, how do we feel about the self and does it matter
- The importance of self-knowledge –  
From theologians, philosophers, scholars, poets
  - Socrates: “Know thyself,”
  - Tao Te Ching/Dao De Jing: “Knowing others is intelligence; knowing yourself is true wisdom. Mastering others is strength; mastering yourself is true power.”
  - Rumi: “Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world. Today I am wise, so I am changing myself.”
  - Buddhism: “To overcome one’s own self is indeed better than to conquer others” – a lack of permanent self central to Buddhism
  - William Shakespeare: “This above all; To thine own self be true.”
  - George Bernard Shaw: “Life isn’t about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself.” – creating a sense of who you are

### To pop culture – quotes, books

- “What matters most is how you see yourself.”
- “It’s not who you are that holds you back, it’s who you think you’re not.”
- Self Improvement ALL-IN-ONE Package
  - Stretch the mind with ideas
  - Satisfy curiosity without risk
  - Capture all at one low price
  - Give to yourself & expand
- 10 Steps to Self-discovery
- 50 Mindful Steps to Self-esteem
- Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition
- Fundamental Steps for Self Discovery and Self Knowledge

### Topic outline

- What is the self?
- Self-knowledge
- Self-motives
  - Self-enhancement
  - Self-verification
- Self-esteem
- Self-conscious emotions

## Lecture outline

- What is the self?
  - Levels of the self
  - Cultural differences in defining the self
  - Gender differences in defining the self
- Self-knowledge: How do we know who we are?
  - Introspection
  - Observing our behaviour
    - Self-perception theory (Bem, 1967)
  - Other people
    - Reflection (e.g., Cooley)
    - Social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954)

## Who am I?

1. I am \_\_\_\_\_
2. I am \_\_\_\_\_
3. I am \_\_\_\_\_
- .....
20. I am \_\_\_\_\_

## The 20 statements test

- Created in 1954
- To get at self-concept
- A measure of what is the self
- Define the question of what is the self as people's answers to the question of "Who am I?"
- Used a lot in the research of the self; still used nowadays

## What is the self?

- Who am I? – Different responses
  - In relation to sorts of traits
    - E.g., honest, outgoing, extroverted, talented
  - In relation to close relationships
    - E.g., a sister, a boyfriend
  - In regard to group relationships
    - E.g., Australian, woman
- Psychological, rather than physical
- A multi-faceted construct
  - Broad and general
  - Encompasses different structures and processes
  - No single structure or process answers everything – a collection of different elements
- Duality of self (James, 1890)
  - Self as an object that can be observed: "Me"/the known
    - Self-concept: our thoughts and beliefs about ourselves
  - Self as an agent doing the observing: "I"/the knower
    - Self-awareness: the perceiver, the active process of info

### **Levels of the self (Brewer & Gardner, 1996)**

- Personal (individual) self
  - Beliefs about private self
  - Characteristics that differentiate you from other people
    - E.g. honest
- Relational self
  - Self in context of interpersonal relationships
    - E.g., intimate relationships
- Collective self
  - Self in relation to group memberships
    - Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986)

### **Cultural differences in defining the self**

- The squeaky wheel gets the grease. – American proverb
  - Implies that you need to shout out loud, stick up your arm, ask for what you need
- The nail that stands out gets pounded down. – Japanese proverb
  - Implies that if you are different to other people, you will get knocked down
- People from Western cultures tend to:
  - Value independence and uniqueness
    - What makes you distinct among other people
    - Individual self
  - Define themselves as quite separate from other people
    - E.g., personal preferences
  - Independent view of the self
- People from Asian and other non-Western cultures tend to:
  - Value interdependence and connectedness
    - What about you makes you a part of a bigger social web
    - Collective self
  - Define themselves in terms of their relationships to others
    - E.g., family, nation, religion
  - Interdependent view of the self

### **Gender differences in defining the interdependent self**

- Women: more relational interdependence – focus more on their close relationships
  - E.g., how they feel about their spouse or their child
- Men: more collective interdependence – focus on their memberships in larger groups
  - E.g., Australian, belong to the cricket team

### **Caveats/Cautionary notes about culture and gender differences**

- There is considerable variability:
  - Within cultures
  - Within each gender
- Different types of self-views can be important within an individual
  - E.g., bicultural individuals
    - HK students who experienced both Asian and Western culture and can speak both Cantonese and English
    - Completed 20 statements test presented in Chinese or English
    - The language they were presented with influenced the likelihood that they would respond in the different levels of the self

### **How do we know who we are?**

#### **Introspection**

- Looking inward – examining our thoughts and feelings
- Problem: We don't always have access to our internal states or their causes
  - We don't always know what our thoughts and feelings are
  - Even if we do, we don't always know why we are feeling that way or thinking that particular thought
- Nisbett and Wilson (1977):
  - Chose a pair of stockings from a display
  - Showed a right-hand bias
    - We don't know the reasons for our decisions
- Wilson, Laser, and Stone (1982):
  - "Introspection" group (diary group):
    - In a diary, record
      - 1) various factors that could influence mood and
      - 2) their mood
    - Estimated the extent to which various factors influenced their moods
  - "Observer" group:
    - Estimated the extent to which various factors influence mood
  - Results: The observer group was just as accurate as the introspection group
  - Introspection doesn't lead to insight about the causes of our moods – we tend to rely on general causal theories, rather than the actual effect

#### **Observing our behaviour**

How do I know what I think until I see what I say? (E.M. Forster)

- Self-perception Theory (Bem, 1967)
  - We infer who we are from what we do (our behaviour)
  - Likely to occur when:
    - We are unsure of our attitudes and feelings
    - Our internal cues (attitudes and feelings) are weak
    - We have no clear situational influence on our behaviour
    - We chose the behaviour freely

- We examine our behaviour and the circumstances in which it is occurring
- We ask ourselves: Is the situation sufficient to explain behaviour?
  - If yes, then our behaviour is due to external factors
  - If no, then assume behaviour is due to internal reasons – it reveals something about the self
- But how do we work out whether the situation is sufficient to explain our behaviour?
  - We ask ourselves: Is the behaviour freely chosen?
    - Intrinsic motivation: desire to engage in an activity because of internal reasons (you enjoy it)
    - Extrinsic motivations: desire to engage in an activity because of external rewards or pressures
  - If due to intrinsic motivation, then we will infer attitudes and feelings from behaviour

### **Self-perception, rewards, and motivation**

- Rewards decrease intrinsic motivation (Lepper, Green, & Nisbett, 1973)
  - Kids who were promised and received a reward for drawing later showed less interest in drawing

#### ❖ Suggested reading:

Brewer, M.B., & Gardner, W. (1996). Who is this “we”? Levels of collective identity and self representations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71, 83-93.

## L20 – Antisocial behaviours: Gender discrimination

### Lecture outline

1. Introduction and definitions – ‘Women firsts’.
2. Gender Pay Gap Statistics (Nov, 2016)
3. Sex Discrimination Act (1984) and Kate Jenkins
4. Sex discrimination is still prevalent – Academia and law firms.
5. Workplace discrimination: Glass Ceiling (Naff, 1994; Melamed, 1995)
6. The Glass Ceiling
7. Explanations for the Glass Ceiling effect
  - Intragroup similarity and prototypicality (Ryan & Haslam, 2007)
  - Stereotypes (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Ryan & Haslam, 2007)
  - Organisational Structures
8. The Glass Cliff (Ryan & Haslam, 2009)
9. Conclusion

### Leadership: Women ‘firsts’ in Australia



Quentin Bryce: Governor General



Kay Goldsworthy: Anglican Bishop



Julia Gillard: PM



Julie Bishop: Foreign Minister

### Introduction

- Sex Discrimination or sexism refers to any negative behaviour (including harassment) directed toward an individual because of their sex.
- Like all other forms of discrimination, sex discrimination may be direct/blatant or indirect/subtle. For example, women who are comparable to men in terms of education and experience continue to receive fewer opportunities for advancement and lower wages.
- Wage disparities, occupational sex segregation, and gender imbalance in senior management positions, are well documented.

## Gender pay gap in Hollywood

- In 2017 Forbes magazine published that Emma Stone topped the best-paid actress list with \$34 million, while Mark Wahlberg was the highest paid man with \$90 million in estimated annual earnings.
- Earlier this year Wahlberg revealed that he was paid \$1.9 million for reshoots on movie *All the Money in the World* while co-star Michelle Williams was paid \$1,300.
- Netflix's *The Crown* star Claire Foy was paid less than her male co-star Matt Smith.

## National gender pay gap in Australia

- In May 2018, the gender pay gap in Australia stood at 15.3%.

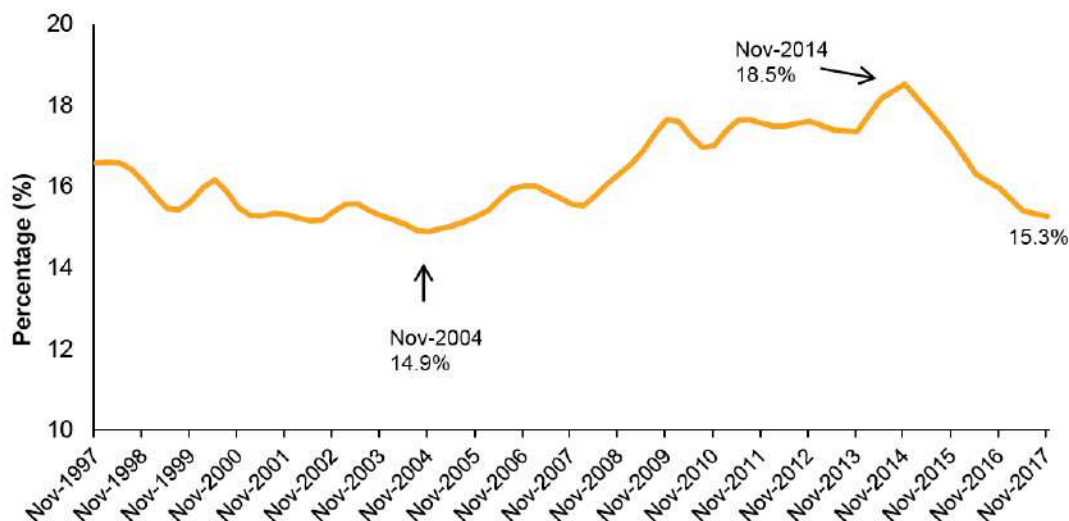


Source: <https://www.wgea.gov.au/addressing-pay-equity/what-gender-pay-gap>

Gender Pay Gap = The percentage difference between women's and men's average weekly full-time equivalent earnings.

## Gender pay gap: Nov, 2017

Figure 1: The Australian gender pay gap, November 1997 –November 2017<sup>v</sup>



Source: Data source: ABS (2018), *Average Weekly Earnings*, Nov 2017, cat. no. 6302.0, viewed 22 February 2018, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6302.0>

A question for you

The GradStats report by Graduate Careers Australia shows median full-time employment starting salaries for male graduates are \$55,000, compared to \_\_\_\_\_ for women.

- a) \$45,000
- b) \$50,000
- c) \$53,000
- d) \$55,000

Note: males graduates overall starting salaries were 4.4% higher than those for females  
(Source: <http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Graduate-Salaries-Report-2015-FINAL1.pdf>)

### Australian legislation: Sex discrimination act (1984)

- Promote equality between men and women;
- Eliminate discrimination on the basis of sex, marital status or pregnancy and, with respect to dismissals, family responsibilities; and
- Eliminate sexual harassment at work, in educational institutions, in the provision of goods and service, in the provision of accommodation and the administration of federal programs.



### Women in academia

Academic staff employed as Associate Professors/Professors in Australia:

	Women	Men
2003	19.1%	80.9%
2016	31.7%	68.3%

Source: <https://docs.education.gov.au/node/42366>; "Table 2.9 Number of Full-time and Fractional Full-time Staff by Age Group, Current Duties Classification and Gender, 2016".

The University of Sydney:

	Associate professors		Professors	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
2009	32%	68%	19%	81%
2015	39%	61%	28%	72%

Source: <https://intranet.sydney.edu.au/strategy-planning/diversity-and-inclusion/gender-equity.html>

By 2020, the University target for women is 45% Associate professors and 40% female Professors.



## Women in law firms

- The percentage of female law graduates has been at around the 50-60% mark for around three decades now (*Lawyers Weekly*, March, 2014), however, they account for only 24% of partners in law firms (*Financial Review*, 2015).
- According Elizabeth Broderick (previous Sex Discrimination Commissioner), the system of billable hours employed by the majority of law firms in private practice could amount to sexual discrimination if it acts as an impediment to women seeking partnership.

A question for you

In 2016 in Australia, a difference still exists between postgraduate starting salaries for women and men, with women earning \_\_\_\_\_ of men's salaries.

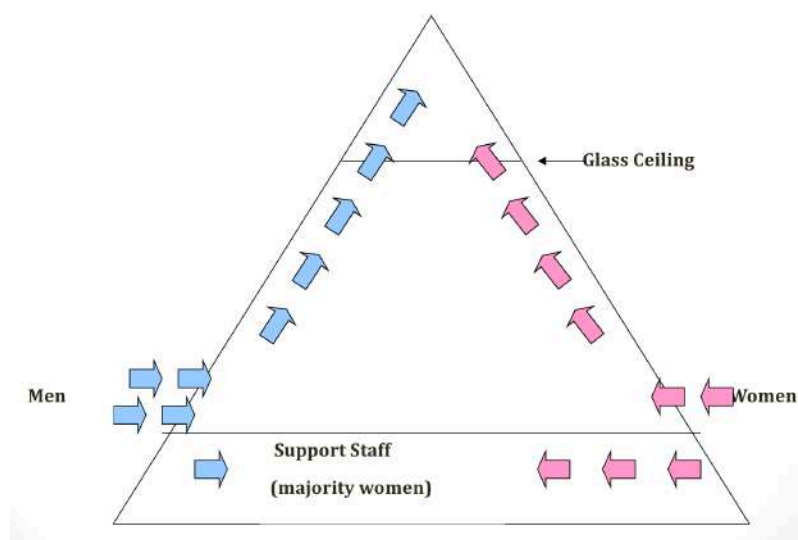
- a) 68% (\$90k/men vs \$61.3k/women)
- b) 72.4% (\$90k/men vs \$65.16k/women)
- c) 83.3% (\$90k/men vs \$75k/women)
- d) 95% (\$90k/men vs \$85.5k/women)

Source: [http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Postgraduate-Destinations-2015\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.graduatecareers.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Postgraduate-Destinations-2015_FINAL.pdf)

## Workplace inequity: the glass ceiling

- Sex discrimination at work has shifted to jobs in upper levels of management as only one in ten executives are women. Even when length of experience and education are equal amongst male and female employees, women still receive fewer promotions (Naff, 1994).
- The glass ceiling refers to "a solid but invisible barrier which blocks womens' progress to higher managerial levels and creates a wage-gap between the two sexes" (Melamed, 1995).

## The glass ceiling



## Explaining the glass ceiling effect

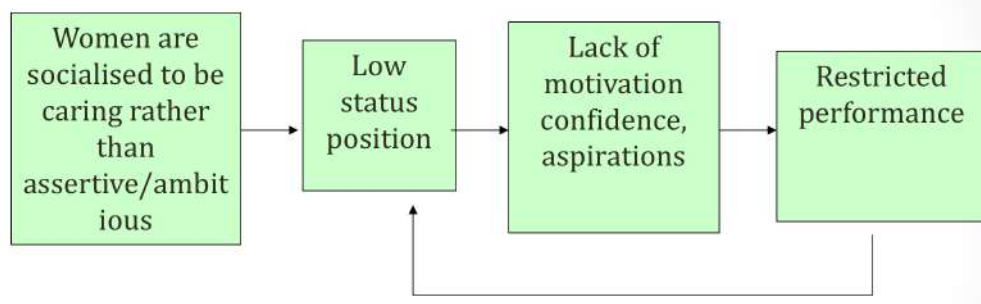
### 1. Intragroup similarity and prototypicality

- The Social Identity approach suggests that inequalities in the number of male and female leaders could arise in part because women are seen by those who appoint them (mainly men) to be less prototypical of the groups they are expected to lead than are men.
- Women are less likely to be seen to define the leaders prototype (because they do not maximise intragroup similarity), and are less likely to be doing the defining (Ryan & Haslam, 2007).

### 2. Sex-role stereotypes

- Eagly and Karau (2002) argued that the incongruity between what means to be female and what is seen to be managerial can produce two forms of prejudice:
  - less favourable evaluation of the potential for women to take on leadership roles compared to men, and
  - less favourable evaluations of the actual behaviour of female leaders.
- Due to the noted automatic associations between masculinity and management observers are less likely to 'spontaneously categorise' women as leaders or potential leaders.

## Sex-role stereotyping in the workplace



- Men fit cultural construals or stereotypes of leadership better than
- women do and thus have better access to leader roles and
- face fewer challenges in becoming successful in them.

## Lose-Lose situation for women

- If a woman's behaviour confirms the gender stereotype, they are not thought to be acting as proper leader, but if their behaviour is consistent with the leader stereotype, then they are not thought to be acting as a proper woman.
- Violating either of these stereotypes (gender or leadership) can then result in negative evaluations of women and their performance (Ryan & Haslam, 2007).

### 3. Organisational structures

- Dipboye, Smith and Howell (1994) note that organisational barriers include, sexist wording on performance appraisals (Xerox Corporation changed "intense desire to win", which seemed stereotypically male, to "intense desire to succeed", which seemed more gender neutral); differences in tasks assigned; training opportunities and mentoring relationships (Smith, Olson & Falgout, 1991).

### A new phenomena – the glass cliff

- What about women who have broken through the glass ceiling into higher management leadership roles, is it smooth sailing from there?
- Research has more recently demonstrated that female leaders are more likely to be appointed
  - in a time of poor performance, or
  - when there is an increased risk of failure, and
- as such, their leadership positions can be seen as more precarious than those of men (Ryan & Haslam, 2009).
- This phenomenon is referred to as the 'glass cliff'.

### The glass cliff 'phenomenon'

- According to Ryan et al. (2015) the Glass Cliff is a result of a selection bias which is a result of gender stereotypes: "*think crisis – think female* stereotypes (e.g., communication skills, ability to encourage others, etc.) vs "*think manager – think male stereotypes*" (e.g., independence, decisiveness, etc.).
- Cook and Glass (2014) argue that women are given less leeway to lead their firms out of crisis, while the ultimate return of the male leader is understood as a signal that things have returned to normal – "the saviour effect".
- These events in turn serve to confirm stereotypes that women are unsuitable for high office.

### Conclusion

#### Have women broken through the glass ceiling?

- The latest percentage of women on ASX 200 boards is 27.1% (31 March, 2018).
- 7 boards in the ASX 200 still do not have any women.
- We need to move beyond tokenistic targets, and set quotas, in order to effectively implement changes in thinking and behaviour.
- We also need legislated equal pay for all women.
- To enable organizations to address women's exclusion from higher levels of management, it is necessary that they provide practical career development tools and initiatives addressing existing workplace inequalities.
- Sex discrimination is a product of a combination of cultural ideas, structural policies that affect women and men differently, and decisions to apply or enforce those policies on workers by gender.
- The challenge for those seeking to eradicate sex discrimination will necessitate shifts in areas of culture, structure, and individual decision-making.

❖ Focus references

- Australian Human Rights Commission: <http://humanrights.gov.au/>
- Cook, A., & Glass, C. (2014). Above the glass ceiling: When are women and racial/ethnic minorities promoted to CEO?. *Strategic Management Journal*, 35, 1080-1089.
- Crosby, F. J., Stockdale, M. S., & Ropp, S. A. (2007). *Sex discrimination in the workplace: Multidisciplinary perspectives*. xvi, 375 pp. Malden, MA, US: Blackwell Publishing.
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- Koenig, A. M., Eagly, A. H., Mitchell, A. A., & Ristikari, T. (2011). Are leader stereotypes masculine? A meta-analysis of three research paradigms. *Psychological Bulletin*, 137, 616-642.
- Preston, A., Jefferson, T., & Guthrie, R. (2007). ABS wage data show women are the winners: a comment, Women in Social & Economic Research Working Paper Series: no. 52, Curtin University of Technology, Women in Social & Economic Research.
- Ryan, M. K., & Haslam, S. A. (2009). Glass Cliffs are not easily scaled: On the precariousness of female CEOs' positions. *British Journal of Management*. 20, 182-197.
- Ryan, M. K., Haslam, S. A., Morgenroth, T., Rink, F., Stoker, J., & Peters, K. (2016). Getting on top of the glass cliff: Reviewing a decade of evidence, explanations, and impact. *The Leadership Quarterly*.

## L24 – Antisocial behaviours: Age discrimination and reduction strategies

### Lecture outline

1. Introduction – a grey Australia in 2030
2. What is Ageism or Age discrimination?
3. The Age Discrimination Act (2004)
  - Susan Ryan, Age Discrimination Commissioner
4. Elderly stereotypes vs reality (Finkelstein, Burke, & Raju, 1995; Grant, 1996; Kite, Stockdale, Whitley & Johnson, 2005)
  - Warm and incompetent (Cuddy, Norton & Fiske, 2005)
  - Branscombe et al.'s (1999) rejection-identification model
5. Strategies to reduce age discrimination
  - Challenging age discrimination legislation (MacDermott, 2010)
  - Public campaigns to reduce age discrimination: Age Positive (AHRC)
    - Homeshare Program (Carmel Hurst)
  - Education programs and providing counter-stereotypical information (Cherry & Palmore, 2008; Cottle & Glover, 2007)
    - Stereotype-inconsistent information (Meisner, 2012)
  - Intergenerational Contact strategies
    - Tam, Hewstone, Harwood, Voci, & Kenworthy (2006); Grandparent–grandchild communication
    - *High quality* intergenerational contact (Bousfield & Hutchinson, 2010)
    - Source–focused Strategy: Younger work colleagues (Iweins, Desmette, Yzerbyt, & Stinglhamber, 2013)
    - Target-focused strategy: Singletary and Hebl (2009) highlight the importance of acknowledgement; individuating information and increased positivity
6. Conclusion

### Introduction

- Ageism is one of “the most condoned institutionalised forms of prejudice in the world” (Nelson, 2002, p. ix).
- Ageing is unavoidable and represents a pervasive and negative consequence of their *permanent* group membership.
- Age discrimination happens when someone is treated unfairly or denied an opportunity because of their age, when age is irrelevant to the person's ability to take advantage of that opportunity (e.g., succeeding at work, pursuing further education, or following one's interests).

### Grey in Australia in 2030

- By 2030 the current number of people aged over 65 years will double.
- These statistics reinforce the importance of reducing ageism in our increasingly grey Australia.



## Age discrimination

- Direct
  - When an older person is not employed in an office job because it is assumed that they would not have the ability to learn new computer programs.
- Indirect
  - When an employer requires an older person to meet a physical fitness test which younger people can meet more easily, if the fitness standard is not reasonable/necessary for the job in question.

## Age Discrimination Act (2004)

- One goal of the Australian Age Discrimination Act (2004) was to address the needs of our aging population. Under this act all Australians should be treated equally and have the same opportunities as everyone else within the contexts of work/employment, education, accommodation or purchasing goods. The law makes it clear that a person cannot be treated unfairly because of their age.



Susan Ryan – Australia's first Age Discrimination Commissioner

## Elderly stereotypes vs reality

- Common stereotypes among employers include perceptions that the skills of mature age job seekers are outdated and that they are harder to train.
- Many employers also assume that mature age workers are either unable or unwilling to adapt to new technology.
- Australian Human Rights Commission Report – “Fact or fiction? Stereotypes of older Australians” (2013):  
[https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/Fact or Fiction 2013 WebVersion FINAL 0.pdf](https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/Fact%20or%20Fiction%202013%20WebVersion%20FINAL%200.pdf)
- Other aged stereotypes include – poor hearing, decreased intellect, slower cognitive functions. When older people come to believe and act according to these stereotypes, it then reinforces the maintenance of such stereotypes and treatment of older persons (Grant, 1996) – a self-fulfilling prophecy effect.
- Kite, Stockdale, Whitley & Johnson (2005) conducted a meta-analysis of 232 effect sizes and found that attitudes were more negative towards older than younger adults.

## A question for you

Dr Roderick McKay (2012), Chair of the Faculty of Psychiatry of Old Age at the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, stated that

- a) 90% of people will not have dementia at 80 years of age
- b) 80% of people will not have dementia at 80 years of age
- c) 60% of people will not have dementia at 80 years of age
- d) 50% of people will not have dementia at 80 years of age
- e) 30% of people will not have dementia at 80 years of age

Also click on the following link for prevalence data for dementia in Australia according to the five-year age brackets and by sex: <https://fightdementia.org.au/about-dementia/resources/prevalence-calculator>

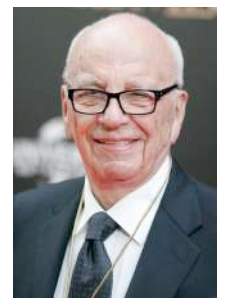
- Psychological research that shows older workers are often more productive, have lower absenteeism and turnover rates than younger workers. In general, older employees do not suffer from poorer health, diminished vigour, or declining mental abilities when compared with younger employees.
- Evidence shows that an older individual, if employed at 50, will stay with their organisation on average longer than a 25-year-old. This may be a result of young people being advised to expect, and indeed encouraged, to change jobs every few years (Ranzijn, 2005).
- Given what we now know about the competencies and trainability of older workers, recruiting and training an older worker may represent a better return on investment than a younger one (Ranzijn, 2005).

#### The mixed elderly stereotype: Warm and incompetent

- Cuddy, Norton and Fiske (2005) asked American respondents to rate 24 social groups on lists of traits reflecting warmth and competence. On perceived warmth, the 'elderly' group were above 96% of the other groups (disabled, homeless, etc.) but on competence, ratings fell below 78% of the other groups.
- Erber and Prager (1999) found that people are also more likely to attribute memory failures of older adults to intellectual incompetence, and memory failures of younger adults to lack of attention or effort.
- Several studies have uncovered the elderly incompetence stereotype in the workplace, where older employees are believed to be less effective than younger employees (Singer, 1986).
- Pity may look benign on the surface but it can create a dangerous self-fulfilling prophecy – some older people internalise this message and this can decrease their independence and increase their helplessness (Cohen, 1990).
- Nussbaum et al. (2005) found that the assignment of labels that convey inferiority (e.g., pitiful) actually renders people helpless and creates self-induced dependence.

#### Isolation & social exclusion of the elderly

- Older people who need work have trouble finding and keeping jobs, often because of unfair and inaccurate assessments of their presumed or actual productivity (McCann & Giles, 2002).
- The age of 65 has become a magic number associated with retirement.... premature retirement leaves older people especially those who strongly identify with work, "Feeling isolated and confused" (McCann & Giles, 2002).



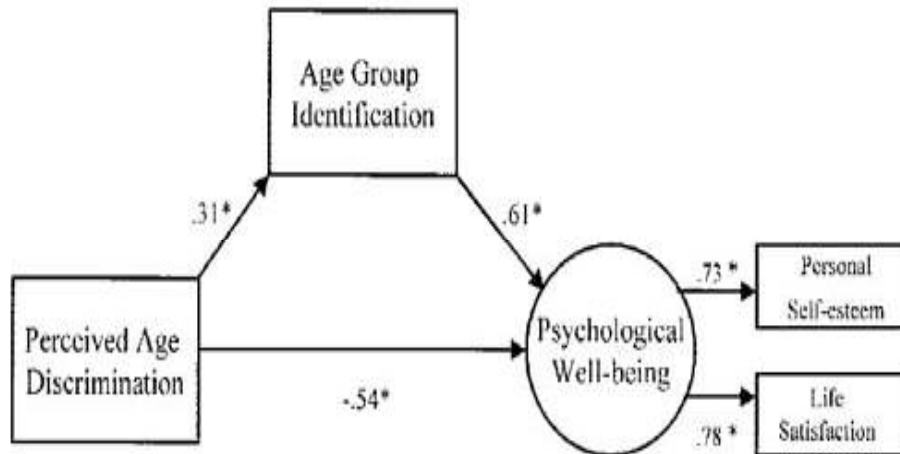
Rupert Murdoch @ 87 years

#### Young and older adults' different responses to age discrimination

- Branscombe et al's. (1999) rejection-identification model proposes that perceptions of discrimination increase group identification for members of low status groups, particularly when the boundaries between low status groups and the high-status groups are perceived as impermeable (i.e., upward movement into higher status groups is not possible).
- Garstka, Schmitt, Branscombe & Hummet (2004) conducted a study involving a sample of 59 young adults/university students ( $M = 18.8$  years) and 60 older adults ( $M = 75$  years) from the community.

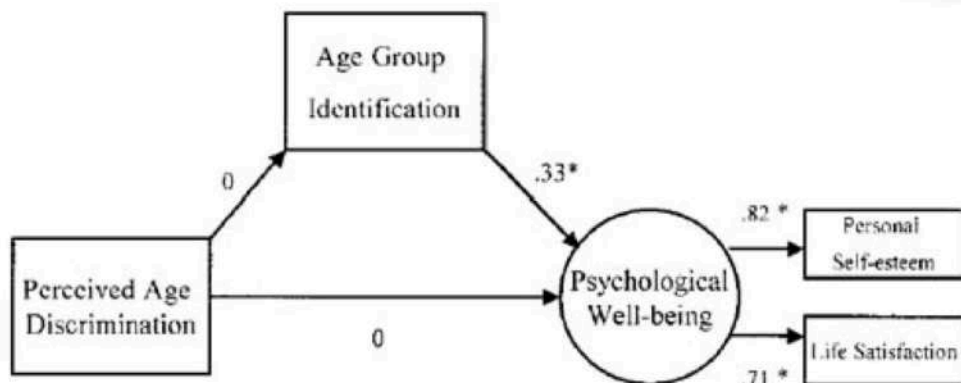
- Participants completed measures of age discrimination (4 items), age group identification (5 items), personal self-esteem (Rosenberg's 1979 Scale:10 items), life satisfaction (5 items), and age group status (3 items rating the status if young, middle-aged and older adults).

The rejection-identification model for older adults



From: Garstka: Psychol Aging, Volume 19(2). Juner 2004, 326-335.

The rejection-identification model for young adults



From: Garstka: Psychol Aging, Volume 19(2). Juner 2004, 326-335.

A question for you

Women alone in the 65-74 age group contribute \_\_\_\_ to the Australian economy.

- \$50 million per year
- \$90 million per year
- \$5 billion per year
- \$16 billion per year
- \$20 billion per year

[Source: <http://www.helppage.org/resources/ageing-in-the-21st-century-a-celebration-and-a-challenge/ageing-in-the-21st-century-infographic/>  
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-05-31/ryan-age-discrimination/4724970>]



## Strategies to reduce age discrimination

### **Public campaigns – Australian Human Rights Commission: Age Positive Website**

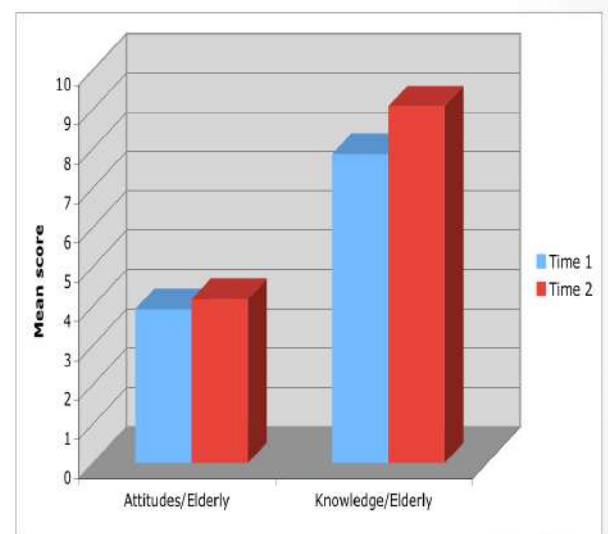
- <http://agepositive.humanrights.gov.au/>
- Older Australians make a significant contribution to our society
- Older Australians are vital for Australian business – as a growing market segment and as employees. And we all benefit from their contribution as carers and volunteers.
- Too often we only hear about the negative stereotypes of older people. It can appear as if they are all sick, frail, lonely and grumpy. Nothing is further from the truth.
- Most older Australians are happy and active, they enjoy life, and they have the skills, knowledge and desire to continue to make a significant contribution to the economy – now and in the future.
- Age Positive is about recognising this contribution and the important and diverse roles of older Australians.

### Age Positive: Homeshare

- *Homeshare* matches an older homeowner with a younger person looking for rent-free accommodation. In exchange, the renter provides approx. 10 hours per week of practical assistance and support including cooking, cleaning and weekly grocery shopping. The program is an opportunity for significant friendships and intergenerational and cultural learning.

### **Educational programs**

- Educational programs that expose people to stereotype-inconsistent and individuating information about the elderly.
- According to Cherry and Palmore (2008) increasing people's awareness of ageist behaviours and disseminating accurate information about ageism could counteract stereotypes and is a necessary first step toward reducing ageism as a pervasive social phenomenon.
- Cottle and Glover (2007) found that positive attitudes towards the elderly and knowledge about the elderly increased significantly from Time 1 to Time 2 for 146 students who participated in a lifespan developmental course.
- Recent research (see Meisner, 2012) has shown that negative age stereotyping elicits effects on behaviour almost *three times* larger than positive age stereotypes.
- Consequently, it is important that reduction strategies must **BOTH**
  - counter negative stereotypes (incompetent) **AND**
  - promote positive age stereotypes (wisdom; experience and life perspective)



### **Intergenerational contact**

- Tam, Hewstone, Harwood, Voci, and Kenworthy (2006) examined the role of grandparent-grandchild communication in improving intergenerational attitudes. These authors showed that contact with one's grandparents was associated with more favourable explicit attitudes toward older adults.
- High *quality* intergenerational contact rather than quantity of contact was positively associated with young people's ( $M = 20.4$  yrs;  $N = 55$ ) attitudes and behavioural intentions towards the elderly (Bousfield & Hutchison, 2010).
- Iweins and colleagues (2013) conducted a correlational study to examine the influence of both intergenerational contact and organizational multi-age perspective on age discrimination in the workplace. The sample included 129 French-speaking Belgian employees with a mean age = 37.74 years from two financial companies.

### Iweins and colleagues (2013)

- Intergenerational contact was adapted from Voci and Hewstone (2003). Respondents rated the degree to which their contact with older workers was natural, positive, unpleasant, competitive, and involuntary from 1 = totally disagree to 7 = totally agree.
- The organizational multi-age perspective required participants to rate six items on the extent to which their company supported a multi-age diversity perspective (e.g., "In its age management diversity, my organization considers that recognizing the specificity of each generation leads to harmony between workers") on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 = never to 7 = always.
- Dual identity was measured by multiplying their age group (ingroup) identity [(e.g., "You identify yourself as a member of your generation at work")] with their organizational (common) identity [(e.g., "You identify yourself as a member of your organization")].

### **Conclusion**

- As the elderly increase in size and influence it remains to be seen how this increase in status will impact the mixed stereotype of 'warm but incompetent'.
- Age discrimination is widely accepted in the community, and consequently well-resourced campaigns providing facts and information on this issue are needed.
- Age discrimination reduction strategies, like many of the strategies discussed in this lecture series, should involve elements of cooperative intergenerational contact and some sort of dual identity recategorisation, in order to affect positive change.

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