"More Societal than Generational":

Examining the Construction and Resistance of Generational Messages

in the Workplace

A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

of

Master of Management Studies

at

The University of Waikato

by

STEVEN DAVID HITCHCOCK

_____

The University of Waikato

2011

AUTHOR NOTE

Steven David Hitchcock, Waikato Management School, The University of Waikato

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management Studies, The University of Waikato July 2011

Correspondence regarding this paper should be addressed to Steven D. Hitchcock, Waikato Management School, The University of Waikato, Hamilton 3216, New Zealand

Email: stevenh@waikato.ac.nz

ABSTRACT

 The Millennial generation, those born between 1980-2000, have drawn vast, sometimes fanatical, criticism in popular media. Slated as narcissistic praise hounds, they are cast as demanding graduate divas who are about to attack the workplace and everything 'you hold sacred' (Clark, 2008; Safer, 2007). The abundance of such messages about this generation in formats 'tailored, targeted, and consumed' by the public is problematic given that generational constructs are by many perceived as sacrosanct (Myers et al, 2010).

The proliferation of such criticism is by no means innocuous given the very likely impact that they will have on Millennial work opportunities. For many scholars the field of Millennial research suffers from a lack of empirical and cross sectional data to establish more calculated and careful generational constructs, – instead relying on or reacting to popular negative stereotypes. While some Millennial scholarship has begun to move beyond criticisms of popular media, Millennial research is by many considered contradictory at best and confusing at worst (Kowske et al, 2010). Additional difficulties arise when the scramble to publish more research-based work has led to methodologies which are inherently flawed because they reinforce the very same monolithic generational categories they are supposed to assess .

This study, undertaken in New Zealand, explores critical approaches as a means of examining the construction of generational messages and the establishment of generational difference. As a starting point, this small-scale examination analyses the very way in which generational messages are constructed and resisted within the workplace through an analysis of interviews undertaken with 26 employees of a Small to Medium Enterprise (SME) in the information technology sector.

Unlike many generational studies, this project did not seek to draw conclusions by framing differences and measuring responses across generational lines, but rather took a bottom-up approach to understand how participants themselves constructed and resisted messages about generational difference. The project asked two research questions: First, how are generational messages constructed in the context of the workplace? And second, how are generational messages resisted in the workplace? Through axial coding this research categorized five themes under which participants constructed generational difference. These five themes are Technology, Voice, Fairness, Informality, and Stimulus. Broadly speaking, these themes were underpinned by a belief that Millennials have a great demand for respect, democratic process, and the reduction of power distances.

Given the critical approach, the study also observed resistance as a component of the discursive process. As such this research outlines the partiality of resistance and

outlines strategies of resistance employed by employees. In line with the idea that construction and resistance are mutually implicated as negotiation, participants were frequently observed simultaneously constructing and resisting generational difference, both synchronically and diachronically. Through axial coding this study also categorized three strategies of resistance. These three strategies are established as Dismissal, the Third Person Effect, and the Decline Metaphor.

This research highlights the usefulness of adopting critical approaches by illustrating the way in which generational meaning is perpetually produced, reproduced, negotiated, and resisted by participants (Murphy, 1998). While there are several factors which are indicative of the Millennial generation, this thesis establishes the hegemonic character of most constructions of generational difference. Given the fragmented and complex state of society, this thesis posits that the usefulness of the monolithic birth-cohort generation has long since passed and we should instead look to understanding generations in terms of their consumption of similar cultural capital.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As I sit to write my acknowledgements, I find it difficult to introduce this project as my own when I have had the support of so many. I am at best, an abysmal writer of sentiment, however I will do my best for the people below as they deserve far more than I can offer them, even in these few pages.

It is truly difficult to overstate my gratitude for my advisor Shiv Ganesh. It was he who inspired, challenged, and guided me throughout this endeavour. His positive outlook and keen critique has been central to the success of this project. I feel I have grown a lot over the past twelve months and there is no doubt in my mind that without Shiv, I would never have reached this point. He is unquestionably a great educator, a great mentor, and a great friend.

 Next I would like to thank my partner Amy Baker, who has reminded me to eat, drink, sleep, and breathe over the past year. She tolerated my days interviewing participants, my nights holed up in the library, and my second relationship with my thesis. Her support has been immense – somehow knowing exactly when to tell me to go back to my desk, and when to pull me away from it.

I would also like to thank the organization and the employees who welcomed me so warmly – particularly the twenty six participants who offered their time and thoughts; without your aid this project would not have been possible. Similarly, I offer thanks to The University of Waikato, specifically the Department of Management Communication at The Waikato Management School whose faculty have always offered their advice, aid, and time.

I would like to thank my parents, David and Rayleen Hitchcock who were unwavering in their support, be it financial, morale, and even nutritional. I am grateful for all that you gave up for me, and know that I owe all that I am to you.

I would also like to thank my old colleagues, Chris Williams, Stephanie Gower, and Tony Aubrey, who taught me more than I can quantify in words, and to whom I owe much.

Finally (but by no means least) to my friends who aided (and tolerated) me, I wish I could name you all; but to Leighton Archer, Andrew Macintyre, and of course Joy Pawley – thank you for the distractions when needed and the help when required.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

Acknowledging and managing different generations is being seen as an increasingly important function of management. Commentators claim that organizations face the challenge of managing a workforce paradigm shift as Baby Boomers rapidly approach retirement and the much heralded Millennial generation flock out of universities (Twenge, 2010). Not only will aging Baby Boomers take with them a great deal of knowledge, but many organizations are also presented with the prospect of accommodating what is cast as the most controversial generation in recent history. Scholars frequently make contradictory claims about Millenials and their potential (Macky, Gardner, & Forsyth, 2010; Kowske, Rasch, & Wiley, 2010). Furthermore popular dialogue about Millenials has become somewhat polarized due to widespread anecdotal reports and absence of empirical studies. While the last few years have begun to see an increase in research, a somewhat problematic praise/criticism dichotomy is still evident in Millennial research This body of contested and contradictory research has seeped into the echo-chamber of popular media, who have for the most part adopted something of a doomsday account of the generation in light (or rather darkness) of the lack of definitive data. This project seeks to address the lacuna of empirical examination in Millennial research through the employment of a critical, qualitative study.

The four predominant generations in the early 21st century workforce are generally categorized as Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials. In 2008, the New Zealand workforce comprised of 2,154,300 employees, with each of the four generations represented at 3.3%, 25.11%, 45.49%, 26.1% respectively (Statistics New Zealand, 2008). If the trends observed for prior generations is similar to that of Millennials, the percentage of Millenials should continue to increase, reaching roughly 45% in 2028. While the number of Millennials in the workplace has surpassed that of Baby Boomers - the majority of data on the incoming generation is widely acknowledged as contradictory and largely anecdotal (Macky et al, 2008). Furthermore, a somewhat negative and antagonistic perspective has affirmed itself in the minds of many as reports in magazines, newspapers and

television indiscriminately slander and forewarn Millennials' attack on 'everything you hold sacred' (Safer, 2007).

One prominent example which typifies such anecdotal work is Tyler's (2007) *The Tethered Generation*, which defines Millenials in a largely negative manner. Millennials are characterized by Tyler (2007) as inwardly focused, knowing only what exists on the internet, having their parents write their CVs, and lacking the ability to spell basic words due to the overuse of abbreviations stemmed from texts and email. In addition, Tyler states that they care little about anything other than themselves, and lack the common sense to regulate their personal time during the day or 'knowing to not make business calls while in the restroom' (Tyler, 2007, p. S5). Gray, (2008) echoes this referring to a Daily Mail headline which claims that Millenials are "graduate divas who want it all…young, talented wannabes. They are the frequently overindulged and overprotected children of the digital age" (Clark, 2007, np). Gray (2008) outlines Millenials as having high demands, wanting it all now, and expecting organizations to pander to their every whim.

In recent years however scholarly work has increasingly identified that the stereotypes popularized in the media are not backed by any reputable data (Macky et al, 2010). While some studies have been undertaken, numerous scholars note the lack of cross-sectional and large scale examination as a barrier to broader conclusions being drawn. Specifically, some critics claim an absence of geographic and culturally specific data (Wong et al, 2010).

An area that has garnered substantial scholarly interest is the examination of motivational and attitudinal differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millenials, as discussed by Cennamo & Gardner's (2008). These findings, solidified by Hauw and Voss' (2010), suggest that Millenials are predominately intrinsically motivated, prioritize work-life balance, person-organization fit, and rapid career progression. This emphasis on environmental factors and intrinsic rewards, while not new, is considered far more important for Millennials than for previous generations (Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008; Stern, 2005; Poomina, 2009). It has been suggested that this emphasis on social/cultural factors is a product of Millenials witnessing their

parents' careers and deciding to seek greater balance between life and work (Pekala, 2001; Glass, 2007). In addition, unlike the generations that preceded them, Millennials are said to be highly engaged with the organization (as opposed to their own career) and purportedly tie their own success to that of their organization (Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008). Pekala, (2001) similarly asserts that, like the Baby Boomers, Milllennials set to build or strengthen their identity through their professions by 'living to work', unlike Generation X who infamously 'work to live' (Gursoy, Maier, & Chi, 2008). In turn, some research has identified that in general, Millennials have a far lower propensity or preference for remaining in a single organization, or even industry, throughout their career (D'Amato & Herzfeldt, 2008).

I suggest that the confusing and contradictory discourse of Millennial research in scholarly work can be attributed at least partly to the way in which data used to construct generational difference is collected and analyzed. The vast majority of scholarly empirical examinations have sought to characterize Millennials through comparison and contrast, against previous generations. This is problematic in that it often means that findings of a study are relative to the generation in question, relative to the comparison data, and relative to the author's interpretation. The most common technique adopted in attempts thus far to establish generational difference is through the usage of quantitative self-reporting questionnaires issued throughout a workplace or geographic locale. These questionnaires ask participants to associate to the values of factors such as technology, person-organization fit, and work-life balance, then comparing mean reported values through Osgood and Likert scales.

This methodology is problematic in a myriad of ways. Primarily such studies establish frameworks based upon existing generational constructs, thereby binding participants to respond within these frameworks. This is not to suggest that this is incorrect per se, but rather it is to *question the validity of concluding difference from studies intended to establish difference.* By instead examining how people view and construct generational messages themselves, a more accurate understanding of each generation can be garnered. Through the adoption of a qualitative critical approach, it

may be possible to move beyond studies that reinforce generational categories and examine the construction of generational difference itself.

Therefore, this study aims to examine discursive practices in the construction and resistance of generational meaning in the workplace. By examining these processes as dynamic it will be possible to move beyond the apparent praise/criticize dichotomy so evident throughout academic and popular texts. In this way, it will allow better categorization and comprehension of generations and allow scholars to understand how generational messages themselves are perceived and negotiated. Accordingly, in this chapter I provide a context for this study by first discussing popular conceptions of generations, scholarly work and the negotiation of generational messages in the context of the workplaces. I also introduce the research questions of this project, grounding them in contemporary studies of power and resistance in the workplace. .

Popular Conceptions

As discussed above, data which exists on Millennials is contradictory and confusing at best (Kowske et al, 2010). This is for the most part a product of a lack of empirical-based scholarly examination and the prominent negative imagery portrayed in mainstream media. Hershatter & Epstein, (2010,and Teicher, (2010) believe that stories featured by such reputable sources as 20/20, 60 Minutes, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times and many industry publications are simply bad journalism, feeding on a lack of understanding and existing negative misinformation. Furthermore, the likes of Teicher (2010) believe that this sensationalist reporting is doing very real damage to the careers and opportunities of Millennials:

> How many employers and hiring managers have been exposed
> to similar articles? Is it so far-fetched to imagine that a
> promising graduate's drive could be misconstrued as
> "entitlement" and lose out on a job as a result? This type of
> journalism leads to inaccurate assessments of reality and

consequent discrimination; it perpetuates falsehoods and

blatantly promotes ageism. (p. 199)

Myers & Sadaghiani (2010) also note that the "popular perception (that is not supported by substantial evidence) is that Millennials are impatient, self-important, and disloyal, among other unattractive qualities from an organizational standpoint" (Myers & Sadaghiana, 2010, p. 226). This perspective has led to the coining of 'Generation Me', a substitute for Millennial which draws emphasis on the ego-centric and narcissistic aspects of the Millennial Generation (George, 2008). Safer's (2007) 60 Minutes 'examination' of Millennials encapsulates and typifies the construction of Millennials within popular media.

Stand back all bosses. A new breed of American worker is

about to attack everything that you hold sacred;from giving

orders to your starched white shirt and tie. There are about 80

million of them they were born between 1980 and 1995and

they are rapidly taking over from the Baby Boomers who are

approaching 60. They were raised by dotting parents who told

them that they are special, played in little leagues with no

winners, or losers or all winners. They are laden with trophies

just for participating and they think your 'business as usual'

ethic is for the birds, and if you persist in that belief, you can

shove it. (np)

The story which refers to Millennials as 'narcissistic praise-hounds' who grew up in a world without failure emphasises how gravely unprepared they are for 'the real world'. The notion of Millennials as self entitled is exceptionally common in popular literature. Millennials are referenced as having grown up during the 'self-esteem movement' whereby helicopter parents continually reminded their Millennial children how important they were throughout their development (Stefano, 2010). This notion of children as family flagships is exemplified by a 2008 article in the Wall Street Journal where it is stated that "more than 85% of hiring managers and human

resource executives said they feel that Millennials have a stronger sense of entitlement than older workers" (Wall Street Journal, 2008).

> Where do such feelings come from? Blame it on doting
> parents, teachers and coaches. Millennials are truly "trophy
> kids," the pride and joy of their parents. The Millennials were
> lavishly praised and often received trophies when they
> excelled, and sometimes when they didn't, to avoid damaging
> their self-esteem. They and their parents have placed a high
> premium on success, filling résumés with not only academic
> accolades but also sports and other extracurricular activities.
> (p. D1)

A great deal of popular commentary suggests that the 'most entitled generation' only feels so because of the times of relative prosperity in which they have grown up . George (2009) suggests that "it wasn't just indulgent teachers and coddling parents that formed this generation's world view. This self-esteem revolution happened to dovetail with a consumer shift toward an ever-greater focus on the individual" (np). The often cited 'everyone's a winner' stereotype apparent in the Millennial generation is continually critiqued as the keystone of such behaviour because while everyone can get a trophy for participating in soccer, the real world doesn't work that way (Brookmeyer, 2010; Carey, 2006).

Interestingly this notion that Millennials neither grew up in the 'real world', nor are prepared for the 'real world' is exceptionally common (Gray, 2008). Some suggest that the generation is primarily composed of 'trophy kids' whose immersion in schooling and extracurricular activities coupled with over exposure to success has rendered them 'graduate divas who want it all' (Clark, 2008). Gray, (2008) echoes this referring to Millennials as the 'frequently overindulged and overprotected children of the digital age'. Similarly, this over exposure to success, or rather incubation within success has publications such as Businessweek toting articles outlining Millennials "as the new office morons" (Teicher, 2010) as "the fact is, today's young professionals need to be told how to dress and act" (Wayne, 2010).

Many commentators further criticize Millennials by outlining a seeming irony where Millennials' exceptional conviction of self is paired with social ineptitude (Tyler, 2007; Wayne, 2010). It is not simply this unfounded criticism which is problematic, but the frequency with which it appears in widely recognized, and reputable contexts such the Wall Street Journal and 60 Minutes.

Academic research on Millenials

Scholarly work has in recent years has started to assess the validity and impact of these widely circulated stereotypes. Teicher (2010) suggests that the repetition of such sensationalist and unfounded misinformation is not innocuous, and most likely does impact on the induction and development of Millennials. Myers & Sadaghiana (2010) examine the integration of Millenials into organizations, focusing on the cultural difficulties that are faced and the impacts had on both Millenials, members of other generations, and the organizations' existing social structure as a whole. The paper highlights the problematic anecdotal misinformation that exists about Millenials, attributing the abundance 'popular press' – 'tailored, targeted and consumed by the older generations i.e. Baby Boomers' (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). These preconceived notions held by existing members of an organization stand to further encumber Millenials in their integration and negotiation into both formal and informal organizational membership.

> As Millennials enter the workplace, like generations before them, the first significant hurdle they encounter is their socialization into the organization (Chao et al. 1994; Van Maanen and Schein 1979). [A process whereby] newcomers learn about tasks and social norm expectations through socialization processes, as well as how to adapt to and negotiate their roles (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010, p. 228).

As an ongoing process this is known as membership negotiation, whereby an individual must prove and be deemed useful by the existing members even before acculturation can take place.

> Early on, organizational incumbents assess every
> newcomer's ability to benefit the workgroup. Only when the
> new member is deemed valuable to the workgroup and
> organization, according to Moreland and Levine, do others
> reciprocate the relationship with commitment. Coworkers
> begin to ask for the new member's opinions, delegate
> significant tasks to the new member, and develop meaningful
> working relationships with the new member. This acceptance
> can be stifled when interaction reveals important differences
> in attitudes and behaviours. (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010, p.
> 228).

It is far from unreasonable to suggest that difficulties for Millenials are amplified by popular misconceptions that exist about their fundamental nature and behavior, purportedly in direct opposition of those belonging to Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, and Generation X. Over the past decade, and the past few years in particular, many academics have begun critically examining Millennials and the work published in popular media. Publications such as the *Journal of Business Psychology* and the *Journal of Managerial Psychology* have run special issues tasked with evaluating Millennial research that has itself founded upon 'relatively sparse empirical research published on Millennials'.

> There are a lot of opinions about who Millennials are, what
> they think and value, and how they will behave as they grow
> older and gain more experience in the workforce. The
> relatively sparse empirical research published on Millennials
> is confusing at best and contradictory at worst. (Deal et al,
> 2010)

Deal, Altman, & Rogelberg (2010) also discuss the tensions that result from the impact of ill-defined, over-generalised and often hegemonic notions of generational difference:

> Tension among generations is primarily a result of a
> combination of a lack of data and an over-reliance on opinion
> rather than empirical results. If we collectively did a better job
> of shining a light on data rather than simply relying on ill-
> informed opinion, generational conflict and misunderstanding
> that exists in the workplace would diminish. If that happened,
> we would all be beneficiaries. (Deal et al, 2010)

Similarly, Hershatter and Epstein (2010) suggest that any understandings of Millennials to this date has been deeply impacted by studies which appear inconsistent in theirs and many others findings, yet are consistently found in the mainstream media. This is not to suggest however that difference is unapparent or non-existent, rather that the majority of widespread messages are largely unfounded or worse founded upon small scale or otherwise questionable examination. McCann and Giles (as cited by Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010) note that problematically, intergenerational research often explores "situational and other factors that amplify differences and stereotypical expectations."

> A more productive goal may be to focus on what each
> generation offers to team and organizational performance, and
> how these qualities affect workplace communication,
> behaviours, and relationships. To date, the lack of such
> research is sadly noteworthy. (p235)

This section will examine the ways in which Millennials are commonly framed and understood through generational difference throughout academic examination. The frameworks examined in this chapter will be categorized as Technological Aptitude, Work Attitude, and Values.

Technological Aptitude.

Hershatter and Epstein (2010) propose that the defining aspect of Millenials is their aptitude and understanding of communication and information technologies as digital natives.

> Despite conventional wisdom, they do not appear to be any more altruistic, family-oriented, or motivated to succeed than those who have preceded them, nor are they any less concerned with making money. However, their relationship with technology has changed the way they know the world, and their positive experience inside organizations and institutions during their school years has changed the way they interact with them. (p212)

It is suggested that as digital natives, the way in which they experience the world, 'through technology', has had a profound effect on the way that they learn, interact, and communicate (Hershatter& Epstein, 2010). While the framework of technological aptitude is relatively narrow areas of focus in many studies, it is one often acknowledged by a great deal of literature.

Work Attitude.

Millennial work attitude is so frequently called into question that many even forgo the term Millennial or Generation Y in favour of GenMe, Gen Y?, and Gen Whine (Twenge 2010). These frequently adopted monikers draw attention to the perceived narcissistic nature of the Millennial work ethic (Twenge 2010; George, 2008). A great deal of literature focuses on Millennials as 'the most high-maintenance workforce in the history of the world' (Tulgan, 2009). Tulgan (2009) however questions the accuracy of these in perceptions of work attitude noting that Millennials are likely to be the most productive workforce in history. Work ethic is notably one of the most frequently discussed and contested aspects of the proverbial Millennial due to it clashing with that of older generations (Kowske et al, 2010).

> Perceptions and realities of generational differences are
> substantially different (Deal 2007). Clearly, most of the
> interviews published in magazines and newspapers as well as
> general conversations among neighbours and around
> workplace water coolers illustrate that older people believe
> that Millennials today say different things than their elders
> remember themselves saying at the same age. (Deal et al,
> 2010)

As such, Deal et al (2010) draw emphasis to the issue where the construction and emphasis of messages is too often generated through identification of difference, problematically based upon the observers' recollection. This process in itself is highly problematic as highlighted by Kowske et al (2010), who in reference to Safer (2007), discusses how many senior employees perceive Millennials' work attitude as a direct attack on their own; a la Safer's (2007) psychological battlefield. 226). In contrast however the few empirical examinations which have taken place give very little, if any, credence to popular perceptions, indicating only small differences in areas such as job satisfaction, recognition, and advancement (Kowske et al, 2010). Ultimately however it is unanimously acknowledged in recent research that very few conclusions can be drawn given the sparse empirical literature, little cross cultural examinations, and that no data exists on previous generations at the same time in their careers (Kowske et al, 2010; Ng et al, 2010; Hershatter & Epstein, 2010).

Values.

It is often noted that the difference in Millennial and non-Millennial work attitude is largely founded upon personal values and expectations, both career and otherwise (Ng et al, 2010). These values and expectations which form attitudinal difference are summarized by Ng et al (2010) as Emphasis on Work/Life Balance, Good Pay and Benefits, Prospect of Rapid Advancement, Meaningful Work Experiences and Nurturing Work Environments. Cennamo and Gardner(2008) examine motivational and attitude differences between Boomers, Generation X, and Millenials. Their findings, solidified by Hauw and Voss' (2010) show that Millenials

are predominately intrinsically motivated and that they prioritize work-life balance, person-organization fit, and rapid career progression.

> The Baby Boomer, Generation X and Generation Y had some differences in work values but fewer than expected. Younger employees may prefer a psychological contract with the organisation, which emphasises freedom, status and social involvement. P-O values-fit was related to satisfaction, commitment and intentions to leave across all generational groups". (p. 904).

This emphasis on environmental factors and intrinsic rewards while not new is of far greater importance than it is to Generation X or Boomers (Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008; Stern, 2005; Poomina, 2009). It has been suggested that this emphasis on social/cultural factors is a product of Millenials witnessing their parents' careers and deciding to seek greater balance between life and work (Stuart and Lyons, 2008). Hill (2002) echoes this stating that Baby Boomers as parents of Millenials had great career aspirations to work in fields that aligned with the 'ideals of their youthful zeal', wanting to help people, and make a difference in the world – unlike the mundane jobs of their own parents. Hill (2002) suggests that this may not be characteristic of Millennials necessarily but that the lack of cross sectional data prevents us from comparing this with prior generations and speculating over "the realities of marriage and parenthood, along with an implicit refusal to reduce our standards of living below that of our families of origin, caused many to eventually seek more traditional ways of life" (p.64)

In many ways understanding and acknowledging this 'failure' of their parents' has forged a core component of the Millennial character, that is demanding far more in work and life, specifically being far more selective in choosing prospective employers. Millennials have been observed by many as highly reliant on, even demanding of feedback and performance reviews (Ng et al, 2010; Kowske et al, 2010; Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). Some have suggested that this is simply a product of Millenials demanding rapid career progression (Ng et al, 2010). Kowske et al

(2002) believe that Millenials were 'brought up by parents and teachers that celebrated mediocrity, and now expect inordinate amounts of praise at work'. Hill (2002) also suggests that this infamous 'everyone's a winner' mentality which aims to encourage teamwork and self-esteem development at a young age has led to Millenials confusion between input (what they do) with output (what they achieve), noting Millenials exasperation when faced with failure, despite 'having worked so hard' (Hill, 2002, p. 265). It could be argued that it is because of this that Millenials are so frequently cited as reliant on feedback and milestone markers (Meister & Willyerd, 2010; McGlynn, 2005, Sujansky, 2009). As they are unable to differentiate their input from their output, and are thereby unable to comprehend how well or poorly they are achieving.

Hershatter and Epstein (2010) also note the level of trust that Millenials hold for authority figures and support structures. They suggest that due to the level of involvement that governments, school structures, and even parents have played in their development that Millenials have developed their trust for the aforementioned bodies to act in their best interest. This, coupled with the generations' 'narcissistic' completive nature as 'trophy children' – suggest that Millenials can quickly lose interest in pursuits where they are not able to quickly identify quantifiable steps which allow them to advance their skills, or themselves within a role.

> Millennials want to amass the skills, knowledge, and credentials that will assist them in fulfilling both their personal and societal goals… in organizations they are equipped to work patiently to move the flywheel forward — as long as they can envision and believe in the direction in which it is turning (p.222)

Myers and Sadaghiani (2010) note Millennials as often constructed as ideal employees, with the enthusiasm and wealth of technological knowledge which they are able to bring to roles, combined with their relentless pursuit of advancement and progression.

> There also are popular depictions of Millennials' purported
> admirable attributes from organizations' perspectives,
> including beliefs that they are more accepting of diversity than
> were past generations, have capabilities with advanced
> communication and information technologies, have the ability
> to see problems and opportunities from fresh perspectives, and
> are more comfortable working in teams than were past
> generations (p.226)

There seems to be a lack of understanding of how, where, and why Millennials' loyalties are formed (Kowske, 2010). Myers and Sadaghiani (2010) note that while there are a number of theories and opinions that present Millennials as disloyal to employers, it is stated that there is little substantive evidence behind this. PricewaterhouseCoopers' (2008) report, *Millenials at Work: Perspectives from a new Generation* which surveyed nearly 5000 Millenials globally was able to clarify, and in some cases debunk some common perceptions of the generation in order to understand how to more effectively manage the generation. The study found that the majority of respondents will remain loyal to their employing organization as long as they felt fulfilled within their role. It is alluded to however that it is difficult to differentiate a 'Millennial' perspective from that of a person entering the workforce.

> We feel that graduates are more likely to aspire to being
> loyal employees at the start of their careers, so in that
> sense the findings are not a surprise. However there is
> clearly an element of self-preservation in the findings, by
> hinting that they were not willing to commit to blind
> loyalty. (p. 14)

It has been suggested that Millenials often form strong loyalties to senior colleagues who they operate with on a day-to-day basis (Hershatter, 2010; Myers & Sadaghiani 2010). This is attributed to Millenials pursuit and interest in forming meaningful work relationships and emphasis on informal social structures over formal ones (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). Many academics have noted the emphasis

that Millenials place or person-organization fit, and the degree of importance that they place on two-way communication structures with colleagues and senior members of organizations (PWC, 2008).

> First, Millennials expect close relationships and frequent feedback from supervisors (Society for Human Resource Management [SHRM] 2009). Second, they expect open communication from their supervisors and managers, even about matters normally reserved for more senior employees (Gursoy et al. 2008; Martin 2005; Remo 2006; SHRM, 2009). Third, Millennials prefer to work in teams, in part because they perceive group-based work to be more fun, but also because they like to avoid risk (Alsop 2008; Gursoy et al. 2008).(p.229).

Similarly many believe that for Millennials to be operating at their true potential, several perquisites are required such as communication and evaluation, requiring organizational structures and change which may or may not be in place (Twenge, 2010).

> The incentives they crave involve self-determination, being recognized for good work, and regular feedback—things that cost no money at all. In other words, to some degree employers may be able to substitute applause for hard currency and still keep young employees perfectly happy, a potential boon in a cash-strapped economy. (Gray, 2008)

PricewaterhouseCoopers' (2008) findings gave further evidence to other recent studies of Millennials – in that while the generation is 'demanding more' from organizations, what they are demanding is for the most part intangible. Personal development and furthered education is of critical importance, and for many was more important than cash bonuses. Progression and fresh challenges are of absolute importance in retaining Millennials with over half of respondents noting that they

would be loyal to the organization on the condition that they were fulfilled in their role (p.14)

As frequently noted throughout this chapter, categorizing Millennials or at least recognizing their difference is exceedingly problematic due to sparse scholarly and empirically data compounded by an oversaturation of conflicting and contradictory reports in popular media.

> To some, they are the next ''Greatest Generation,'' armed with the
> tools and inclination to drive toward a better future in a world
> facing economic, geopolitical, and environmental crises. To others,
> they are ''Generation Whine,'' young people who have been so
> over-indulged and protected that they are incapable of handling the
> most mundane task without guidance or handholding. Still others
> wonder if they are really very different from other generations, or
> if the generational moniker and all the media hype it has generated
> have simply created a self-fulfilling prophecy (Hershatter&
> Epstein, 2010).

Further to this, generational characteristics are often constructed through identification of difference which while being problematic in itself , serves very little purpose in application to organizational functions. Broadly however, areas which are frequently highlighted are those of technological aptitude, work attitude and expectations, and values (such as work-life balance, person-organization fit, and motivators).

Generational Differences at work.

Generations are broadly understood as cultural contemporaries who have experienced the same historical events (Mannelheim, 1952; Ryder, 1965). Generations in this sense personify societal periods which, as cultural discourse, become their prism of understanding. Furthermore the notion of generations allows something of a societal discourse to be established – giving perspective to the impact

of broader cultural context on development. "Shared experiences at key developmental points contribute to the unique characteristics (e.g., values, attitudes, personality) that define and differentiate one generation from another. These unique characteristics in turn impact conservative social forces and drive societal change" (Kowske et al, 2010). Table 1.0 (below) constructs a brief summary of the four generations currently in the workforce and their widely accepted descriptors.

Table 1.0

Generational Summary

Generation	Born	Theoretical Descriptors
Traditionalists	1925-1942	Preferring job security over entrepreneurship, cautious, unimaginative, unadventurous, unoriginal, facilitators and helpmates, arbiters but not leaders, causeless, without outward turmoil, inward-focussed, sandwiched in between the GI and Boomer Generations.
Baby Boomers	1943-1960	Much heralded but failing to meet expectations, smug, self-absorbed, intellectually arrogant, socially mature, culturally wise, critical thinkers, spiritual, religious, having an inner fervour, radical, controversial, non-conformist, self confident, self indulgent.
Generation X	1961-1981	Cynical, distrusting, bearing the weight of the world, fearful, lost, wasted, incorrigible, in-your-face, frenetic, shocking, uneducated, shallow, uncivil, mature for their age, pragmatic, apathetic and disengaged politically, independent, self-reliant, fatalistic, mocking under-achieving
Millennials	1982-2004	Optimists, cooperative, team players, trusting, accepting of authority, rule-followers, smart, civic-minded, special, sheltered, confident, achieving, pressured, conventional.

Note: Adapted from Kowske et al (2010) referencing Howe and Strauss (1991; 2000)

A great number of studies have been undertaken to examine generational difference in the context of the workplace. Given the complexity of such examinations however much of the work remains contradictory (Macky, 2008). While many claim to debunk popular generational stereotypes (Twenge & Campbell, 2008; Wong et al, 2008) it is often acknowledged that differences are far more complex than commonly understood. As in broader studies of generational difference, two most commonly noted difficulties in examining generational differences are attributed to the research methods and to cultural context. The majority of examinations often use quantitative data to establish what generation feels as important to their career yet many acknowledge the problematic limitations in this method of constructing difference (Macky et al, 2008; Twenge et al, 2008; Wong et al, 2008; Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Dries et al, 2008; D'Amoto, 2008; Kowske et al; 2010; Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010; Hershatter & Epstein, 2010; Twenge, 2010). Firstly there are issues surrounding the usage of cross sectional data whereby there is little to no referential data to evaluate life stage versus generational trends (Wong et al, 2008; Meriac et al, 2010; Kowske et al, 2010). Second there are no cross cultural examinations of generational difference across geographic borders. Finally some have called into question the very methodology of comparing and evaluating difference based on research which sought to find difference. Merial et al (2010) note the difficulties surrounding equivalence in cross generational examinations. Similar to the findings of Twenge & Campbell (2008) it was found that differences are apparent between Millennials and their cohorts but they are far more complex than commonly understood.

As this study is principally an examination into the construction and resistance of generational resistance in the workplace, this section will frame the construction of generational messages in relation to the need to manage generational difference as a function of management. This section will set out to establish understanding of each generations present within the modern workplace, examining similarities and differences as precursors to the construction of generational messages.

Management of Generational Difference

In the context of the workplace, management of generational difference is often constructed or at least often framed as a requirement of the organization. As a somewhat pragmatic HR policy such measures normally aim to ensure members are operating as effectively and efficiently as possible. Thereby generational difference commonly becomes understood within a 'management' framework. This is not to suggest that difference as constructed within the context of management practices such as HR is isolated from other contexts (popular and academic), but rather offer managerial discourse as a third source of construction which draws upon both popular and academic sources, while being contextually focussed on work. The 'management of Millennials' was an area of particular focus for many in the first decade of the 21st century given their prophesised impact and degree of difference. Shaw and Fairhurst (2008) outline that while the validity of much of this work within popular media at least has been called into question, existing Millennial discourse has become entrenched in the minds of many.

> Generational values, attitudes and preferences whether they are grounded in empirical data or a product of the popular media do exist to some degree and can cause intergenerational misunderstanding, affect workplace dynamics and impede organisational culture change and effectiveness. Development specialists in organisations would do well to recognise and address this through intra and intergenerational development processes thereby enhancing their own strategic value to the organisation. (p. 376)

A great number of examinations which are often treated as 'anecdotal' seek to describe workplace behaviour, especially conflict. Downing (2006) discussed the implications of workplaces comprising of four separate generations – focussing on conflict as a management function of increasing importance. Conflict which Frandsen

(2009) believes arises where members of each generation do not, or wrongly, understand each other which leads to conflicts arising "because they approach their work from different perspectives" (p. 35).

Dwyer (2008), (citing Hatfield, 2002), draws attention to the dynamics of the multi-generation workforce, noting the difficulties which lie ahead for management in creating structures in which the full potential of each generation can be realized. It is suggested that managers face many challenges in integrating generations as differences are defining, pronounced, and in many cases not complimentary. Dwyer (2008) believes that organizations should adopt separate management techniques and reward structures for each generation, taking into consideration their unique motivating factors. It is noted however that danger lies in separating the generations too far in this way, as it is still pivotal that an organization remains as culturally and functionally cohesive as possible. Ultimately he believes that the key to ensuring an organization's survival in the multi-generation workplace is for management to understand and allow for fundamental differences in each generation, ensuring that the individual needs of each are met on the way to meeting those of the organization. Similarly, Bell (2008) believes that the key is to first examine each generation's perception of the work environment.

> Looking at employee perception of the work setting from the environmental support perspective (1) helps to reveal possible shortfalls of which management may be unaware of or may not have considered, (2) aids with the determination of where to concentrate organizational resources, and (3) aids with the determination of the level, depth, and type of additional analysis needed. (p. 43)

The PricewaterhouseCoopers (2008) study, undertaken to understand the differentiating factors and variables between the four generations echoed the findings of many other similar examinations (as cited by Bell, 2008). These findings implied that while each generation may weigh different motivating factors more or less heavily, there are not entirely dissimilar in all areas. The report proposes eight approaches which organizations should take into consideration when developing

structures and management techniques to ensure good levels of retention and satisfaction amongst Millennials

> **1.** Use metrics and benchmarking to segment your workforce in order to understand what Millennials want and how these desires might differ from older workers.
>
> **2.** Think creatively about reward strategies and what motivates Millennials? For example, is it time to shift focus from cash bonuses and company cars to other things?
>
> **3.** Consider global working opportunities – how might this enthusiastic generation support your global mobility needs?
>
> **4.** Continue to invest in personal development and training – explore expanding coaching/mentoring programmes to younger workers.
>
> **5**. Articulate your employer brand – communicate internally and externally what it means to work for your organisation.
>
> **6.** Have a clear statement about corporate responsibility – make this part of your employer brand and be committed to deliver the promise.
>
> **7.** Think creatively about how technology can be used to engage this audience e.g. avatars, internal networking sites etc.
>
> **8.** Provide variety and fresh challenges – consider promoting cycles of experience in other parts of the organisation. (p.20)

Such measures imply that to motivate Millenials, a focus on individual development based upon their own evaluation criteria will allow for the swiftest progression as "they are more likely to be encouraged by activities that enhance personal fulfilment as opposed to external rewards" (Hill, 2002, p. 66).

Some academics have put forward that as a part of workplace membership negotiation, the difference in motivating factors and characteristics conflicts with those of existing, more senior members of organizations (Myers & Sadaghiana, 2010). Primarily, Millennials pursuit of a greater work life balance permeates throughout the goals and expectations that many Millenials hold. They first pursue, or in some cases request more flexible working conditions such as working from home – things which are considered by many as privileges of tenure. Generational differences also cause several other different values to hinder membership negotiation (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010).

> A pertinent example of attitudinal and value differences related to Millennials that may affect membership negotiation is that, according to empirical and popular press sources, more senior workers' believe that Millennial newcomers should have to "pay their dues" as they did when they were young workers (Marston 2007) (p.227).

Many of the privileges demanded by Millenials are intangible and related to notions of prestige, such as working on high-profile projects which directly impact the organization. In addition the social structures of organizations which Millenials have grown up with including schools, clubs, and even at home – have emphasized minimal power-distance relationships and low levels of formality. This is a factor which directly contradicts with the perspectives of their colleagues such as speaking on a first name basis with seniors versus earning the right to do so. Again, this has been suggested as a product of Millennials being a generation that has experienced very little hardship (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). Less than 20% of Millennials have grown up in poverty, and are yet to experience great economic hardship having grown up in relatively wealthy circumstance (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). Their high levels of confidence and enthusiasm coupled with low levels of depression often render them seen as arrogant and over-confident.

It has been suggested by Hill (2002) that this 'brashness' is a product of the Boomer's unconditional love for their Millennial offspring. He proposes that the

concrete social distances and roles which existed in the Traditionalists' generation caused a pendulum effect in their children. "Boomers questioned and challenged the existing order…We [Boomers] vowed to balance work and family life and break down the barriers between the traditional roles such as father/mother or employee/employer" (p. 61)

Hershatter & Epstein (2010) noted that interesting Millenials tend to have the greatest similarities with Boomers, as many of their generation's characteristics align closely and that Millenials tend to epitomize what Boomers wish they were like at that age.

As with any new 'generational addition' to a group or organization, Millenials inevitably bring with them change. Not only do they seek change informal dynamics, they can also disrupt existing formal and social structures. Their state as 'digital natives' sees them often being seen as communication information technology experts (Deal et al, 2010).

Hill (2002) notes the increasing importance of ensuring that employees are managing both their professional and personal selves. The behaviours of Baby Boomers and Millenials have become focused on time management, in a sequential and budgeted manner. With ever increasing workloads both at work and at home, the focus becomes taking on more and making time for it, this has to implications especially pertinent to the employer (Hill, 2002). First 'compulsive time management' begins to impact on the task at hand, in that both the allotment of time is reduced, and the quality of completion is also impacted. Secondly fatigue in the short term has a compounding effect, making each task incrementally difficult, while trying to mentally balance everything that is yet to be done. Fatigue in the long term can cause employees to burn out, become ineffective and lose interest. This is especially relevant with Millennials who have been shown 'jump ship' as soon as a role is no longer fulfilling. Hill (2002) believes that organizations which encourage 'shedding' of obligations will allow them to function better in both the long term and the short term. It is discussed however that this process goes directly against the traditional values of all three generations in the workplace. "Shedding is much more

difficult because it involves losing something that once held value" as it leads to "confusion about priorities; in conflict with important others; and feeling stressed, angry, or guilty" (Hill, 2002, p. 65). Ensuring that an employee is able to focus on where their interests lie allows performance to be maximized in those areas, while areas that are no longer important/relevant are able to be understood as such. It is believed that this shedding process will be the most difficult for older generations and the least difficult for younger generations.

Section Summary.

This chapter has thus far identified the complex nature of generational studies. Bodies of work within popular media, scholarly literature, and industry text construct a number of generational differences. The proliferation of popular works which frame Millennials as overt narcissists established a trend of dichotomous framing. While a series of scholarly literature sought to rebuff the claims made in popular literature, in many ways this further reinforced and gave credence to such messages. A great deal of contradiction exists between the claims made in these works, each backed by isolated instances of empirical data. In addition to the lack of cross-sectional data, some have questioned the data collection and examination methodologies of these studies. In part this is due to studies framing questions in terms of commonly assumed areas of difference. Moreover I have argued that there are inherent flaws in concluding difference from studies intended to establish difference. Predominantly studies frame power in establishing generational difference and the construction of generational messages as asymmetric. To this end, it seems necessary that research moves beyond popular and hegemonic notions of generational messages and adopt a critical approach . To enable a more inductive generational research paradigm, this project raises the first research question.

RQ1: What generational messages are constructed in the context of the workplace?

Mumby (1993; 2005; 2006) suggests that the notion of single and unitary sources of power in meaning construction is an out-dated one, noting that critical

approaches better understand meaning construction as a discursive process of negotiation. This project will adopt this approach in an attempt to transcend both the praise/criticize dichotomy in current popular and academic texts, as well as the post-Marxist reduction of resistance down to 'coping mechanisms' (Mumby, 2005). Therefore the following section will establish contemporary critical and post-structural research in organizational communication.

Control, Resistance and the Critical Approach.

Organizational research traditionally interpreted power as control exerted by an organization with resistance understood as a dialectical response to power (Karreman & Alvesson, 2009).

> "Such responses may include activities like, to cite Carr
> and Brower's (2000) empirical study, conditional effort
> (e.g. withdrawal and foot-dragging), exit, voice, sabotage,
> enacting alternative channels and engaging stakeholders
> (which includes well-known resistance strategies such as
> leaks and whistle blowing; see Ackroyd & Thompson,
> 1999, for a review). (p. 1122).

It is suggested that such resistance is in many ways an inherent tension that emerges wherein individuals subordinate their autonomy to the collective will of the organization (Barker, 1993, p. 409). Edward's three strategies for control; simple , technological , and bureaucratic are identified as methods typically undertaken to best control employees behaviour, but do not entirely escape the problematic fundamentals of employees inherent resistance to external control (Barker, 1993). Shifting the locus of control from the manager to the employee has resulted in systems where "control emerges not from rational rules and hierarchy but from the concertive value-based actions of the organization's members" facilitating "unimpeded, agile authority structures that grow out of a company's consensual, normative ideology, not from its system of formal rules" (Barker, 1993, p. 411). Similar to Barker's (1993) findings of a shift to concertive control leading to an

increase in regiment and control over employers and an almost draconian work environment, Larson and Tompkins (2005) suggest that concertive control may not lead to freedom from the iron-cage as imagined due to the innate and ironic inability for an employer to manage the amount of control that concertive control systems can exercise which over time have been observed to become decreasingly bureaucratic.

While traditional conceptualizations view the organization as powerful and employees as powerless and exercising resistance as a coping mechanism, this dichotomy is deconstructed by the notion that "organizations are not sites of neutral meaning, but rather, contested fields where meaning is produced, reproduced, negotiated, and resisted" (Murphy, 1998, p. 500). Mumby (1993) notes a 'significant paradigm shift' which occurred within critical organizational communication studies through the 1980s, resulting in the emergence of the hermeneutic or interpretive approach. Interpretive approaches were outlined by the way in which "researchers have become increasingly concerned with examining the various ways in which communication functions dynamically, processually, and constitutively to create the collective meaning systems which we give the name organization" (Mumby, 2005, p. 18). Questioning the notions of neutrality and authority in the generation of message and meaning, Mumby (1993) believed that this shift had 'lead to a crisis of representation'.

> [This crisis has led to] an essentially realistic epistemology, which conceives of representation as the reproduction, for subjectivity of an objectivity that lies outside it – projects a mirror theory of knowledge and art, whose fundamental evaluative categories are those of adequacy, accuracy and Truth itself (Jameson, 1984, p. 8). (p. 18)

The interpretive approach was presented in two distinct forms; as a descriptive hermeneutic and a hermeneutics of suspicion. Descriptive hermeneutics has been primarily concerned with "interpreting organizational symbolic practices (e.g. stories, rituals, myths) and explicating the link between these practices and the beliefs, values, and meanings that they both produce and express" (Mumby, 1993, p.

19). Hermeneutics of suspicion on the other hand "preserves the focus on symbolic practices and the creation of organizational meaning systems, but situates this relationship within a critical conception of organizations as discursive and material sites of domination." (Mumby, 1993, p. 19).Mumby (1993) felt that it was of critical importance that scholars moved beyond the treatment of organizations as systems of set meaning and instead focussed on micro practices which constitute discursive and dynamic generation and negation of meaning. In this sense, adoption of a critical approach facilitates balanced observation of all constituents in the meaning negotiation process.

Murphy (1998) examined the discursive nature of control-resistance frameworks in the context of flight attendants. Attention was drawn to the exceptionally strict and regimented codes which airline hospitality staff must comply with. Murphy (1998) highlights that "employees may appear to be aligned with or buy into the organizational line, but such appearances may be little more than a strategic pose. Alternate meanings may be constructed in private". (Murphy, 1998, p. 500). While traditional thought would suggest that the organizations dominant or 'preferred' meaning is often subverted by the private discourse or 'hidden transcripts' of employees – Murphy (1998) believes that such behaviours are but a part of the discursive construction/negotiation of meaning.

> It is not so much a matter of some people having power and
> others not having it, but rather that power is exercised
> continually (by all organizational members) through discursive
> acts that produce, reproduce, negotiate and resist
> organizational meanings; and when not possible in public,
> power renegotiation can be exercised in private" (p.502).

Murphy's (1998) paper is poststructuralist in orientation, in contrast with neo-Marxist suggestions that power is unilaterally imposed upon the powerless. Ashcraft (2005) discusses gender issues again in relation to the airline industry, notably within the context of the pilot culture resisting what is felt as a threat to their occupational identity. Pilots are outlined as 95% Male, - traditionally constructed as authorative,

all-knowing, patriarchal figures 'romantically coupled' and polarised with the sexy stewardess. While this occupational identity has certainly changed, with many professing to detest the hyper masculine character, Ashcraft (2005) reveals that the shifting roles and expectations are far from greeted warmly. Industry wide pushes for crew empowerment is seen as eroding the historical notion of being "the man" leading many to fear 'feminization'. Ashcraft (2005) therefore presents the issue of 'traditionally privileged' groups seemingly resisting-resistance. Of particular interest, was the degree of change that had occurred within this industry since its proliferation in the 1970s. The aviation industry itself was traditionally a much gendered one with men flying the planes and women assisting the passengers (Murphy, 1998; Ashcraft, 2005).

In organizational research such gender issues have been increasingly scrutinized – specifically examining the interplay between the presence of men and masculinities within power structures and notions of resistance and feminism research (Collinson & Hearn, 1996; Mullholland, 1996). It has been suggested that such discussion is not without difficulty as the examination of such notions faces "a strange silence, which we believe reflects an embedded and taken-for-granted association, even conflation, of men with organizational power, authority and prestige" (Collinson & Hearn, 1996). It is no wonder that many question the true accessibility of managerial positions and organizational control for women, given the reflection and reinforcement of masculinities throughout managerial discourse (Collinson & Hearn, 1996). The presence of masculinity as patriarchy as synonymous with power, somewhat ironically, epitomizes the notion of discourse as perpetually produced, reproduced, negotiated and resisted.

While a great number of sites negotiate and resist traditional notions of so dubbed *man*agerial power in the push for societal equality – substantial reproduction and reinforcement of the discourse leaves notions of masculinity dominant. Such reproduction and reinforcement is examined by Mulholland (1996). It is suggested that entrepreneurial discourse and ideologies are distinctly male-gendered, contrasted with domestic emotional labour. Mulholland (1996) outlines the 'monolithic'

understanding of the successful company man encapsulating and representing masculinities as factors of success. Further attention is drawn to the impact of such notions on the home and family – specifically discussing the reinforcement of women as 'wives' as a family brand ambassador. Throughout the discourse constructed by the participants in Mulholland's (1996) study, the degree to which both gender roles are reproduced and reinforced is striking and again gives evidence to the inaccuracy of control power dichotomies in the discussion of discourse construction and resistance.

Mumby (2005) questions the suggestion of sites of discourse generation and power, which challenged notions of ideology and hegemony as "not simply [as] a system of ideas, but rather to everyday discourses and practices which constitute the lived reality of social actors" (Mumby, 2005).

> From a critical perspective, ideology provides the
> interpretative mechanism though which certain social realities
> and interests are privileged over others. Furthermore, ideology
> does not simply reflect these dominant interests in a
> straightforward manner, but rather transforms and obscures
> these interests such that they are not immediately accessible to
> everyday experience". (p. 3428)

As such this so dubbed approach "considers power in terms of diffuse and disciplinary networks, operating normatively and unobtrusively. Rather than power being conceptualized in terms of repression, it is thought of in terms of its ability to produce identities, languages and realities" (Ganesh, 2008, p. 3435). The significance and meaning of the way in which discursive control-resistance negotiations are negotiated, be it overtly or covertly however remain contested. (Putnam et al, 2005). Studies that focus upon workplace control processes tend to trivialise resistance as ineffectual, similarly those which privilege resistance often romanticize efforts to resist organization control as bastions of authenticity (Mumby, 2005).While the examination of daily practices and micro practice remains a dominant discourses throughout critical organization studies it has been suggested that "research on

resistance has been framed and explored in largely individualized terms" (Ganesh, Zoller, & Cheney, 2005).

> Critical organizational communication research along with the
> communication field more generally has largely ignored the
> opportunity to investigate collective resistance to power from
> the point of view of movements that work to resistance and
> transform ideologies, practices and institutions that support
> and constitute neo-liberalism (p.170)

The adoption of critical approaches in examining power and resistance beyond Mumby's (1993) micro-politics will facilitate a greater understanding of generational research. The adoption of a critical approach in research can be understood as treating power as diffuse and aggregated sites wherein meaning is perpetually produced, reproduced, negotiated and resisted. Instead of treating generational differences and characteristics as absolute, this study therefore positions them as hegemonic categories, attempting to understand how they might be constructed in everyday communication practice. Consequently, it is important to raise questions about how organisational members might resist and challenge messages about generational differences. To date, this approach has been largely absent in studies of Millenials. Therefore, this project raises a second research question to address the discursive practice.

RQ2: How are generational messages resisted in the workplace?

While the research questions themselves may appear posed as dichotomous, they can be better understood as offering a framework for the examination of generational messages and difference via a critical approach.

Chapter Summary.

This chapter has established a context for this study. Differing discourse which exists in popular, academic, and industry texts has lead to an exceptionally contradictory and confusing body of knowledge based upon inconsistent empirical

data. Recent years have seen both an increase in analysis of such discourse and an increase in empirical examinations which will serve to offer more founded insight to the examination of Millennials. This is not without difficulty however, as while some have suggested that the work to date has inevitably framed current text, others question the methodology of empirical examinations thus far entirely. This chapter has presented two research questions, and posits that adopting a critical approach via a qualitative methodology will facilitate a greater understanding of generational difference beyond hegemonic constructions and the praise/criticize dichotomy apparent in Millennial examination.

CHAPTER II – METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

A qualitative methodology was chosen for several reasons. As previously discussed there is a great deal of conflation, contradiction, and complexity throughout generational research, especially that which focuses on Millennials. The majority of empirical examinations that have been undertaken to examine generational difference have been based primarily on quantitative data collected via self-reporting questionnaires (see Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; PWC, 2010). Some however have called into question the validity of such studies wherein the study itself is constructing points of difference (such as the importance of KPI or the importance of being able to work from home) then asking participants to gauge such factors on given Osgood and Likert Scales. Criticism has been drawn as regards to the process of first establishing points of generational difference, then constructing statistical difference between individuals classed as generations through their age. Some scholars believe that often this method tends to yield very little other than what the researcher is setting out to examine (Macky et al, 2008; Twenge & Campbell, 2008; Twenge, 2010; Kowske et al, 2010). Furthermore questions can be raised regarding the scope (culturally and geographically) of such examinations being generally small relative to the claims made. Such factors are compounded further by the lack of consistency between studies' methodologies making it difficult to build a consensus even over a number of studies. Finally such methodologies rely on the comparison to either participants belonging to other generations or existing bodies of work which have reported on other generations. This is problematic in the sense that such research is often framed in terms of aiding the management of a generation, yet it in effect it is only describing one generation relative to another.

To comprehensively address the research questions, it was thereby important to select a methodology to understand how generational messages were produced, reproduced, negotiated, and resisted. While potentially feasible through quantitative methods, a qualitative method was chosen as it would allow both the structure and flexibility for the evolution of strategy and tactics approaching each individual (Lindlof & Taylor, 2010). As such, semi-structured interviews allow the structure to

guide the conversation along generational lines while allowing the flexibility for participants to frame and discuss the construction of generational messages in any manner or form that they see fit. In addition, this methodology allowed flexibility in my role as the interviewer to probe areas of focus/interest of either my own or the participant's. Through the prism of the performance metaphor – this study will be able to examine the construction and perceptions of the performance, as opposed to performance itself.

Methods

As this project aimed to understand how generational messages were constructed and resisted within the workplace, it was decided that an in-depth examination in a single organization would best facilitate a complete understanding of this process because it ensured consistency in sectoral background and organisational culture. Mosbius Designs was selected as a relatively young business which featured a large proportion of Millennials (around 50%), while being renowned for its high acquisition and retention rates for the generation. The Millennials in the organization largely populate the execution level positions such as design, development, clerical work, and account management. The majority of management positions are populated by non-Millennial employees who have been brought on to manage the 'business side'. This configuration ensures that while being an organization that focuses on graduates, the interactions and workplace dynamics that exist are for the most part reflective of conventional interactions between Millennials and non-Millennials. Furthermore, these non-Millennial employees come from much more established national and international organizations and as such have a wealth of experience in working with Millennials and identifying the differences between Mosbius Designs and other organizations.

Organization Background

Mosbius Designs was founded in 1998 in Auckland, New Zealand by Ted Mosby – working out of a caravan in his parents' backyard. Ted was looking to set up a small website as a platform for his own development work, unable to afford hosting

however he approached an ISP and offered his design skills in exchange for free hosting of his web site. The ISP liked his work and began offering him a great deal more, eventually asking Ted to redesign their own web site amongst others. As demand started to rapidly increase, Ted realized the potential of this venture and established Mosbius Design – bringing onboard several employees to turn a viable business into a successful one.

Ted quickly found that diversification was needed and so established a domain hosting and registration division to provide a stream of income; from which he began turning Mosbius Designs into a total web based solutions provider. Mosbius Designs' quickly identified an opening in the market and developed a product which allowed clients to have more control over their own websites – breaking the then traditional revenue model that sold client updates over time. This product facilitated Mosbius Designs' rapid growth, moving from a small scale local operation to an organization that boasted a number of high-profile national clients.

Mosbius Designs went from strength to strength, winning award after award nationally and locally for their exceptional work and revolutionary business model. In 2006 Mosbius Designs expanded to professional premises in the Auckland CBD, now boasting fourteen staff and an array of servers as a well established, full service web solutions partner. Quickly becoming certified by a number of international organizations including attaining the renowned Microsoft Gold Partner status – Mosbius Designs was growing exponentially. By late-2008, Mosbius Designs had exceeded the capacity of its new premises and Ted again offered his own home as a work base for employees. In 2010 Mosbius Designs relocated again to their current location, two floors in a brand new office building. Currently employing over fifty full-time staff with a number of part-time contractors – the organization is constantly searching for more to keep up with demand. Mosbius Designs has won some of the most prestigious awards in the industry while maintain a growth rate of 43% per annum.

As industry leaders, Mosbius Designs notes itself as customer focused, with 70% of new clients being referral. Mosbius Designs believes its greatest strength

however to be its employees, 'a close-knit team of some of New Zealand's brightest, talented young professionals'. The organization aims to 'reward, praise, nurture, support, and empower their team to be innovative, responsible, and accountable'.

Participant Breakdown

I interviewed twenty-six Millennial and non-Millennial participants, twenty-four 'principal participants' from Mosbius Designs and two 'member-check' Millennials. Of the twenty-four participants from Mosbius Designs there were eleven Millennial participants and twelve non-Millennial participants. From these participants fifteen were male, eight were female – while this may indicate of a male skew, this is reflective of the organizations male to female ratio – indicative many web development and design organizations in New Zealand. For a full background of participants please see Table 1.

Table 1

Principal Participant Breakdown (n=24)

Pseudonym	M/NM	Position	Length of Employment
Chloe	NM	Project Manager	1 Year
Jerome	NM	Development Team Lead	4 Years
Alan	NM	Sales Manager	Founding Member
Sam	M	Product Testing	<1 Year
Brad	M	Senior Developer	3 Years
Karen	NM	Project Manager	<1 Year
Randy	NM	Development Team Lead	5 Years
Tony	NM	Account Manager	2 Years
Mike	M	Developer	2 Years
Lance	M	Designer	3 Years
Greg	NM	Contractor	5 Years*
Victoria	NM	Production Coordinator	1 Year
Abby	M	Office Coordinator	1 Year
Stuart	M	Developer/IT Manager	3 Years
Jen	M	HR Assistant	1 Year
Doug	NM	Project Manager	2 Years
Ted	NM	CEO	Founding Member

Heather	M	Project Manager	2 Years
Lucy	NM	Analyst	<1 Year
James	M	Development Team Lead	<1 Year
Sam	NM	Developer	2 Years
Simon	M	IT Manager	5 Years
Jack	M	Senior Systems Engineer	5 Years

* While not based at the organization, Greg is there most days and is referred to and listed as an employee.

The two 'member-check' Millennials (excluded from the principal examination), one female and one male, were selected as contemporaries of my own, employed in more typical organizations (i.e. smaller proportion of Millennials employed and located at lower level positions). One a accountant at a worldwide firm with offices in New Zealand, and one a PR assistant at a non-profit organization. I included these two reference Millennials to gain an indication of whether the experiences of Millennials at Mosbius Designs were typical, and to plausibly indicate to any missed areas. Interestingly, examination revealed that there was very little difference in responses aside from industry nuances, which confirmed my belief that selecting an organization with a large number of Millennials while still having fairly typical interactions between Millennial and non-Millennial roles would allow the observation of a greater number of interactions.

Logistics

Each interview was between approximately fifteen and forty-five minutes long, conducted in person and recorded digitally via Android application. The interviews for the most part took place in cafes and restaurants in the Auckland CBD over coffee or lunch. Three interviews took place in meeting rooms at Mosbius Designs due to some participants not having time to get away from the offices. The interviews were scheduled over the course of February 2011. I introduced myself and presented the project to employees of Mosbius Designs at their weekly staff meeting on a Monday morning late in January 2011. At this presentation I covered my own background and presented the research questions alongside the expected outcomes. Each employee was given an information sheet (See Appendix A) which detailed the

process of taking part in the study. Within a week an interview schedule had begun forming, however I had less than 25% of the objective of twenty-five employees. In speaking with Ted, the CEO, he suggested that given the organizational culture, it may be fitting to attend their 'Friday Wrap Up', a social event where employees discuss fairly humorous accounts of the week, followed by the organization catering finger food and beer and wine. After less than an hour floating at this function, even being lured into the weekly foosball and Street Fighter tournament - I had filled the remainder of the interview roster, with many employees approaching me and noting that they had intended to email but had lost the form or been too lazy.

The interviewees however did not abide by the interview schedule. Over the three weeks, between the twenty-four participants, I scheduled nearly fifty interviews – many participants either forgetting, or getting caught up at the last minute. If I was advised of a cancellation, it was generally by phone or text message at the time of the interview. Most often however I was unaware of the cancellation until I would call participants myself. Showing up to a scheduled interview and the participant not doing the same was fairly typical, generally happening around twice with one participant cancelling and rescheduling four times. I quickly found that by extending my offer of coffee to lunch or breakfast – participants began arriving at scheduled interviews with all interviews were completed within one week. The final interviews took place in the first week of March 2011.

While an effective motivational technique, especially in consideration of my timeline – this cost quickly amounted to roughly $500 and $750 NZD in hospitality costs, a figure not insurmountable for a post graduate student working solely as a sessional assistant at the University. While most lunches were had at conservatively priced noodle houses or burger bars (at the participants' choice) one participants' dining led to a bill of over $100 featuring a bottle of red wine (which he consumed on his own) a bruschetta entrée and a main of crayfish.

Data Collection Procedures

As this project sought to examine how messages are constructed and resisted within the workplace, it was important to ensure that participants were offered the best chance to articulate their thoughts, and that I was able to gather as much data as possible in doing so. It became apparent that a qualitative methodology would best facilitate a deep ethnographic examination of Millenials and non-Millenials' understanding, knowledge, and perspectives. Furthermore qualitative methodologies allow the researcher to understand how and why these systems are constructed in the minds of participants. Face-to-face, semi-structured interviews would ensure that social distances could be reduced via the generation of rapport – and give participants as much room to answer questions within the scope of the study without being overly constructed in how they could answer.

As such a series of fourteen questions were generated to ensure focussed discussion, but participants were allowed to focus on areas which they felt were most pertinent. (For the complete series of research questions see Appendix B)

The first section (questions one to four) of the interview sets out to establish the participants understanding, perception, and conceptualization of Millennials. This was framed within the micro (their workplace), within the cultural context (New Zealand), and within the macro (the world).These questions also serve to establish the tone and scope of the interview and the opportunity to start recalling memories or experiences, vital to the next section. In some instances participants were able to convey very little in this section, having few preconceived notions – these participants however almost always came back to these questions later in the interview as they developed their thoughts more.

The second section (questions five and six) aimed to identify participants' relationships with these messages. Participants were asked to express how they felt about their relationships, attempting to identify perspectives towards the messages that they were aware of and raise issues of correctness and accuracy. This discussion was pivotal as it was most often the point in the interview where participants began

drawing upon a great deal of personal experience in the justification of their explanation. The relaying of these anecdotes was in itself quite interesting as it began touching upon 'story telling' generation. It was at this point that many participants became aware that they were managing multiple perspectives when their experiences would be drawn back against their initial thoughts.

The third section (questions six to nine) sought to discuss application and practicalities of raised messages. This section in many ways built upon the preceding section, with participants negotiating externally generated messages with personal experience to discuss permutations. This section also acted as a way help participants move past any cognitive dissonance they may be facing by bringing the conversation 'back down to earth' by seeking answers based on their day to day experience.

The fourth section (questions ten to thirteen) sets forth inquiry into work behaviour, work ethic, and perspectives on work. Again this section builds on the prior section by asking participants to discuss the experiences and stories they had recanted up to this point within the scope of work ethic. This section was found to be quite apt given that often participants identified Millennials as bringing a 'different attitude' and 'fresh thinking' to the workplace in the section previous.

The final section (questions fourteen and fifteen) aimed to serve as something of a catch all, while allowing participants to voice any thoughts they had mulled over but until this point not felt they had the opportunity to relay. To some degree this final section also was a direct prompt for participants to construct difference between generations. It was in comparing Millennials to prior generations that many participants began revisiting other sections.

Data Analysis

All interviews were recorded digital via an Android application; the mp3 files were then orthographically transcribed. Analytical memos were taken in each interview to highlight particular areas of emphasis on the part of participants or to outline areas of particular interest to revisit. In conjunction with these, field notes

were taken that described observed activities or discussion during the time I spent at the organization.

Throughout the transcription process I engaged in reflective thinking (Lindlof et al, 2010) to further my own comprehension of the data collected by referencing field notes and memos. Adoption of this method ensured I was actively engaging with the material over a longer period of time, constantly building upon my own notes and understanding.

Initially this project set out with a slightly more pragmatic purpose to examine what perceptions of Millennials were apparent in the workplace, and how these messages impacted them. Similar to many other Millennial examinations, these questions assumed the power asymmetries in the construction of generational discourse and more importantly assumed participants were cognizant of this hegemony. Early in the interview and transcription process I realized that the data was simply not addressing researching questions. It was quickly apparent that generational constructs were conceptualized by participants far differently than anticipated, and the richness of the data collected could be utilized in a far more dynamic examination. What had become increasingly predominant however was the discursive construction and resistance of generational messages throughout participants' dialogues. This data was not anticipated nor predicted by myself, my advisor, nor the literature. After a great deal of debate and revision, the research questions would be recast to facilitate the adoption of a critical approach.

I then began an open coding analysis (Emerson et al, 1995) by examining both transcripts and memos through Owen's (1984) criteria of recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness. Axial coding (Charmaz, 2006) was then adopted to examine the data within the framework of the research questions. From this two sections were established, construction and resistance; each to examine data respective to the research questions. A great deal of time was invested by both myself and my advisor in finalizing the themes and concepts, given the complexity of the data collected and the way in which it began alluding to a number of factors not previously encountered in literature. Over twelve weeks I examined and re-examined the data against

literature, principal impressions, and the coding analysis – eventually solidifying a series of themes and concepts which encapsulated the findings of this research. Within construction, five broad themes were identified which categorized messages and perceptions. Within resistance, two broad themes were identified, one discussing the way in which participants exhibited resistance, and one examining how participants exhibited resistance.

Chapter Preview

Based upon the framework offered by the research question and process central to the critical approach, the themes will be divided into two chapters.

Chapter three focuses on the themes generated through axial coding which categorizes the construction of generational difference established by participants; these are Technology, Voice, Informality, Flexibility and Stimulation. This chapter discusses how and why these themes were constructed, and analyze the linkages between each.

Chapter four addresses processes of negotiation and resistance displayed by participants. This chapter is presented in two sections. The first section examines the partiality of resistance as either Synchronic or Diachronic. The second section addresses participants' methods of resistance and negation, and posits on the implications of such methods.

Chapter five offers a brief summary of this study, its findings, and finally discusses both practical and theoretical implications of this research. This chapter will attempt to highlight the problematic nature of extrapolating data from generational data and how scholarship can address this through its treatment and approach to generational research.

CHAPTER III - CONSTRUCTION

Through axial coding, I have categorized the construction of generational difference into five themes, each comprised of several concepts. These themes not only suggest how such messages are generated, but also begin to examine the way in which they are generated. Interestingly the majority of these themes and concepts are apparent as construction through conflict, frequently exhibited through Millennials endorsement in contrast to non-Millennials criticism. This chapter will address each of these five themes and their respective component concepts and illustrate how generational differences are often constructed through conflict, criticism, and identification via differentiation.

The first theme is Technology, which reflects Millennials as Prensky's (2001) Digital Natives. This theme examines perceptions of Millennials' intuitive and intimate knowledge with artefacts and systems of the information age. The second theme is that of Voice, which discusses Millennials' need to be heard. It further examines Millennials' understandings of the role, purpose, and impact of communication infrastructure. Third, the theme of Informality highlights Millennials' desire to engineer an amiable working environment by reducing social and power distances with colleagues. Fourth, Flexibility as a theme draws attention to Millennials as proponents of equifinality. Equifinality as a concept recognizes that final goals can be reached through numerous paths or trajectories (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Finally, I discuss the theme of Stimulation, which addresses the intrinsic motivators of Millennials.

Technology

Throughout the interviews the dominant and most frequently adopted identifier of Millennials was technology. Based upon participants' usage and treatment of the term, this project understands technology as reflecting Prensky's (2001) Digital Natives. As such, this theme examines perceptions of Millennials' intuitive and intimate knowledge with artefacts and systems of the information age.

Technology as a term was raised by all participants, however, the interpretation and usage of technology varied between Millennial and non-Millennial participants. The majority of non-Millennial participants framed Millennials as proponents of techno-centrism. Whist non-Millennials acknowledged technological intimacy as beneficial to the organization as a whole; this is potentially problematic in that it often instils delusions surrounding skill and capacity in Millennials. Some non-Millennial participants believed that Millennials' faith and immersion with technology has led to an absence of soft skills. Millennial participants acknowledge technology as a generational identifier, but often treated it as one that had been attributed to them by others. This is not to suggest that they felt it was incorrect, rather as digital natives they did not understand the perception of 'technology' as external – but rather as an embedded component to themselves.

The differing perspective of technology as external or internal has interesting ramifications within the workplace. Non-Millennial participants drew attention to Millennials' usage of 'personal devices' such as iPods and mobile phones during 'work time' as inappropriate, and were baffled by Millennials' insistence that they be permitted to do so. While this tension could easily be attributed to the disparity between life stage or personal work values or issues of professionalism - I believe that this reflects the absence of separation between Millennials' concept of self and these devices. This tension is further extended to access of personal RSS, Twitter, and Facebook services – especially when accessed through company-owned platforms.

Intimacy with Technology

All participants discussed Millennials' intimacy and fluency with the artefacts and systems of the information age. Some participants went farther and framed technology as inseparable component of Millennials themselves. Millennials' affinity for, and integration with digital technologies to this degree is indicative of Millennials as the quintessential Digital Native (Prensky, 2001). Such notions of digital nativity were endorsed by a number of Millennial participants who discussed the way in which technology was/is 'just a part of growing up'. Stuart, a Millennial designer noted technology's seeming Omni-presence in his and others formative years.

> [It was] a part of growing up I think. Like a lot of us had all
> the latest gadgets and stuff and also used social media to keep
> up with the play, following technology sites and seeing,
> posting, collaborating about what people think about new
> technologies.

The presence of, or relationship with technology in this sense was often constructed by Millennial participants as a point of difference between themselves and non-Millennials and vice versa. Furthermore, in contrast to Millennials' assumed or expected understanding of technology, non-Millennial participants would often highlight periods where artefacts or systems were introduced or not existent thereby articulating difference. Victoria illustrated this construction through contrast which was frequently utilized by non-Millennial participants.

> I'm old enough to remember starting high school and we were
> learning how to type on type writers and that was like 93-94
> so like up until even then, we didn't have computers set up
> back then and I guess I feel quite thankful, that I experienced
> it so that I know that this isn't just the norm and the way that
> its always been

While this anecdote seems relatively innocuous, this and similar constructions were frequently adopted by non-Millennial participants to identify themselves as different from Millennials. Randy, a non-Millennial resource coordinator also displayed this construction through difference by highlighting adoption and availability of technology between himself and his Millennial colleagues. He noted "back when [he] was at school no one had cell phones and when [he] was at university it wasn't until [his] final year that a third of people in [his] halls of residence would have had phones". Arguably, non-Millennial participants' construction in this sense paints Millennials as unaware of 'reality' or what is 'normal'.

Non-Millennial participants' process of distancing themselves and their understanding of the world from technology (i.e. technology as foreign) was often juxtaposed against portrayal or reference to Millennials as synonymous with technology. Tony noted that "[they're] really technologically savvy" and how he felt it is technology "that defines them". Randy echoed this, "because they've grown up more with technology that they've definitely adopted it more readily and [are] more likely to hook it up and run with it and aren't threatened by it whereas people in the Baby Boomer era especially can be". Sam, a Millennial designer alluded to how Millennials' proficiency with technologies and systems was often treated as something almost occult by non-Millennials and how it is simply that they "hit the technology boom at that time, so the comprehension of things electronic is well beyond what most other people have". Again this illustrates the way in which Millennials do not conceptualize technology as external or removed from 'reality'.

Dialogue with participants often traversed from opinion to application, examining how growth and development with rapidly evolving technologies has impacted the way in which Millennials understand systems more broadly. Sam noted how he believes Millennials as digital natives benefit organizations more broadly than just technological fluency as in general, "they're more willing to try things, to change things, perhaps they move a bit faster, or take on new technologies, new policies more readily". A number of non-Millennial participants discussed the value of Millennials' adaptability and willingness to pick up new technologies within the context of the workplace. Jerome, a non-Millennial developer cited Millennials' adaptability and capacity to move with technology and how this is a positive within their industry.

> I'm having trouble keeping with all the technology and phones
> and whatever where I've always been into it I just can't keep
> up with it, and I would expect within my particular industry, a
> generation would be more up to date with Twitter and
> Facebook and social networking and be able to incorporate

that into their decisions and knowledge and contribute to the

team.

It is this growth and development with technology that led some non-Millennial participants to draw allusions to techno-centrism. While this may on the surface seem overly cynical, some Millennial participants such as Sam did note Millennials as "more able to adapt to technology. To pick things up and just work with it and I guess you see a bit of obsession and compulsion in some ways". Despite this, many non-Millennial participants such as Karen held Millennials' adaptability and drive to explore in a positive regard.

They are interested and intrigued and not afraid to use

technology and look into it and explore new things, um and

that means that creating new opportunities and discovering

new things and think that that's a great thing to be building

as opposed to limiting yourself not being afraid of something

so I really like that that is a driving force, so I think that that

is definitely a positive and a reason I came into this job was

because, they are heading.

Interestingly, this attribution of adaptation and creativity to Digital Natives is one of the only points of consensus between Millennial and non-Millennial participants. Throughout the interviews both Millennial and non-Millennial participants would illustrate their respective affiliation with or separation from technology as evidence of their membership to a generation.

Constant and Ambient Connectivity

Connectivity was a core component of dialogues about technology – specifically Millennials' connection to each other and to the 'world' via their technologies. Connectivity was in this sense framed in two ways, global and interpersonal.

Millennial participants would often note themselves to be highly connected and globally aware. A number of non-Millennials such as Tony reinforced this in reference to Millennials' increased sense of world events and global awareness, "I think that young people are more connected with the world at large than previous generations were, and I think that that's true on a superficial level. On the level of information and data". This connectivity and awareness on the global is not necessarily limited to news and media events, but more pertinently – information applicable to their own interests' i.e. new technologies. Notably, Tony's caveat about 'information and data' implies distinctions between Millennials' ability to receive and understand text.

Discussions about global connectivity often acted as a segue into interpersonal communication. Interpersonal communication was often in reference to conflict over Millennials' compulsion to be constantly connected to each other and the world. This connection was not necessarily noted as active connection, but a passive or ambient access to channels. Non-Millennial participants discussed how this drive leads Millennials to demand the usage of personal devices such as cell phones and personal feeds such as Facebook and Twitter at work, during 'work hours'. While construction through conflict surrounding working paradigms will be examined in depth further in this thesis, it is important to note that some Millennials such as Brad, a senior developer felt that this compulsion or behaviour was triggered by Millennials' growth and development with technology.

> I guess smart phones are a big part, of what drives a lot of
> those behaviours, because they can um, they can satisfy the
> urges for being able to do whatever you want now, being able
> to find out information immediately, being able to keep in
> touch with your friends irrespective of where you are um,
> smart phones allow those and so those skills to coordinate
> things on the spot, being able to find information instantly,
> being able to learn technologies and pick up these new

> programs, you know, within potentially minutes, being able to
>
> understand technology is the overarching one there

Many Millennial participants discussed the issues of access to personal devices within the workplace in this sense, many acknowledging that while Mosbius Designs certainly did not promote the behaviour, they tolerated it out of necessity. A number of participants believed this tolerance to be a product of the intense demand on the part of Millennials and the mean age of the organization. Heather, a team supervisor discussed how she had debated placing formal regulation against the use of personal devices during work hours for her team. She advised how she had met with such a great deal of resistance that she felt it 'wasn't worth the fuss', "mp3 players all that sort of stuff cell phones it is all just second nature so they don't even see it as an interruption it's like it would be an issue not to have it".

Arguably Millennials' inability to separate themselves from their personal devices during 'work time' is indicative of a broader inability to identify technology as separate from notions of self entirely, be it work or personal. In addition, several non-Millennial participants posited that over time, the usage of digital communication in the place of interpersonal, has come at the cost of many 'soft skills'. Karen strongly believed that Millennials are lacking interpersonal or 'face to face' communication skills, "texting, phones, Facebook, Twitter, using social networking is high on the agenda, people are encouraged to communicate via technology rather than face to face so there is um lower levels of communication, less social skills [with Millennials and successive generations]".

Tony discussed the way in which members of his team had pushed him to work with them more digitally and less face to face.

> It seems that social media has replaced a lot of face to face
>
> contact for them so they will get annoyed if you come and sit
>
> down in front of them all the time. Which an older person
>
> would want to do to create rapport, namely they expect you to
>
> be reading their Facebook feed and commenting on it…face to

face is scary, it is quite confronting, especially if you are more

used to operating online

This preference for digital communication over physical notably drew a great deal of criticism within the workplace. A number of non-Millennial participants expressed bewilderment and/or frustration towards Millennials' obsessive-compulsive connectivity. Furthermore, a preference for digital communication was suggested to have caused Millennials to experience a degree of apprehension when it came to physical situations.

Immediacy and Access to Information

These notions of constant connectivity extend to Millennials' view of information sources (i.e. the internet) as a continuation or supplementation of themselves and their own knowledge. Accordingly a number of Millennial participants expressed the sentiment that their own knowledge was only limited by what they could access online. Again Brad discussed how one of Millennials' key strengths is their "being able to find information on a topic immediately" and knowing that "there is always an answer to something now". Jen asserted that this ability to 'know anything' instantaneously brought with it a great deal of sometimes misguided confidence.

We have grown up with things being very instant and

especially in terms of technology and wanting to find things

out we just like with the internet and if we want to know

something then we can just Google it then immediately find it

out and if we can't immediately find it out or if we don't know

something straight away it can be quite frustrating.

Google (in both noun and verb form) was appropriated a great deal in this context – to the point where Millennials view it almost as a prosthetic. Doug, an account management team leader maintained this.

> The problem solving ability I feel is a lot stronger in
> Millennials because for instance, before I got into working
> with Mosbius Designs I didn't realize how valuable the
> Google was as a tool for everyday life and it's, it's really the
> hub of all information, it's just, you can utilize it in everyday
> life and also in the workplace.

Non-Millennial participants were notably critical of their counterparts'
dependency on online resources. Many non-Millennials such as Alan felt that
Millenials confused the 'knowledge of how to access information with actual
knowledge'

> I think that probably one of the major areas is around the
> concepts of what knowledge is, um and what intelligences is, I
> think that those are things that not just through social media
> but through the creation of Wikipedia and Google and those
> sorts of things that are really driving information to people and
> allowing people to have information come and find them I
> think that that is going to start shifting learning approaches I
> hope and less of learn the book and more of find the
> information and evaluate whether its correct or incorrect.

Tony stated that Millennials' dependency on digital resources was potentially
problematic in that Millennials do not always approach information critically.

> You've got to put your own filters on it to understand what's
> important, what's not, what's lies, what's truth, you know,
> everyone's putting their own bias on stuff and not the media
> doing it for you and I think that really does influence a culture.
> Yea, it will be interesting to see how that changes them as they
> grow up.

Technology was used to construct difference between Millennials and non-Millennials by all participants – specifically by examining their own relationship with technology versus Millennials'. While Millennial participants believed technology to extend their own capacity, non-Millennial participants believed that this had lead to an over dependency which came at the cost of interpersonal 'soft skills'. Construction was often also generated through conflicts surrounding usage, indicative of Millennials growth and development with technology and inability to separate it from notions of self. While largely positive surrounding the facilities that technology brings, a number of Millennial participants noted what they felt was a compulsion to be constantly connected.

Voice

Voice as a theme discusses Millenials' need to be heard. It further examines Millenials' understandings of the role, purpose, and impact of communication infrastructure. Issues of Voice were raised by a number of Millenial and non-Millenial participants. It was often categorized by expression and discussion surrounding decision-making at all levels within an organization. This is not to suggest a narcissistic pursuit of self-affirmation on the part of Millenials, but rather a genuine belief in democratic process. Millennial participants highlighted the gains which can be made by an organization through an open forum in terms of new ideas and problem solving.

Non-Millennial participants expressed confusion and frustration with Millennials' need to be heard. It was stated that this can often lead to an increase in bureaucratic measures and process times due to the large number of people who expect a forum to express their opinion. Furthermore, some non-Millennial participants felt that this in itself leads to further complications, specifically office politics, in terms of ensuring all staff get to 'have their say', or rather issues surrounding the ramifications if someone does not get to have their say.

This focus on expression and consultation was also noted to extend to reward and punishment structures in the organization. Non-Millennial participants often

discussed Millennials' expectation that internal reward and punishment are voiced publicly. This is arguably an attempt to establish a concertive or socially mediated system where 'people get what they deserve'. Interestingly, while non-Millennial participants focused on the punishment component, Millennials tended to focus on the reward. Millennial participants expressed the desire for a meritocratic system, where employees' remuneration is based purely on performance as opposed to age or seniority which, were largely seen as arbitrary. This desire for a meritocracy was often extended to 'the business world' as a whole – as many Millennial participants noted difficulty in establishing rapport with senior employees externally due to their age.

Democracy

Throughout all dialogues, Millennials' demand for democratic process was continually raised. In many cases this was discussed in terms of the employees making decisions together. Victoria a production coordinator expressed how this can be exceptionally problematic to manage given the large number of Millennials at Mosbius Designs. During her interview she contrasted the expectations of Millennials (specifically those at Mosbius Designs) and employees of more traditionally structured organizations, "I find at a bigger place you are more of a number, just a figure in the masses, with other people making all the decisions, like the guys here really feel like they should be involved in making decisions".

For Victoria this demand for Voice has been somewhat confrontational as in her previous role she had not experienced this "haptic feedback" from subordinates in her own decision making. James, a Millennial developer and team leader solidified Victoria's observation and discussed his own experiences of how "everyone wants their say, and they feel that they have the right to express their opinion about their seniors and elders, and about the processes and make themselves heard". This apparent push to generate workplace structure alongside covert rejection of traditional organizational and workplace hierarchies in many ways reflects Millennials' demand for social democracy within the workplace. Victoria believed that this was not necessarily irreverent demand for attention but an indication of a deep personal

investment into the organization on the part of Millennials, "they [Millennials] are extremely passionate about this place doing well and they don't want to be in a place that doesn't do well so they are really driven to make sure that what they are doing is contributing to that".

While Victoria was for the most part optimistic in her discussion of this push from Millennials, Lucy, a human resources manager revealed however that this demand often posed distinct and at times frustrating difficulties from a management perspective. She explained that at times she felt as her job had become mainly ensuring Millennials at all levels feel heard, respected, and most importantly that they are an integral part of the team.

> People have a lot more opinions and so they want to be more democratic or in a democratic sense which doesn't necessarily mean results, not results focused necessarily its more opinion focused so that becomes a problem – more of a Swedish model where everyone agrees rather than being laughed at. So that presents its own challenges but it means that more voices are heard.

Interestingly, she noted as a caveat that it is often not that Millennials want to be leaders – but rather they want to feel that they are having an impact.

> They need to be seen to be heard and for that to be taken on-board and unless they have had some influence and the outcome of the decision in a democratic way, but they don't necessarily want to be leaders, they want to be part of something bigger.

Despite the contentious nature of Mosbius Designs' decision making systems, Brad, a Millennial developer and team leader noted that it is these systems which, in part, have facilitated the organization's success with the retention of Millennials, and in turn the organization's success in the marketplace.

> They like to feel like they are valued and are part of the
> company more, so, at [Mosbius Designs], everyone wants
> their opinion heard, and for everyone[else] to know what
> direction they are coming from because we keep everything
> quite flat over the last few years, I think we do cater better
> than most out there

Participants' discussion of Mosbius Designs decision making processes illustrates clear construction through differing perspectives and expectations of what were traditionally management concerns.

Fairness

Issues of democracy were often precluded by, or within close proximity of, discussions of fairness. In the way that democratic decision making represented fairness to many participants. Several participants went on to discuss fairness within organizational and societal discourse. Max, a Millennial account manager expressed how he felt that there is too much emphasis on age/seniority within working paradigms and were apparent proponent of meritocracy.

> For certain roles, certain people need to fill, certain high tier
> roles it is usually expected that the person is quite old, or quite
> experienced will take that role. If someone who is quite
> young, younger than I guess the people that how do you say
> presiding over, and then they tend to kick up a stink because
> he is too young, won't have enough experience, won't be able
> to make enough decisions blah… it shouldn't matter, if they
> have the knowledge and the skills to do the job effectively
> then why bother or why care? You know, it shouldn't really be
> up to the fact that they're 30-40+ to hold that role, it should
> just depend on their skills.

Notably, Max and number of the other Millennial participants who raised such perspectives in turn discussed instances in which they had been refused positions or roles due to their (apparent) age. This is in many ways indicative of Millennials' expectation that fairness equates to evaluation of merits, or in this case, by what a person can do – not how long they have been doing it. Mike, an account manager, expressed how he felt that existent societal weightings of age and seniority seem arbitrary and irrelevant. He discussed his experiences with older clients at both his current and previous role, and how they often had little respect for him despite how much he put into their work because of his age.

> At my last job there, you just get treated like a moron, you're
> an idiot, do your job, peasants…I guess you get over it for the
> pay check, you put up with it but it just sucks going to work
> when you're not treated fairly I guess, not respected.

For non-Millenial participants, Millennials' emphasis on fairness was often framed within the context of accountability through reward and punishment systems. Ted, the CEO highlighted the "demand from the Millennials of knowing that that person has for sake of a better word punished. Or knowing that something is happening that they kind of like, want to see it". Millennials' demand for openness in this sense draws a great deal of criticism from non-Millennial employees, for whom the most evident issue is that Millennials' view on fairness leaves little room for the likes of discretion and privacy. Ted discussed these issues in relation to employees wanting to see those who are performing poorly punished, and those performing well rewarded.

> When you are in one of those performance based cultures,
> when someone is seeing someone who's not performing it's
> like a boomer, they kind of have this expectation that it's
> going to be dealt with, and it's going to be dealt with behind
> closed doors and its going to be sorted. Where when it's a
> Millennials there is an expectation that it's going to be dealt

> with, it's going to be public and everyone is going to know,
>
> um so that's been kind of interesting.

In general however, Ted believed that both Millennial and non-Millennial employees noted the effectiveness of performance based cultures in the management of Millennials – especially given the proportion of Millennials at Mosbius Designs.

> But definitely a big focus on fairness, I think like one of the
>
> things that has always allowed us to go quite well with
>
> Millenials is setting up an organization that is performance
>
> based, so it doesn't matter how old you are or how long
>
> you've been there, if you perform like you basically ramp in
>
> pay ramp in salary and all of that.

Fairness, specifically discussions surrounding what is fair, is often raised as important by Millennials within the performance based culture of Mosbius Designs. Given that this culture has been engineered, its effectiveness in the management of Millennials can be understood. The differing perspectives between Millennial and non-Millennial employees towards reward/punishment structures in this sense clearly facilitate construction through difference.

Informality

Informality highlights Millennials' desire to engineer an amiable working environment by reducing social and power distances with colleagues.

Informality was constructed through Millennials' focus on informal social structures, specifically relationship building with colleagues and seniors. In many instances non-Millennial participants discussed the way in which they had 'personal' and 'work' selves, in comparison to Millennials for whom it was one in the same. Millennial participants would often frame the importance of getting along with co-workers in terms of satisfaction and enjoyment. Non-Millennial participants were seemingly perplexed by this pursuit, underlining the disjuncture between their own separation of personal and professional senses of self. Some non-Millennial

participants suggested that Millennials' pursuit to construct a social circle in the workplace, or even viewing their colleagues as a 'second family' was largely due to their age. While some Millennial participants echoed this, a number expressed that it was simply 'cooler' working with one's friends.

Blurring of 'Home' and 'Work' Lives

Throughout the interviews Millennial highlighted the degree to which they valued informal and social structures within the workplace. Many Millennials believed that the reduction of formality and social/power distances leads to a more enjoyable and productive workplace environment. Stuart reflected that this tendency on the part of Millennials is often about improving one's workplace, "A shitty job can be a lot better if your co-workers get along good, have good relations". Abby, a member of the administrative team suggested it to be a product of Millennials previous social environments and identified how non-Millennials often interpret this behaviour erroneously.

> I just think that, you know, the whole informal thing, a lot of people who are older might interpret that as being you know less focused or less dedicated when it's not the case, it's just a different attitude to stuff… Um, not really sure, you grow up, you go through uni, you go through high school and you're so used to being in an informal situation that it becomes a bit different. So you're still not kind of used to being in a working environment and I guess years and years of being in a working environment makes you more serious.

Millennials' pursuit to reduce formal structures and social distance comes directly under criticism from non-Millennials, who feel that socialization to this degree within the workplace is unnecessary, bordering on inappropriate. For the most part, non-Millennials discussed the way in which they were 'here to work', not to 'make friends'. Greg expressed his own bewilderment towards the pursuit of informality, discussing the difference between his own and Millennials'.

> I know when I was quite a bit younger and an apprentice I was
> social with the other people and friendly with and I worked in
> a manner consistent with their expectations but I still wouldn't
> say I integrated with them as such, it was something where
> everyone did their own work and we got on well together but
> we didn't really do a lot of work together and didn't
> particularly seek it out.

Greg's treatment alludes to a notion of professionalism where, while it is important to be polite and respectful, social interaction in 'a Millennial sense' does not comply with his conceptualization of workplace discourse. Heather, a non-Millennial human resources manager with a young family, reflected on Millennials in the workplace becoming more like friends and family, rather than colleagues due to their age.

> When you are at that age you have a lot of energy, you go out
> partying, and you are socializing with your workmates all the
> time. You probably don't have family or other commitments
> so work is probably more like your family, when you are in
> that age group. I think that they interact probably better than
> maybe other generation or people who work, 'cause I think
> work is probably more of your life than when you get older
> and you have a different focus with family and other things.

Blurring of home and work lives was constructed in the sense of what 'appropriate' workplace behaviour is, specifically the differing perspectives between Millennials and non-Millennials.

Respect

Surprisingly however, throughout the interviews it was Millennial participants that more often addressed or recognised Millennials' lack of respect for older employees and organizational structures. Max, a Millennial developer in a

senior role agreed with this, discussing how in his experience this was most apparent upon Millennials entrance to an organization.

> I think, inherently, their immediate respect levels are not
> where they should be, whereas I think that non Millennials
> will come into an organization with a lot of respect for the
> status quo and everything else and will try to adapt
> themselves to the organization whereas Millenials seem to
> try and adapt the organization to themselves.

Respect in this sense was often viewed through the lens of conforming to organizational culture and guidelines, Millennials were often highlighted for their drive to do the opposite and impact upon culture and guidelines. Sam, a Millennial developer, noted his resentment for his generation's "lack of respect" for the organization and traditional working paradigms. Karen felt this lack of respect was more accurately interpreted or understood as a lack of respect for older generations.

> With older generations there is more respect for elders there
> is more respect for routine, there is more respect for people
> and for ownership whereas now it's a bit more, kind of, you
> do generally, you get the impression that young people are in
> it for themselves and don't have as much respect for things?

Informality was often framed by Millennial and non-Millennial participants in relation to respect, specifically respect for workplace discourse, organizational culture, guidelines, and existing employees. Many participants, including Millennials felt that Millennials in general lacked respect for these due primarily to their age and lack of experience in strict environments. Some non-Millennial participants took particular offence to Millennials attempts to disestablish or generate new structure which served them better due to it contrasting with their own conceptions of respect.

Flexibility

Flexibility as a theme draws attention to Millenials as proponents of equifinality. Equifinality as a system recognizes that a final state can be reached from an initial state through numerous paths or trajectories (Katz & Kahn, 1978).

Flexibility was constructed by a number of participants, specifically in regards to how Millennials wish to work. Many Millennial participants noted a desire to work in an environment free from what they believed to be arbitrary organizational structures such as, but not limited to, work hours, geographic location, breaks, and conventional process. These structures were treated as hindering the likes of problem solving and stifling opportunities to pursue new, creative, and innovative solutions in any given project. This frame was often described anecdotally, often involving frustration with pragmatic processes and 'how things are done' or rather, how things have been done in the past.

While non-Millennial participants noted Millennials for their exceptional problem solving capabilities, capacity for innovation, and creativity – this pursuit of flexibility in how they work was also interpreted this as a lack of work ethic or as an inability to focus. Furthermore, a number of non-Millennial participants noted that often this output-oriented flexibility often came at the cost of a project being completed effectively and efficiently.

Structure

Both Millennial and non-Millennial participants discussed Millennials' resistance of formal structures such as working hours, working location, and break times. Sam relayed the problems he faced as a manager in dealing with Millennials and their regard of working hours.

> They have their own way of doing things, their own, ideas
> about things like break and break times, and they generally
> start off with their ideas and they are had to move, it might
> just be an age thing…taking them whenever, but also not

> taking them, that's a big problem for HR – people who don't
> take breaks. [Jack] would sometimes, sits down at 1pm and
> leaves at 1am and hasn't stopped.

For many participants, Millennials' apparent attitude towards workplace expectations surrounding work hours and their desire to "work from home a lot" typifies this notion of flexibility. Tony, whose position is somewhat similar to Sam's, acknowledged how Millennials 'want to work when they need to work'. That is to say, they are happy to work until midnight without breaks when they are busy, but want to be able to come in later and take longer breaks when they are 'quiet' (in terms of workload). Tony pointed out an evident difference between Millennials and older generations where "you can call them [Millennials] at 8pm at night and they are happy to jump in and start doing a bit of work, no dramas" in contrast to non-Millennials who will often ignore their phone if work rings outside of hours. Similarly, Jen, a part of Mosbius Designs' human resources department theorized that this is a fundamental indicator of difference in work ethic between generations.

> The older value set of you start at eight you finish at five,
> where kind of, and that's what we are trying to encourage but
> there's definitely people who work through the night and it's
> hard to get them there before noon.

Jen discussed how resistance to this behaviour on the part of Millennials had led to the organization re-structuring its policies on working hours. Mosbius Designs implemented a shift from salary to wage as a response to demands of the industry and Millennials propensity to work often erratic hours based on workload. This change had also been spurred due to the organization's shift to team structures. An unintended side-effect being that if one person came in early/late – so did all those on the team to help. In general flexibility as a concept encapsulates Millennials' wish to work in the time/space which they feel best facilitates production.

Processes

Similar to concepts of structure, Millennials were frequently portrayed as output-oriented as opposed to process oriented. The concept of process examines Millennials as proponents of equifinality specifically in regards to task completion. Frequently Millennial and non-Millennial participants would cite Millennials' resistance to pragmatic instruction and how they would want to be given the opportunity to explore alternatives and learn via exploration. This was treated by many as reflective of Millennials' inclination or desire for innovation and change. Stuart believed that Millennials growth and development with technology, and experience with technological change had instilled an expectation or demand of such change.

> I guess we are quite fast paced with technologies and stuff like
> that so; people are always keen to try out the latest and
> greatest thing, yeah. People are wanting to do or learn about
> new technologies and provide the best solution based on
> what's out there. Like viewing all the possibilities

This viewpoint was echoed by non-Millennials such as Victoria who had observed the way in which Millennials were "quite driven, quite innovative" and so were often "coming up with good systems and ideas and new ways of doing stuff". While this drive was largely discussed as a positive, Ted noted that sometimes Millennials urge to explore and try something new comes at the cost of efficiency.

> I would say pretty well, they have a massive desire for change,
> to kind of change things that they think aren't really working –
> they can get very very very painful if they haven't been
> educated well, so I kind of remember, some guy or one of the
> guys in particular that just because he didn't, because they get
> so passionate and so engaged they can get incredibly
> passionate and incredibly engaged about behaviour that's just
> really wrong. Um and it's at that point that they realize omg

> what I'm doing is actually wrong and then that changes and
> they become the biggest advocate about what was xyz
> behaviour

Just as flexibility encapsulates how Millennials' wish to work in the time/space which they feel best facilitates production, "processes" refers to Millennials' wish to choose how they work, and treatment of work as an opportunity to learn.

Innovation

In general, however, many believed that one of Millennials' more valuable assets was their propensity to innovate; Millennials were believed by many participants to be "generally more creative", and able to bring new technologies and ideas to the forefront of the company. Sam believed Millennials to be especially valuable prospects as they often bring "knowledge of new things especially in the IT sector, as everything is growing, new and starting so these people have come in during their strongest learning years into technology and just bring so much". Chloe, a non-Millennial human resources manager and one of the more senior employees discussed how she was constantly amazed at Millennials, and how, "[they] are way out there with their thinking in terms of new ideas and innovation, very innovative". Ted discussed how one of the key motivators in hiring primarily Millennials for development and design roles was because "you get these people who are quite creative and have the ability to think of the fly and really adapt to situations and come up with really innovative situations".

Innovation while discussed proportionately less than the other concepts within the theme of flexibility closely reflects previous suggestions that growth and development with technology has lead to a demand or expectation on the part of Millennials for change.

Content Switching

Content switching was a term introduced to me during the interviews, one that was used quite frequently by participants. As explained by participants, content

switching addresses issues of focus and multitasking within the workplace - especially multitasking between 'work' and 'personal' devices and feeds. Conceptualization of content switching was quite evident within Mosbius Designs, one which the organization was attempting to address due to its purported negative impact on productivity. Tony relayed content switching as detrimental to productivity as in the case of Millennials, it often involves switching between work and personal content.

> Content switching, so having twitter and facebook open, while
> at work and stuff, which is actually not encouraged any more
> but is still done – those guys do it a lot, so they are always on
> Facebook, they are always on twitter and they are always
> working, so I think the lines between your personal life, your
> home life your work life and even your tasks, when you are
> working and when you are socializing are blurring.

Some participants felt that content switching was prolific in Millennials due to an inability to control urges to do something else when bored. As a concept it was also linked to issues of focus, or rather that Millennials were unable to properly 'focus' on a single task. Millennial participants were aware of non-Millennials perceptions of content switching.

Ted addressed the issue from a management perspective, noting that Millennials were unaware that this content switching was coming at the cost of productivity in terms of quality of the work being completed.

> So I would say the kind of the behaviours one is definitely
> difficulty with focus. So very easy to be trying to program
> while getting twitter feeds, while getting incoming text
> messages uh while Facebook status updates, that kind of
> constant content switching, is definitely like a behaviour
> which seem to run through them. Um and interestingly
> enough, quite a, quite interesting it's like a pro and a con. So
> it's really good when you've got them in roles so let's say

> account management right, where you are juggling a lot of
> different things at once, which is really good but if you are
> trying to get one of them into an area where they've got to
> kind of you know focus to do something quite complex, um
> that can be very hard for them to get into the zone and stay
> there.

Similarly, Tony believed content switching was to some degree a product of the way in which Millennials had worked in bursts throughout their schooling etc, and were never forced to focus on a single task. He discussed the difficulty he had personally faced in engineering environments with Millennials that promote focus.

> I think that constant content switching like having social
> media stuff open all the time and that sort of thing does
> impact the amount of work that you can get done and your
> productivity, so making sure they're smart about it, not
> completely denying them access to it, cause that would be
> like denying the access to their left eye, but just making
> there are some clear guidelines around how they should and
> shouldn't be using social media in the workplace

Content switching, as an emic term in this project, usefully draws attention to how participants construct Millenials vis-à-vis appropriate workplace behaviour.

Stimulation

Stimulation as a theme addresses the intrinsic motivators of Millennials. Stimulation is constructed through the lens of work values, in this case the work values of Millennials. It highlights the changing attitudes towards work on the part of Millennials, specifically examining that which Millennials demand from employers.

Non-Millennial senior employees expressed bewilderment in regards to Millennials' expectation that the organization should motivate them as an employee. A number of non-Millennial participants discussed realizations that 'you're here

getting paid' is no longer enough to motivate Millennials, that they are coming to work for ideas and values first and everything else second. Mosbius Designs has found that providing stimulation is in place, Millennial employees will remain highly dedicated and perform at an exceptional level – if not however, they quickly lose interest and cease performing. Mosbius Designs has a number of processes in place to ensure that this stimulation remains by aligning the organizational culture and values with that of Millennials.

Non-Millennial participants constructed this demand for stimulation as a self-centeredness approach. These same participants noted processes such as frequent performance reviews, and clear career progression outlines as pivotal to ensuring retention. Finally problematic behavior was raised, specifically Millennials only being driven to work on projects that were prestigious or fun.

Interestingly Millennial participants within this study expressly discussed this framework of stimulation very little. However a number did express appreciation for the organizations pursuit to meet their needs.

Engagement

Non-Millennials identified and were critical throughout the interviews of Millennials need to feel connected with, and an important part of both projects and the organization as a whole. Furthermore, non-Millennials struggled to empathize with the fact that this connection/engagement is pivotal and directly proportional to their input and performance. Jen discussed her frustrations from a HR perspective in that she finds herself needing to justify to employees why they should do they work they are getting paid for.

> They want to be part of the solution. They want to be not
> just, they don't want to be told what to do, they want to be,
> and this drives me crazy, 'you've got to inspire me, you can't
> just tell me what to do, you've got to make me want to do it'.
> Which is, from a management perspective it's quite

> frustrating and kind of see that kind of management's been
> used all through this time and to me it's just so inefficient,
> but it's been quite successful in having a really highly
> engaged workforce

Alan conveyed his bemusement towards Millennials' inability to understand that "it's not all about fun". "They want everything that they do to be fun and exciting and interesting and new and sometimes you've got to grind". Lucy expressed the difficulties she faces with Millennials in production management where traditional working paradigms of 'you're here to get paid to do this' is not enough. She discussed her frustrations around Millennials needing to know why what they are doing is important and needing to understand the context or bigger picture. She noted that at a hierarchical and interpersonal level this can generate conflict when "older generations might be dictating to a younger generation how to do something because they have usually been in an organization for longer and they are less likely to think they have to justify their decisions with Millennials, whereas a [Millennial] person is more likely to want to be want to told why they are doing something". While a number of participants examined the negative aspects of this behaviour, Ted felt that this drive to understand context was in fact a 'massive opportunity as' "[If] you give them what they're passionate about and what they care about and you get them engaged then they are amazing".

It was apparent that while this baseline expectation on the part Millennials can certainly create difficulty or incite frustration from a management perspective, it also causes personal investment into projects from Millennials which can be exceptionally valuable. Victoria felt that this emphasis comes from Millennials' genuine drive for their organization to succeed, and for themselves to succeed within their role; "they are extremely passionate about this place doing well and they don't want to be in a place that doesn't do well so they are really driven to make sure that what they are doing is contributing to that".

Direction and Progression

Similarly to how Millennials wish to see themselves succeeding through their work via personal investment – they want to be able to see development of themselves through skill growth and organizational or career progression. A number of participants who supervise Millennials drew attention to the importance of performance-reward structures and outlining direction and progression to Millennials through KPIs and goals. Ted identified that not only did Millennials require and demand that such structures are in place, but that in meeting these goals and indicators, they find a great deal of intrinsic satisfaction.

> The passion when they are engaged is amazing, we've had
> guys that have literally, when they've still been at uni, like fail
> papers and peers and like they've been failing them because
> they've been working like 40-80 hours a week because
> they've really loved what they've been doing.

In general, Ted felt that this was because Millennials want to know that they are improving, and understand that what they are doing now is contextual and relevant to something bigger. This goal-oriented behaviour extended deep into the long-term mind-set of Millennials. Through discussions with Millennials in his team, Tony was made aware of their demand for milestone markers and clearly identified progression. He relayed that the requirement placed on managers to ensure that Millennials have milestone markers alongside constantly justifying what they are doing as relevant to their career.

> And career progression, trying new things is really big. If they
> are some sort of technical engineer now they probably won't
> want to be a technical engineer in two or three years time. So
> making sure, it's probably a huge HR issue really because you
> have to be constantly be asking them how we are going,
> progressing and making sure that they are up skilling
> themselves and they can see the progression in their career

Enjoyment

Many non-Millennial participants felt however that the negotiation of tasks and goals left Millennials feeling entitled to working on only prestigious, important or fun jobs. Tony discussed how these issues of enjoyment often mean that Millennials simply will not do work that they do not like.

> They don't always want to cross the 'i's and dot the 't's because
> it's boring. You know, documentation, following due process,
> that sort of stuff isn't as easy, not as interesting so they aren't
> going to do it. So I think that needs to be managed as well.

Victoria went farther and discussed an instance where Millennials' demand for jobs they want often causes them to lose sight of the organization as a whole.

> So I got a new job through the other day, quite a high profile
> job, pretty good job, but it's quite a simple job and one of the
> team leaders wants to do it. Even though he is completely
> overloaded with work, he wants to do it. He doesn't want
> anyone else to do it and he's got team members that don't have
> enough work. Like that kind of thing, he would rather see
> himself and better his career than give it to one of his trainees
> than help them and support them and help them do well with
> it. It bothers me a lot really

This negative impact on productivity arose in a number of interviews, often identified as a source of great frustration for supervisors and management. Karen deplored this aspect of Millennials' work ethic as she felt it simply had no place in modern working paradigms.

> I would definitely say there is more of a negative in the way
> that productivity and again, coming back to the same thing if
> you've got a job role that says you have to do it and you get
> on with it, and you do it, you perform and often they'll do a

and not b and c because they don't want to they don't feel

like it, they don't feel like they have to they don't really care,

they're not too fussed on the consequences.

Ted felt that ultimately, this behaviour was reflective of the way in which Millennials were coming to work for ideas and values, not necessarily to get paid. Moreover, he noted that Millennials want to find enjoyment in their work, and that 'they will take low pay, crap offices, and a career downgrade to have a better sense of self and work on the projects they want to.

From what I've discovered definitely not, it's kind of there's

been a desire for cool work and understanding and the

meaning of why they do something and interesting thing

about pay, is that especially with Millennials I've seen with

some there's not a massive drive for I want a million dollars,

but what the drive here is that I want to feel that I'm being

valued, um and if that pay is like not, then like there're being

valued then there is problems, the need to feel values is very

dominant, like massive, it's a massive driver

Enjoyment and engagement examine the importance that Millennials place on understanding their position as relative to their goals, and understanding their work in a much broader context.

Collaboration

Millennial participants placed a great deal of importance on enjoyment and engagement through collaboration. Many Millennials discussed the importance/preference in discussing and brainstorming with peers on new and existing projects. Stuart felt that while this is viewed negatively by a non-Millennials it is truly beneficial for the projects and organization as a whole.

I guess [Millennial] people might be working and have a

discussion on what they are working on just to try and figure

out something. Or and maybe the non Millennials are like "get

back to your work and do it rather than discuss it". Sometimes

you can get part way through a project and we are constantly

thinking about the end solution, we get partway through the

project and realize that something can be done in a better way.

Using agile methodologies, you can adapt from where you are

to change it to get a better outcome at the end rather than

coming into a project, listing out what needs to be done and a

strict do this dahdahdah, but it could have been better if we

rethought the situation and talked about it.

James identified that Millennials' preference for collaboration was reflective of

technology's influence on their development. "I've been growing up things have been

moving more towards technological shift and social collaboration shift; that is

definitely a major difference but I think it is happening more slowly this time". An

interesting perspective voiced by Lucy was that Millennials don't necessarily want to

work together all the time, nor do they want to be stuck in their offices – they want

access to both environments.

Probably more collaborative, they are looking to

communicate with others. They're probably less likely to be

locked in a room so for example at Mosbius Designs they

like to be left alone but they do like interaction, whereas if it

were before that they would be more like put me in a dark

room and I'll program away.

Stuart suggested that while it was definitely not the workplace norm, it offered

a better working environment, at least for Millennials.

Job satisfaction is a big thing; if you have a big bunch of

Millenials that work together and stuff, it's nicer to work that

way and you might come out with a better outcome or

something like that rather than if you have a strict set of rules

that have you set into a routine.

While it could be suggested that Millennials require a great deal more work to ensure they are operating effectively and efficiently within their roles, it is important to look at why this is required, and what it yields. A number of both Millennial and non-Millennial participants articulated that this assurance of stimulation leads to Millennials personally investing themselves into their work and the organization, as a seeming emotional stakeholder. This personal investment leads to what a number of participants suggested to be higher output as Millennials begin to see their work as a reflection of themselves and their ability.

Chapter Summary

Through axial coding this chapter has identified five themes through which participants constructed generational messages. These five themes were identified as Technology, Voice, Informality, Flexibility, and Stimulation. While inexorably linked and impractical to view in isolation, through these themes we are able to view how generational difference is established in relation to Millennials within the workplace. While technology is often the first defining aspect of the Millennial character, it is by no means the most important. Technology was often described as a lens through which Millennials view the world and a rubric by which they solve problems. As discussed by Prensky (2001), technology was viewed by Millennials as an assumed extension of their own capacity, and Millennials were viewed in turn as an access point to this capacity by older employees. A great deal of Millennial scholarship has understood Millennials as 'whiney' (Twenge & Campbell, 2008) and self-important – this chapter has evidence that such descriptions are simply misinterpretation. Through the themes of Voice and Informality we can understand that participants construct Millennials view opportunity to speak, and communicate on equal terms (i.e. free from power distances) as indicative of respect. As such, several Millennial participants felt that Millennials' desires to be heard could be more adequately described as a need to be respected and an attempt to garner this respect. Many participants also discussed the ways in which they felt respected by senior figures

throughout their lives such as parents and teachers – they therefore come to understand respect through dialogue. Stimulation similarly highlighted how participants saw the mutual implication of enjoyment and engagement in the minds' of Millennials – which are often contingent on the basis of respect. Flexibility is arguably the most pragmatic of the themes. Participants constructed Millennials as having spent the entirety of their lives in school with unprecedented focus on 'learning' view every aspect of life as an opportunity to learn. Furthermore the often cited self-esteem movement often promoted making mistakes and learning for oneself. It is impractical and inopportune to expect that Millennials trust that seniors 'know the best way to go about a task' – and follow verbatim instruction. Allowing Millennials the opportunity to explore, and make mistakes – with helicopter supervision – will ultimately lead to a more dedicated and productive employee.

This chapter has also established that the five themes are largely consonant with both popular and academic characterisations of Millenials. This, coupled with the fact that Millennial participants were much less likely than non-Millenials to criticize these characteristics, constitutes evidence of the hegemonic status of contemporary discourse on generational differences, especially Millennial discourse. This is posed in the sense that these generational constructs are more definitive or explicit in the minds of non-Millennial participants. This was apparent when non-Millennial participants would frequently frame discussion in terms of a generation. In contrast to this Millennial participants would frequently outline their doubt as to the actuality and relevance of generational constructs, stating that they generally perceived age in terms of those younger, older or of the same age to themselves.

CHAPTER IV - RESISTANCE

Both explicit and implicit resistance was apparent across participants' dialogues. Resistance is understood by this project at two levels; first, all resistance is seen as partial and second, specific strategies of resistance are unpacked. The section titled All Resistance is Partial discusses the way in which forms of resistance were apparent as discursive practice. The next section, Resistance Strategies, examines methods of resistance exhibited by participants, generated through axial coding.

All Resistance as Partial

This section refers to the propensity of participants to simultaneously construct and resist generational messages. This behaviour is categorized in two forms; Synchronic and Diachronic. Synchronic resistance discusses participants' perceptual dissonance towards generational messages, vocally negotiating the construction and resistance of generational messages. Diachronic resistance examines a seeming superficial resistance on the part of participants whereby initial resistance would be progressively subverted by the construction of complex generational messages.

Synchronic

Synchronic resistance as internal dispute implies participants' perceptual dissonance towards generational messages. As *simultaneous* construction and resistance, this was apparent in the discussion of both externally generated messages, and messages participants had generated themselves. Several participants, when prompted to note any generational messages or perceptions that they had or aware of, would discuss those popularized in the media. Tony outlined several generational messages that he was aware of, however began questioning the source and validity of these messages.

> To me they are definitely coming from the media. So I'm
> reading so editorials, I'm reading articles and stuff like that.
> Some of it is based on stats; stats around you know the period

of time where people are in work, or in relationships, just
analysing behaviours, so it might be done by research type
people, being commented on by the media. I don't know the
underlying kind of bias and prejudices, there are some pretty
big assumptions that you have to make, like Millenials are
younger, so they are going to display these traits that these
young people you know, like I was saying before, I was a lot
more self centred, more flighty, when I was younger, I was
probably more like Millenials are now, but now I'm old and
wise and you know, and have seen and know it all.

This vocal negotiation echoed many participants' sentiment that these
externally constructed messages were generated by those with bias or agenda. A few
participants went as far as to suggest that a drive to categorize and stereotype groups
is inherent to the human condition is. At times however participants' attempts of
resistance via discrediting sources of construction was met by their own perspectives.
This was exhibited by Jen whose resistance by questioning the motives behind the
generation of these messages was undermined by her own experiences.

It's often people trying to stereotype I guess, is what I
generally think about it. I don't think there is a lot of value [to
it], but I think I've noticed different work ethics and what
[Millennials'] expectations are quite different.

Similarly, this simultaneous construction and resistance via internal dispute
was exhibited by Greg in regards to the theme of Flexibility.

Like I said there is a tendency to have an expectation of things
to be a lot more of their own way than other generations
previous to them definitely had, there's a lot of specifics that
you could relate to individual people but not to the generation
as a whole but in on the whole the higher expectation and
value they place on their self whether it be correctly or

incorrectly would be two of the most recurring things that you
could say not just a generalization but something a little bit
more specific.

Again, this illustrates participants' simultaneous construction of and resistance
to generational categorisation. In a similar vein, Alan displayed Synchronic resistance
through the discussion of observed generational traits as misattributed life stage traits
coming into conflict with his experience.

I've read articles about how you know gaming and computer
use starts to rewire how you think and it reduces your attention
span and all of that, it all seems realistic. I don't really
attribute this stuff to the age, I attribute it to wider societal
changes, I think that if an 18 year old and he's got a really shit
work ethic I can't blame it on him being 18, I probably more
blame it on his parents, how he was raised and the people that
he has hung out with at school and those sort of factors that
have build him into the person that he is rather than him being
under 20. But having said that we've had a staff member who
was asked to do some work and did, rather he asked to have a
day off to go to Big Day Out [a large national music
festival],and was told "no you can't have the day off we need
you at work", but um on the day of the concert he just chucked
a sickie, and um didn't come to work and called in sick which
was an obvious lie, and when he got pulled up on it his
response was "I'm 23 what do you expect".

While Alan is attempting to resist generational messages by refuting their
accuracy, he is at the same time constructing several messages through his own
experiences and the discussion of wider societal shifts which he concedes as
impacting directly on those who are developing.

Synchronic resistance as discussed by this chapter is by no means a simple concept; it alludes to perceptional dissonance and vocal negotiation as being representative of resistance while simultaneously constructing complex messages about generational difference. While it could be argued that this signifies the context of participants dialogue (i.e. face to face interviews without prior knowledge of the questions), in truth this illustrates the very complex and discursive nature of the construction and resistance of generational messages.

Diachronic

Diachronic resistance as superficial resistance examines behaviour where participants would initially and explicitly resist generational messages or notions of generations entirely, however, increasingly construct numerous and complex generational messages through their dialogue. Diachronic resistance was often apparent in participants who felt compelled to resist broader notions such as generations as stereotypes initially, but began to construct numerous generational messages as the interview progressed. In this sense, Diachronic resistance was superficial because ultimately hegemonic notions of generational differences were reinforced. Given that generational constructs were often understood by participants as 'stereotypes' – Diachronic resistance in this sense was readily evident. Chloe discussed how she was personally "hesitant to compartmentalize anyone into any generation or types because that's stereotyping and I prefer to treat people individually" but proceeded to construct a number of messages through discussion of her personal experiences at Mosbius Designs in this project's theme of Flexibility.

> Less formal, than other generations, probably because of the way that they have been brought up in environments that they are in, so things like language dress behaviour, piercings, you know all those sorts of things, things that weren't acceptable years ago are now acceptable so I think the workplace has changed to reflect that.

In this sense, Diachronic resistance was exhibited in that Chloe believed herself to have one perspective which she voiced, but then constructed several messages contradictory to this when recounting from experience. Similarly, when Karen was initially asked what messages or perspectives she was aware of in regard to Millennials, she attempted to overtly resist such generalization.

> I don't really have an opinion I suppose, I guess my thoughts
> on it are that you know there's always stereotypes, there's
> always assumptions that people talk about these things but you
> can generalize this as I'm saying that you can have one end of
> the spectrum and then the opposite depending on the person,
> so I think that something's are true but as far as your work
> ethic is concerned I think that is more to do with personality
> than technology and things like that

As the interview progressed however, she began discussing her experience in working with Millennials and her frustration as a manager when it came to the Millennial work ethic.

> I would definitely say there is more of a negative [work
> ethic] in the way that productivity and again.if you've got a
> job role that says you have to do it and you get on with it,
> and you do it, you perform. And often they'll do a and not b
> and c because they don't want to they don't feel like it, they
> don't feel like they have to, they don't really care, they're not
> too fussed on the consequences. They'll just wait till it
> happens and then make an excuse

Karen's Diachronic resistance is evident in that while she explicitly resisted generational notions entirely, or rather the discussion of individuals in terms of generational 'stereotypes' , she was able to identify and discuss a number of generational messages from personal experience. Randy was also very resistant to generational constructions while also noting the incorrectness of general perspectives

of Millennials. He noted that often life-stage messages were unfairly misattributed as generational messages.

> It's kind of by experience and by attitude and you know a
> younger person is naturally sometimes can be a bit more
> immature more emotional and likely to sort of respond but
> not always, it's very hard to typify anyone.

Throughout the interview however he constructed several generational messages based on the time they had grown up specifically.

> I think there's a technology aspect, that because they've
> grown up more with technology that they've definitely
> adopted it more readily and are more likely to hook it up and
> run with it and aren't threatened by it, whereas people in the
> Baby Boomer era especially can be, and before that. But I
> think even generation X as well for a lot of them it's come in
> at a time where they have to adapt to it, some generation X's
> are you know, dependent because generation is sixty five to
> seventy seven or something like that, that you know, there's a
> range but, I think with generation Y there's more of a tech.

Randy went further throughout the interview and began discussing issues within the theme of Flexibility, "you have to have a little discipline like people just answer their text message as soon as it goes off that, kind of thing, and get distracted a bit more easily".

Diachronic resistance examines participants negotiation of multiple perspectives in a manner similar to Synchronic resistance, but at a less intentional level. Where Synchronic resistance illustrates a single perspective on a single construct (i.e. externally generated messages), Diachronic resistance exhibits multiple perspectives which resist not only externally generated messages, but those generated internally.

Section Summary

This simultaneous construction and resistance as Synchronic or Diachronic could be understood in two ways. The first is that participants hold differing perspectives and are unable to effectively negotiate between the two at a cognitive level, hence the articulation of both to express this dissonance. The second is that participants are experiencing what is referred to in psychology as conceptual perspective-taking (Ruby & Decety, 2003)– the negotiation of multiple perspectives which are based at different levels of thought. Arguably the method of the interview facilitated the appearance of either, in that participants had a minimal amount of time to negotiate and rationalize a mediated perspective. Furthermore either form of resistance on the part of participants illustrates the way in which messages are constructed through resistance and while participants may resist generational notions entirely, there are specific messages which they themselves are cognizant of and believe to be reflective of Millennials.

Resistance Strategies

While the previous section viewed resistance as a partial discursive practice, this section will examine the more tangible strategies of resistance employed by participants. Both perspectives are pivotal to this study within the framework of a critical approach as they destabilize notions of centralized push/pull forces on meaning negotiation.

The first strategy of resistance is understood by this project as Dismissal. Resistance through Dismissal is characterized by participants' negation or rejection of messages which they perceive as 'false'. The second strategy of resistance is categorized as the Third Person Effect. The Third Person Effect examines the way in which participants would construct generational messages, but note that they hold greater truth for others rather than him or herself. The final observed strategy of resistance is examined by this project as the Decline Metaphor. Resistance through the Decline Metaphor examines a number of participants' perception of a progressive deterioration with each subsequent generation.

Dismissal

As a form of resistance, Dismissal was frequently exhibited through participants' negation or rejection of messages which they perceive as 'false'. Dismissal is primarily identified by the way in which a number of participants displayed aversion to the construction of generational messages, and in some cases the notion of generations entirely.

Dismissal was evident in both open and closed forms. Through closed forms, participants would expound messages as being incorrect or ineffectual. This was categorized by participants responding with closed answers to questions surrounding whether messages they had raised were correct/incorrect or accurate/inaccurate. In open forms, participants would discuss messages as being unimportant, irrelevant, or misrepresentative. This was categorized through participants open answers to questions surrounding whether messages they had raised were correct/incorrect or accurate/inaccurate. While the difference is subtle between these methods of articulation, they could suggest differing relationships with these messages. Closed forms illustrate somewhat of an antagonistic relationship, but open forms highlight a distance or lack of relationship. In both cases however messages are dismissed as being false to participants.

Similar to the aforementioned discussion of participants' perceptual aversion to the construction of stereotypes, participants would often dismiss generational notions entirely in an attempt to resist specific generational messages. Chloe discussed several specific generational messages throughout her interview, however when queried with whether organizations should or need to manage generational difference, she immediately attempted to dismiss such premises.

> I'm a believer of diversity, that everybody needs their own
> particular management; everybody should be managed
> differently because everybody is different, regardless of what
> generation. So you can compartmentalize those into an area and
> generalize on a few things but everybody has their own needs,

drivers, wants, to make them successful, to make their lives go
forward. Personally I'm hesitant to compartmentalize anyone
into any generation or types because that's stereotyping and I
prefer to treat people individually.

While Chloe had constructed several generational messages, when moving
from a theoretical discussion to a practical discussion she discussed a difference
between what she felt were messages others had constructed, and what her own
opinion was. Chloe in this instance attempted to solve her own cognitive dissonance
by invalidating these messages through dismissing notions of generations entirely.
This behaviour of negating specific messages through dismissal of broader constructs
was also exhibited by Karen. Karen discussed a number of generational messages that
she 'had heard' about the Millennial work ethic, but dismissed them by noting them as
life stage indicators, not generational attributes.

I don't, as I say wouldn't really typify it as generation Y.
Like younger people often have less experience but
sometimes that can be a good thing to have less bad habits as
well. So I just base it on how a person works and it doesn't
matter how old they are.

Karen's strategy of dismissal through negation and misattribution was also
exhibited in Tony's discussion about Flexibility.

Millennials are younger, so they are going to display these
traits that of these young people.I was a lot more self centred
more flighty when I was younger, I was probably more like
Millennials are now, but now I'm old and wise and you
know, and have seen and know it all.

Again, Tony's treatment clearly illustrates Dismissal by misattribution, by
categorizing constructs as life stage characteristics as opposed to generational
characteristics.

Participants exhibited Dismissal in a myriad of ways throughout the interviews. While Dismissal itself was a very common method of resistance, participants would interestingly frame their dismissal through strategies such as misattribution, ineffectuality, or simply being constructs of 'others'. While an examination could most likely be undertaken to understand the difference in these forms of utilization, Dismissal is categorized by this projects as participants' attempts to exorcise generational constructs.

The Third Person Effect

Resistance through the Third Person Effect expands on Davison's (1983) third person perceptual hypothesis. This hypothesis discusses the way in which individuals often perceive persuasive messages in mass communication as having more impact on others than him or herself. In this sense, this project appropriates the Third Person Effect to illustrate participants constructing messages as correct and accurate for others, but exempting themselves. Interestingly, resistance through the Third Person Effect was often extended to those which the individual works with – notably however this was applied more to those which the participants worked with closely, and less to others at the organization.

In the Third Person Effect, a large number of participants would acknowledge generations and construct generational messages, however often prefaced or supplemented by "I don't think that I fit into the stereotypes". This application of the Third Person effect was often apparent through discussions of the concept of Stimulation. In reference to discussion circulating through Mosbius Designs at the time surrounding laziness and Millennials, Jack noted his personal dislike for such messages.

> The whole laziness one, I'm the complete opposite I feel I'm quite driven and I'm trying to get established like early on, so it's easier later on and I also go round complaining about hard work. Like, I mean sure, I feel I work pretty hard, and I know

you get results from putting in hard work like regardless, so

that's fine.

This conscious distancing, or rather perception of distance, between oneself and conceptualizations of generational categorizations is exhibited succinctly via Brad's treatment of the notion of Millennials after constructing several messages, "It's just sort of, I guess a general label. I don't have any particular attachments to it, I don't really identify with it necessarily".

Such stipulations illustrate the Third Person effect more clearly through participants' processes of distancing themselves from the messages which they constructed. Max discussed the messages surrounding Millennials that he was 'aware of' as partially correct and accurate, but again, not applicable to him. Similarly, Abby discussed the way in which she felt that some messages were applicable to some Millennials. While this could plausibly be interpreted as simple uncertainty, I would suggest that this illustrates not only conscious attempts to distance oneself from the messages about Millennials but an attempt to distance oneself from the application of these messages to Millennials.

The Third Person effect was also applied more broadly by participants, often extending to their colleagues and to their organization as a whole. A number of participants discussed the way in which while these messages were correct, they did not apply to those at Mosbius Designs. Often this was noted as being intentional, that Ted was careful in his selection process for prospective employees – or rather that the organization itself only caters for more mature/talented Millennials. While this may be true to some degree, this exhibition of the Third Person effect as it displays the way in which participants do not perceive themselves and those close to them to be as susceptible as the 'masses'.

Jen discussed this again in terms of the theme of Stimulation, that the messages which exist about Millennials are "definitely not" reflective or apparent of the Millennials at Mosbius Designs, "our guys definitely have different expectations and they are a lot more passionate than other organizations I've been in because it's

kind of the environment, it's fostered". Sam felt that [his] work place is probably a special case being an IT company".

The Third Person effect was a strategy of resistance very prevalent amongst participants, as with the strategy of Dismissal. The vast majority of both Millennial and non-Millennial participants articulated a number of generational messages and constructs but noted how they were not reflective of themselves. In this vein, participants would also discuss how said constructs and messages were in addition not reflective of Millennials at Mosbius Designs. This points towards a counter-intuitive proposition: if archetypal generational characteristics are always to be found elsewhere, where exactly can one eventually locate them empirically?

Decline Metaphor

Resistance through the Decline Metaphor examines a number of participants' perception of a progressive deterioration with each subsequent generation. Resistance through the Decline Metaphor was often evidenced by participants' construction of generational messages, but they would also state that any given generation would say the same of those which follow.

The Decline Metaphor was often founded on two assumptions. The first assumption is that each generation makes negative criticisms of those which follow. The second assumption is that there is indeed a deterioration of work ethic, values, and behaviours with each generation due to societal forces. This was also exhibited in discussions of generational difference, that due to factors such as this deterioration, adjacent generations integrate with far more ease than those more distant. Heather illustrated resistance through the Decline Metaphor after constructing a number of generational messages.

> I just think every older generation, doesn't matter if its xyz
> whatever, probably looks back at the younger generation and
> thinks the same thing. It maybe not particular to gen Millenials
> or whatever its just older generation versus younger

generation and into their 30s and 40s and look at younger

generations then they'll probably say the same thing.

Interestingly, while many participants discussed this deterioration, it was treated as a belief that each generation had about those which follow, not necessarily as a truth, or even that previous generations did indeed have better work ethic, values, or behaviour. The Decline Metaphor was in general a far less commonly exhibited strategy of resistance; however, it appeared in many instances as a core assumption. When initially asked what associations, perceptions, or understandings he had of Millennials, Tony stated that he felt that many he had were 'the same as any one generation would have looking at the next'.

I think that they are the first generation to be younger than me

so I think all of the class things that an older generation would

think about young folk, they are silly and naive, and,

superficial and uh, overly image conscious, and things like

that.

The Decline Metaphor is interesting in that a number of the messages that were constructed by participants would focus on the positives. Regardless of the positive or negative applications of constructed generational messages (i.e. Technology or Stimulation) it was an almost unanimous assumption that there was either actual deterioration with subsequent generations, or at least, that each generation wants to believe that there is such deterioration and looks to be critical. Arguably, it could be suggested that this assumption on the part of participants is at the very least indicative of participants' perceptions and understandings of generations entirely.

Stereotyping versus Individualization

Throughout the interviews it became apparent that participants almost unanimously understood generations as 'stereotypes' and the construction of generational messages as stereotyping. While broadly speaking the construction of

generational messages into meaningful frameworks could be understood as stereotyping, it is important to note that in the context of these interviews, stereotyping or simply the endorsement of stereotypes was treated by participants as a negative or ignorant behaviour. Many it seemed were attempting to illustrate that they possessed a more complex or deeper understanding of people, or rather that they "like to treat people as individuals". Furthermore, some participants such as Sam felt that because he extended this depth of understanding to bodies which represented them or of which they are a stakeholder, in this instance Mosbius Designs was noted as taking a 'modern approach' by generating a 'contemporary workplace' that "avoids typical stereotypes".

Participants' negotiation of stereotypes versus the individual was a dialogue that carried throughout several interviews and a core component of both Synchronic and Diachronic resistance. It is important to understand that this behaviour illustrates resistance as partial in participants' discussion.

Section Summary

This section has illustrated the strategies that participants adopted in the resistance of generational messages. Constructed through axial coding, the themes of Dismissal, the Third Person Effect, and the Decline Metaphor all offer insight to participants' interpretations and relationship with the messages in question. The theme of Dismissal for example reveals a somewhat antagonistic relationship of direct rejection in the sense that participants are actively seeking to identify fallacies and inaccuracies. The themes of the Third Person Effect and the Decline Metaphor however reveal a great deal more engagement and negotiation. The Third Person Effect may illustrate that a participant has identified information which he or she believe to be true but exempts themself and their colleagues as being above such generalization. Similarly the Decline Metaphor illustrates negotiation in the sense of questioning generalization and categorization entirely – cited as a drive for one group to be critical of those who follow.

Chapter Summary

Ultimately both means through which resistance was interpreted by this study understand the mutual implication of construction and resistance. I have attempted to highlight discursive practice through the illustration of both the form (strategies) and function (partiality) of resistance of participants' resistance. Within the workplace generational messages are resisted primarily in two forms: the disregard for, and engagement with generational messages. Those who disregard generational messages often do so based on the belief that they serve little purpose or hold little truth. Similarly, those who engage with generational messages feel the same, attempting to debunk generational messages as they too believe they serve little purpose or hold little truth. In either case, generational scholarship must look beyond the motives of disregard and engagement and instead frame both behaviours within the context of meaning negotiation. It should be noted that while some participants, believed that there was some, truth to some messages – not a single participant ever stated that they felt a generational message which they had encountered was entirely correct.

CHAPTER V - DISCUSSION

Studies such as this which examine generational constructs are of increasing importance due to the contradictory nature of current studies and the popularization of overwhelmingly negative accounts. Furthermore, for many the notion of a generation is a concrete one, upon which many organizational decisions are made. Given this situation, it is of the utmost importance that we as scholars place a great deal of precedence on increasing and popularizing the prominence and accessibility of balanced, empirical examination of generational constructs. As a practice however, generational research must first address several issues which impair the progress of the field.

Primarily, there is a great deal of anecdotal data which exists in an established echo chamber of popular media and in the minds of consumers of such texts. Many scholars have suggested that the presence of these messages is not innocuous and can have various, very real impacts on the induction and development of Millennials in the workplace. It is also apparent that a somewhat incestuous dynamic was established early in the decade between popular texts and academic literature. Millennial literature quickly became dominated by a polarized praise/criticize dichotomy where Millennials were treated by some as the next great generation, while heralded by others as those that would bring the dissolution of the world as we know it. While there are few comprehensive empirical surveys of Millennials, most of those which have taken place illustrate the inaccuracy and the fallacy of many popular accounts, by indicating minimal rather than pronounced generational differences. It is opportune in the case of Millennials that we have the opportunity to set a course for future research. As such, this study has taken a step back from existing bodies of work and set forth a new trajectory for generational inquiry. This chapter will discuss this study, its findings, the theoretical and pragmatic implications, and conclude with the consideration of future research.

This project first posed the following research question; *What generational messages are constructed within the context of the workplace?* While many previous studies have been framed as investigating generational differences, the employment

of quantitative methods have strictly categorized and limited responses to pre-existing, and imposed, generational rubrics. This study instead observed the ways in which participants would construct generational messages as active participants in processes of meaning negotiation. I believe that this open-ended methodology provides results far more relevant to both scholarly theory and management practice as participants' responses were not bound by already established constructs.

This study generated five themes through axial coding which categorized the way in which participants constructed generational messages. The first theme is Technology, which constructs Millennials as Prensky's (2001) Digital Natives. This theme illustrates perceptions of Millennials' intuitive and intimate knowledge with artefacts and systems of the information age. The second theme is that of Voice, which constructs Millennials' need to be heard. It further illustrates Millennials' understandings of the role, purpose, and impact of communication infrastructure. Third, the theme of Informality highlights Millennials' desire to engineer an amiable working environment by reducing social and power distances with colleagues. Fourth, Flexibility as a theme draws attention to Millennials as proponents of equifinality. Equifinality recognizes that a final state can be reached from an initial state through numerous paths or trajectories. The fifth and final theme is Stimulation, which highlights the intrinsic motivators of Millennials. Throughout this project, these themes have been expanded and understood as components of discursive practices that construct generational characteristics instead of innate, pre-ordained characteristics of Millenials themselves. In doing so, this research attempts to avoid the notion of what generational difference *is* and instead examine how generational differences are both constructed and perceived. The themes taken together reveal the hegemonic character of popular and academic characteristics of Millenials. Hegemonic in the sense that they are perceived/imagined by many as widely accepted 'truths' solidified by a great body of data. Several of the themes apparent in both Millenial and non-Millenial discourse at Mosbius resonated with both popular and academic characterisations of Millenials. This was most apparent in the identification of technological aptitude as a defining feature of Millenials.

As the construction of meaning was seen as a process of negotiation between participants, the second research question was posed; *How are generational messages resisted within the workplace?* This question was addressed in the categorization of two apparent forms of resistance. First, 'All Resistance as Partial' describes the way in which forms of resistance were apparent as discursive practice. Second, 'Resistance Strategies' highlight methods of resistance exhibited by participants. This study quickly found that the construction and resistance of generational messages were mutually implicated – in that resistance was not philosophically viable as a standalone practice. In this sense, generational messages, as with any system of understanding, were not "not neutral sites of meaning, but rather, contested fields where meaning is produced, reproduced, negotiated, and resisted" (Murphy, 1998, p. 500). Similarly, this research refutes the notion of single sources of power in the construction of generational messages, in that Millennials do not simply operate within the bounds of organizational/industry perception and are constantly renegotiating meaning in the minds of colleagues.

Theoretical Implications

While some scholars believe that the confusing and contradictory body of knowledge in research in Millenials is due to the aforementioned lack of empirical and cross-sectional data, this research, instead suggests that this state is more indicative of a principal, flawed assumption. Thus far Millennial, and generational research, has almost entirely been operating on the premise that generation is comprehensive of systemic similarities evident throughout all those born in a given time frame. This research calls into question the efficacy of the term 'generation' (or generational monikers) to encapsulate or conceptualize so many under a single cultural banner. Principally outlined as birth cohorts who carry the impress of their contemporary social heritage (Mannheim, 1923; Ryder, 1965) – this research would suggest that upon the basis of the complex and fragmented state of society, the monolithic construct of generations, while convenient, is not a suitable measure or descriptor of such a heterogeneous group. The study establishes that generations are better understood as processes of meaning and idea construction as opposed to

legitimate descriptors of innate categorical difference between people. The dissimilar findings throughout popular and academic research are therefore of little wonder. While it is plausible to construct similarities between these birth cohorts, as scholars we must enforce that as many, if not more, dissimilarities will be apparent in these cohorts.

In this light it becomes pertinent to further address the status of generations as hegemonic discourse which is a concrete and infallible descriptor of its member's abilities, tendencies, and behaviours. Therefore we must assert that ostensibly established generational differences are just that, externally prescribed, and not necessarily indicative or reflective of guidelines on individuals. This in turn ushers a number of new conversations that must be had, such as the treatment of popular versus academic literature and the praise/criticize dichotomy. Given that processes of construction and resistance are mutually implicated, then, we must resist the temptation to simply disregard the content of popular text and instead view it as a component of meaning negotiation. As such, scholars should therefore transcend the discussion of the flaws of popular text, avoid reproducing reified generational distinctions and instead look at the various sites in which Millennial discourse is evident and what impact this may or may not be having.

Pragmatic Implications

Throughout this chapter I have argued that birth cohort generations as we currently conceptualize them are not necessarily culturally defining given the fragmentation of society. This section will outline observed differences and discuss their relevance to management practice. It is important to note however that this data can not necessarily be extrapolated globally. As such, this section will examine these differences alongside others in the context of the way in which individuals negotiate generational messages which as a process should be considered as a core component of workplace dynamic by managers. Given the way in which I have framed the construction of generational messages under five themes, this section will discuss the pragmatic implications of this project in relation to these themes. I will restrict my recommendations to managers at Mosbius.

Technology

It is important for managers to remember that as many Millennials are constructed as Digital Natives, they may be steered towards approaching problems from a technological standpoint. This should not in itself be a point of criticism given that for most of their lives, technology has been the channel through which problems are solved. While Millennials will also possess technical skills in the usage of new and digital technologies, many do not. This study identified several Millennials who were frustrated with the expectation of technological know-how placed on them. In this sense Millennials' technological aptitude must be understood as an appendage or extension of oneself in reaching goals, not the goal itself.

Voice

Given the importance of Voice in participant accounts, it is important for management structures to ensure that at the very least, a platform exists for Millennials to voice their opinions and communicate with colleagues and managers. Furthermore, such structures will lead to participants feeling more connected/committed to the organization and staff as an integral component to the business itself. A platform as suggested by this project would serve as an open forum in company meetings, or even time in social organizations. Employment of tokenistic methods such as emails or suggestion boxes should be avoided as they will serve only to accelerate frustrations. Managers must ensure that they communicate on a personal and professional level in a way that is perceived as a genuine interest in their perspective.

Informality

The suggestion for addressing this study's notion of informality is not so much creating procedure so much as it is removing it. Small factors such as allowing junior members to address senior members on a first name basis will go a long way in attaining commitment to the organization. Furthermore, promoting informal situations such as having lunch with junior employees or speaking personally in

social settings will quickly garner their support and dedication. Younger participants in this study, voiced the importance of being friends first and colleagues second in a productive workplace.

Flexibility

Managers and supervisors must in many ways fill the role and operate as the workplace 'helicopter parent'. While it is important to ensure that expectations are clearly outlined in terms of input, output, process, and behaviour - young and junior employees must be allowed the opportunity (and time where necessary) to explore options and multiple avenues. While an experienced employee or manager may feel they know 'the best way' to go about a task, allowing junior members to explore multiple avenues to complete tasks will enable them to either find a better way or at the very least increase workplace collegiality. To clarify, this is not to say managers should become like parents – but play a similar role in supervising, allowing employees to make mistakes and learn for themselves.

Stimulation

Stimulation as discussed throughout this thesis, can be achieved through observation of the four previously discussed themes and through simple measures such as ensuring involvement from the ground up on a project and genuinely taking their input into consideration. Both of these allow all employees to contribute and be an integral part of the team. In addition, it is important that Millennials are working within reward based structures which focus on performance reviews, KPIs, and milestone markers. This can be achieved at nearly no cost by reducing wages by a small factor such as $4,000 and instead offering quarterly 'bonuses' of $1000 – Millennials may become far more engaged and dedicated to the organization and their work. Senior staff and managers throughout this study relayed the effectiveness of goal-oriented behaviour in the workplace.

It is important to take into account all five themes explained throughout and ensure that measures are taken to correspond with organizational requirements and

employee needs. This is not to suggest that a special case needs to be made for all Millennials in all situations. In general, it is problematic to draw distinctions between how hard employees are willing to work based on their generational cohort.

Limitations

It is important to keep in mind that the scope of this study was relatively small. Undertaken in one of New Zealand's largest cities, in a single organization - it is nigh impossible nor even desirable to extend the conclusions of this project as to Millennials globally. However I believe that this study can be juxtaposed with a great deal of current scholarship, illustrating that while generational differences do exist, they are not as vast as those that popular media would have us believe, and that generations are more similar than different.

A second limitation in the sense of scope is the size of the organization and the industry. Mosbius Designs, like most firms in New Zealand, can be categorized as a small to medium enterprise with around 50 employees based in a single office; a relatively new organization in the IT sector; with generally young management. It would be interesting to examine culturally differences outside of IT and in an organization that is older and more established. However I believe that a great deal of research thus far has principally gathered its data from such organizations and so this study may highlight new differences in cultures. The study is qualitative and in this sense, it is has not gathered the quantitative data that many academics suggest is required from generational studies. While qualitative however, this study has not framed its questions within the context of generational difference as many previous studies have.

Future Research

Three major factors have contributed to the discussion in this chapter which demand further exploration. First, there remains a lack of empirical and cross sectional data which needs to be addressed. Second, there is a hegemonic perspective of generational constructs as quantifiable and realistic measures of difference. Third I

believe that we need to shift to a more discursive perspective in understanding construction, resistance and negotiation in generational messages.

However, I believe that ultimately the notion of approaching such a vast array of people with concepts derived from a global mean aggregate of data is inherently flawed and ineffectual. The complexity and fragmented state of modern society suggests that the monolithic notion of birth cohort generations as described by Ryder (1965) simply do not, and cannot effectively serve the function for which they are intended.

Where in the past management studies have approached birth cohorts as the best measure for managing cultural difference, I suggest that the time in which a person grows up is no longer the predominant cultural indicator. Ryder (1965) states a birth cohort as adequate as it best understands the unavoidable cultural impress of society during their development. In the age of information and perpetual connectivity, I believe that a person is better comprehended by the cultural capital which he or she chooses to consume. In this sense, the notion of a compulsory, birth-cohort generational placement is secondary to contextual and complex cultural influences. Ultimately, while convenient, birth-cohort generations constructed by a mean aggregate of understanding, no longer serve purpose as prominent descriptors or signifiers to abilities, behaviours, and tendencies. We must instead fashion contextual and dynamic strategies for examining culturally informed generational differences in workplace, s seeking to better understand social individuals through their own choices.

APPENDICIES

Appendix A

Participant Information Sheet

Waikato Management School
Te Raupapa

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Project Title:

Management of Millenials: Culture and the Next Generation in the Workplace.

Project Purpose:

Millenials or Generation Y (those born between 1980-2000) make up the fastest growing demographic within the working populace, and are set to remain so over the next 20 years. There has been a relatively small amount of academic examination of this group; there has however been a great deal of anecdotal information put forward by popular press. This information has by in large been negative, and it has been only in the last few years that more analytical information has been put forward. There have however been only a handful of studies that have taken place in New Zealand. This project has to primary goals. First it aims to understand what perceptions exist about Millenials, and in turn how Millenials perceive themselves. Second, the project seeks to examine the ways in which Millenials negotiate the perceptions that exist within corporate culture.

Project Contacts:

Researcher - Steven Hitchcock: sdh10@waikato.ac.nz

Supervisor – Dr. Shiv Ganesh: sganesh@waikato.ac.nz

What's involved for Participants:

Participants will be asked to take part in a single interview with the researcher that will take between 30 and 60 minutes. This interview can be scheduled at your convenience, at any stage over the following weeks to ensure minimal disruption to your activities. This interview will be unstructured, based on an interview guide seeking only the opinions of interviewees.

All information collected will be one-on-one and absolutely confidentially. The interviews will be recorded, however these recordings will be heard only by the researcher and participants will be unidentifiable, and furthermore there will be no written record of names or descriptions in any shape or form published at any point. The recordings and any notes take will be stored securely by the researcher alone. Each participant will be referred to as an arbitrary number for any project purposes.

Information gathered from the interviews will be evaluated alongside information gathered from other researchers worldwide, and produced in the form of a thesis which will be made available to all participants upon the projects conclusion. Prior to the commencement of writing, each participant will be emailed their transcribed interview, and have the ability to remove or clarify anything they so wish.

Request for Participants:

If you wish to participate, please email myself at sdh10@waikato.ac.nz by at your earliest convenience, alongside a time/date that suits you. Alternatively, please complete and return the attached form.

If you require more information before you decide whether to participate, feel free to email me at any stage or my supervisor (address above). If you decide to participate,

you have the ability to opt out at any stage, for any reason, with no explanation required. Simply email myself, with 'opt out' in the subject line.

Thank you for your time. Again, feel free to email, or speak to me at any stage with any questions.

Appendix B

Interview Questions

1. Have you heard the term 'Millennial generation?' what does it mean to you? *(If not, preface and explain generations as commonly understood)*

2. Can you tell me what you think are some popular beliefs about Millennials in New Zealand? *(Probe - examine specifics raised - how do they deal with politics, culture, work, families, etc)*

3. What messages do you get about Millennials at work? *(probe- what do people say about your age?)(Probe – from where do these messages derive?)*

4. How do these compare with perceptions about Millennials that you think exist overall in NZ *(Probe – if they clash, then why?)*

5. How do you personally feel about these messages and values? Do they apply to you? If so, why? If not, why not? Can you give me some examples? *(probe – do you feel that you have been impacted by these perceptions? Did exposure to these perceptions lead you to alter your behaviour in any way?)*

6. Are there any specific characteristics which are associated with Millennials? *Probe – do you believe that these associations are correct/accurate?)*

7. What does it mean to be a Millennial? *(Probe – how do you believe that the time that you've grown up in as affected you?)*

8. What do you believe that Millennials can or do bring to a workplace?

9. Do you believe that an organization, and in turn its employees, are impacted by the presence of Millennials? If so, how? *(Probe – ascertain whether this a reaction to Millennials specifically, or simply younger employees in general?)*

10. How do you think Millennials should be managed in your company? *(probe – do you think this is feasible in most organizations? – how do you think this would impact non-Millennial employees?)*

11. In what capacity do you interact with Millennials?

12. *[If not raised thus far]* How do you feel about Millennials workplace behaviour and work ethic *(Probe – does this clash with that of non-Millennials?)*

13.   How well do Millennials integrate themselves and operate within the of an organization? [*attempt to discuss formal and informal dynamics where feasible*] (*probe – are they able to integrate themselves into the structures and identify what is expected of them?*)

14.   Do you believe that Millennials differ from other generations, and if so, how? (*Probe – do you believe that you or members of your generation were different at that point in your career or age?*)

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

Anonymous. (2008). Bridging the Gaps: How to Transfer Knowledge in Today's
Multigenerational Workplace. *Research Technology Management, 51(6),* p.
69-71.

Anonymous (2011). Is Generation Y The Root of All Evil? *Leadership Management
Australiasia.* Retrieved Febuary 5, 2011 from http://tiny.cc/f8t00

Anonymous. (2008). The 'Trophy Kids' Go to Work. *The Wall Street Journal.*
Retrieved January 16, 2011 from http://tiny.cc/bcc1i

Ashcraft, K. (2005). Resistance Through Consent?: Occupational Identity,
Organizational Form, and the Maintenance of Masculinity Among
Commerical Airline Pilots. *Management Communication Quarterly, 19(1),* p.
67-91.

Asthana, A. (2008). They Don't Live for Work…They Work to Live. *The Obsever.*
Retrieved December 1, 2011 from http://tiny.cc/mpxla

Barker, James R. (1993). Tightening the iron cage: Concertive control in self-
managing teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 38*(3), 408.

Bell, E. E. (2008). Exploring Employee Perception of the Work Environment Along
Generational Lines. *Performance Improvement, 47(9),* p. 35-45

Bevil, S. & Bracy, C. (2009). Multigenerational Workplaces: Tips for Success. *Allied
International Conferences: Academy of Organizational Culture and
Communications Conflict, 14(1),* p. 1.

Burg, B., & Mann, J. (2008). Giving It Your All: Five Principles for Creating a
Culture of Excellence. *The Journal for Quality and Participation, 31(2),* 20-
24,40. Retrieved January 16, 2011, from ABI/INFORM Global. (Document
ID: 1545149991).

Brookmeyer, L. (2010). Get Over it Millennials: You're Not Entitled to Anything. *Aol Jobs.* Retrieved February 4 2011 from http://tiny.cc/vd854

Bustillos, M. (2010). The Boomers Agree: The Lazy Millennials Want to Be Jobless. *The Awl.* Retrienved December 14, 2011 from http://tiny.cc/w2lxf

Cafolla, L. (2009, February). Balancing act: Short-term performance or long-term vision? *China Staff, 15(2), 2-4.* Retrieved December 1, 2010, from ABI/INFORM Global. (Document ID: 1654961791).

Carey, W., P. (2008). Millennials in the Workplace: R U Ready? Knowledge@ W. P. Carey: *Human Resources.* Retrieved October 20, 2010 from http://tiny.cc/h71fl

Cennamo, L., & Gardner, D. (2008). Generational Differences in Work Values, Outcomes, and Person-Organization Values Fit. *Journal of Managerial Psycology, 23(8),* p. 891.

Clark, L. (2008). The Graduate Divas: Bosses Mourn Arrival of Generation Y, The Graduate Divias Who Want it All. *Daily Mail.* Retrieved October 29, 2010 from http://tiny.cc/f09bh

Collins, J. (1998). Why we must keep Baby Boomers working. *New Zealand Business, 12(8),* p.53.

Collinson, D., L. (1996). Breaking the Silence: On Men, Masculinities, and Management. *Men as Managers, Managers as Men: Critical Perspectives on Men, Maculinities and Managements*, p. 1-24.

Cheyney, G., Christianson, L., Zorn, T., & Ganesh, S. (2010). Organizational Communication in an Age of Globalization. Love Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

Cheyney, G., & Nadeson, M. (2008). Forum Conclusion: A Response to These Essays and a Prologue to Further Investigations. *Management Communication Quarterly, 22*, p. 17-151.

Cheyney, G., Zorn, T., Planalp, S., & Lair, D. (2008). Meaningful Work and Personal/Social Well-Being. *Communication Yearbook 32, p. 138-185.*

D'Amato, A., & Herzfeldt., R. (2008). Learning orientation, organizational commitment and talent retention across generations :A study of European managers. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 23*(8), 929-953. Retrieved July 15, 2011, from ABI/INFORM Global. (Document ID: 1591442701).

Davison, W. P. (1983). The Third-Person Effect in Communication. *Public Opinion Quarterly, 47*(1), p. 1-15

Dries, N., Pepermans, R., & De Kerpel, E., (2008). Exploring four generations' beliefs about career :Is "satisfied" the new "successful"?. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 23*(8), 907-928. Retrieved July 15, 2011, from ABI/INFORM Global. (Document ID: 1591442691).

Deal, J., Altman, D., & Rogelberg, S. (2010). Millennials at Work: What We Know and What We Need to Do (If Anything). *Journal of Business and Psychology, 25(2),* 191-199. Retrieved January 16, 2011, from ABI/INFORM Global. (Document ID: 2033951331).

De Hauw, S., & De Vos, A. (2010). Millennialls' Career Perspective and Contract Expectations: Does the Recession Lead to Lowered Expectations? *Journal of Business Psycology. Springer Link, 25(2),* p. 293-302.

du Gay, P. (2004). Against 'Enterprise' (but not against 'enterprise' for that would make no sense). *Organization, 11(1),* p. 37-57.

Downing, K. (2006). Next GenerationL What leaders Need to Know about Millennials. *Leadership in Action, 26(3),* p. 3-6.

Dwyer, R. J. (2008). Prepare for the impact of the multi-generational worforce! *Transforming Government People, 3(2),* p. 202-110.

Fairhurst, D., & Shaw, S. (2008). Engaging a New Generation of Graduates. *Education and Training, 50(5),* p. 366.

Frandsen, B. M. (2009). Leading by Recognizing Generational Differences. *Long-Term Living, 58(2)*, p. 34-36.

Ganesh, S. (2009). Critical Organizational Communication. *Encylopedia of Communication Theory,* p. 226-230.

Ganesh, S. (2008), Organizational communication: Postmodern approaches. *The International Encyclopedia of Communication*, p. 3433-3438.

Ganesh, S., Zoller, H., & Cheney, G. (2005). Transforming Resistance, Broadening Our Boundaries: Critical Organizational Communication Meets Globalization from Below. *Communication Monographs, 72*(2), 169-191.

Gerds, L. (2006). Millennials: Worst Generation in the Workplace? *Bloomberg Business Week.* Retrieved March 4, 2011 from http://tiny.cc/ujwcd

Glass, A. (2007). Understanding Generational Differences for Competitive Success *Industry Commercial Training, 39(2),* p. 98.

Gordern, R., L. (1969). Interviewing: Strategy, Techniques, and Tactics. Homewood, IL: Dorsey.

Gursoy, D., Maier, T., & Chi, C. (2008) Generational Differences: An examination of work values and generational gaps in the hospitality workforce. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 192(6),* p. 448 – 458.

Gray, R. (2008). Generation Y – Time to Grow Up. *HRMAGANIZE.co.uk.* Retrieved 4 December 2010 from http://tiny.cc/dm938

Gregory S Larson, & Phillip K Tompkins. (2005). Ambivalence and Resistance: A Study of Management in a Concertive Control System. *Communication Monographs, 72*(1), 1-21.

Harvey, P. (2010). As College Graduates Hit the Workforce, *So Do More Entitled-Minded Workers. University of New Hampshire: NewsWise. Retrieved April 6, 2011 from* http://tiny.cc/no4rs

Hill. R., P. (2002). Managing across generations in the 21st century: Important lessons from the ivory trenches. *Journal of Management Inquiry, 11(1),* 60-66. Retrieved December 11, 2010, from ABI/INFORM Global. (Document ID: 109399217).

Hickey, B. (2011). Baby Boomer Burden Starts. NZHerald.co.nz. Retrieved January 9, 2011, from nzherald.co.nz.

Hershatter, A., & Epstein, M. (2010). Millenials and the World of Work: An Organization and Management Perspective. *Journal of Business Psychology, 25(2),* p. 211-223.

Jackson, M. (2007). Fluidity, Promiscuity, and Mash Ups: New Concepts for the Study of Mobility and Communication. *Communication Mongraphs,* 74(3), p. 408-413.

Jones, A. (2010). The Millennials: Generation Enlightened or Generation Lazy? *The Wall Street Journal.* Retrieved December 16, 2010 from http://tiny.cc/jl12t

Julie Jargon. (2010, October 13). At Starbucks, Baristas Told No More Than Two Drinks. *Wall Street Journal (Eastern Edition), p. B.1.* Retrieved November 21, 2010, from ABI/INFORM Global. (Document ID: 2160645671).

Jurkiewicz, C., L. (2000). Generation X and the Public Employee. *Public Personnel Management, 29(1),* p. 55-74.

Kärreman, D., & Alvesson, M. (2009). Resisting resistance: Counter-resistance, consent and compliance in a consultancy firm. *Human Relations, 62*(8), 1115.

Katz, D., & Kahn, R. (1978). Organizations and the Systems Concept. In *The Social Psychology of Organizations*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Kirby, E., & Krone, K. (2002). The policy exists but you can't really use it: Communication and structuration of work-family policies. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 30(1),* p. 50-77.

Kowske, B., Rasch, R., & Wiley, J. (2010). Millennials' (Lack of) Attitude Problem: An Empirical Examination of Generational Effects on Work Attitudes. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 25(2),* 265-279. Retrieved December 17, 2010, from ABI/INFORM Global. (Document ID: 2033951311).

Kristof, A., L. (1996). Person Organization Fit: An Integrative Review of its Conceptualizations, Measurement, and Implications. *Personnel Psychology, 49(1),* p 1-49.

Lindquist, T., M. (2008). Recruiting the Millenium Gernation: The CPA. *The CPA Journal, 78 (8),* p. 56.

Lindolf, R., & Taylor, B. (2011). Qualitative Communication Research Methods 3rd Ed. Sage: CA, USA.

Mackay, K., Gardner, D., & Forsyth, S. (2008). Generational Differences at Work: Introduction and Overview. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 23(8),* p. 857-861.

Mannheim, K. (1952). The problem of generations. In Essays on the sociology of knowledge, p. 276–322. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd

Mayfieldm M. (2009, September). Sparking worker creativity: cultures where garden variety creativity can flourish. *Development and Learning in Organizations, 23(5),* p.10-14. Retrieved December 14, 2011, from ABI/INFORM Global. (Document ID: 1871994181).

McGlynn, A. (2005, December). Teaching Millenials, Our Newest Cultural Cohort. *The Education Digest, 71*(4), 12-16. Retrieved July 19, 2011, from Academic Research Library. (Document ID: 940541831)

Meister, J., & Wilyerd, K. (2010). Mentoring Millennials. *Harvard Business Review, 88(5).*

Mullholland, K. (1996). Entrepreneuralism, Masculinities and the Self-Made Man. *Men as Managers, Managers as Men*: Critical Perspectives on Men, Maculinities and Managements, p. 123-149.

Mosher, D. (2011). High Wired: Does Addictive Internet Use Restructure the Brain? *Scientific American,* Retrieved June 2, 2011 from http://tiny.cc/rmk1f

Mumby, D. (1993). Critical Organization Communication Studies: The Next 10 Years. *Communication Monographs,* 60(1), p. 18-25.

Mumby, D. (2005). Theorizing Resistance in Organization Studies. *Management Communication Quarterly, 19(1),* p. 19-45.

Mumby, D. (2006). Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches. *The International Encyclopedia of Communication*, : Blackwell Publishing, p. 3427-3433.

Murphy, A., G. (1998). Hidden transcripts of flight attendant resistance. *Management Communication Quarterly : McQ, 11*(4), 499-535.

Nadeson, M., & Tretheway, A. (2000). Performing the Enterprising Subject: Gendered Strategies for Success. *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 20(3), p. 223-250.

Neuborne, E. (Febuary, 1999). Generation Y. Business Week. Retrieved October 27, 2010, from ABI/INFORM Global.

Nicholas, A., J. (2009). Generational Perceptions: Workers and Consumers. Journal of Business and Economics Research. ABI INFROM: Global, 7(10), p. 47-52.

Ng, E., Schweitzer, L., & Lyons, S. (2010). New Generation, Great Expectations: A Field Study of the Millennial Generation. *Journal of Business and*

Psychology, 25(2), 281-292. Retrieved March 9, 2010, from ABI/INFORM Global. (Document ID: 2033951221).

Patton, M., Q. (2003). Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pekala, N. (2001). Conquering the Generational Divide. *Journal of Property Management. Chicago, 66(6),* p. 30).

Poomina, S., C. (2009). Motivating Through Satisfaction: An Ongoing Effort of HR in Organizations. IUP Journal of Management Research. Hyperbad, 8(5), p. 26.

Putnam, L., Grant, D., Michelson, G., Cutcher, L. (2005). Discourse and Resistance: Targets, Practices, and Consequences. *Management Communication Quarterly, 19(1),* p. 5-19.

Reed, R. (1996), Entrepreneurialism and paternalism in Australian management: a gender critique of the 'self-made' man", in Collinson, D., Hearn, J. (Eds),Sage, London, pp.99-122.

Ruby, P., & Decety, J. (2003). What you Believe Versus What you Think They Believe: A Nueroimaging Study of Conceptual Perspective-Taking. *European Journal of Neruroscience, 17(11).* P. 2475-2480.

Ryder, N. B. (1965). The cohort as a concept in the study of social change. American Sociological Review, 30, 843–861.

Sadaghiani, K., & Myers, K. (2010). Millenials in the Workplace: A Communication Perspective on Millenials' Organizational Relationships and Performance. *Journal of Business Psychology, 25(2),* p. 225-238.

Safer, M. (2007). The "Millennials" are Coming. *60 Minutes* [Television Show]. USA: CBS News.

Schaefer, Z., Conrad, C., Cheyney, G., May, S., & Ganesh, S. (2010). Economic
         Justice and Communication Ethics: Considering Multiple Points of
         Intersection. *The Handbook of Communication Ethics,* p. 432 -452.

Shaw, I. (1999). Qualitative Evaluation. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Shaw, S. & Fairhurst, D. (2008). Engaging a New Generation of Graduates.
         Education + Training, 50(5),

Silberman, D., & Marvasti, A., B. (2008). Doing Qualitative Research: A
         Comprehensive Guide. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Statistics New Zealand (2008). Labour Market Statistics 2008. Wellington Statistics:
         New Zealand.

Stern, S. (2005). The New Generation Game. Human Resources. London, p. 28.

Stefano, A. (2010). Spoiled and Entitled: Millennials as a Whole, or Just a Bad Egg?
         TNGG. Retrieved May 14, 2011 from http://tiny.cc/t2ms7

Stuart, A., & Lyons, S. (2008, March). Millennials in the Workplace: Understanding
         and capitalizing on the connected generation. *Viewpoint.*

Sujansky, J., & Feri-Reed. J. (2009). Keeping the Millennials: Why Companies Are
         Losing Billions to This Generation – and What to do About It. John Wiley &
         Sons.

Sullivan, S. E., Forret, M. L., Carraher, S. M., & Mainiero, L. A. (2009). Using the
         Kaleidoscope career model to examine generational differences in work
         attitudes. *Career Development International, 14(3),* 284-302.

Teicher, D. (2010, November). 'Millennials Are Morons' trend stories are bad
         journalism and a slight to an entire generation. *Advertising Age, 81(40),* 14.
         Retrieved December 1, 2011, from ABI/INFORM Global. (Document
         ID: 2196778561).

Thomas, R., & Lindlof (1995). Qualitative Communication Research Methods. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Tulgan, B. (2009). Not Everyone Gets a Trophy: How to Manage Generation Y. USA. CA: Jossey-Bass.

Twenge, J., M. (2010). A Review of Empirical Evidence of Generational Differences in Work Attitudes. *Journal of Business Psychology, 25(2),* p. 201-210.

Twenge, J., M., & Campbell, S., M. (2008). Generational differences in psychological traits and their impact on the workplace. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 23*(8), 862-877. Retrieved July 15, 2011, from ABI/INFORM Global. (Document ID: 1591442661).

Twenge, J. M., Konrath, S., Foster, J. D., Campbell, W. K., & Bushman, B. J. (2008). Egos inflating over time: A crosstemporal meta-analysis of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory. *Journal of Personality, 76,* p. 875–902.

Tyler, K. (2007). The Tethered Generation. *HRM Magazine, 52(5),* p. 40.

Bobby White. (2008, March 4). The New Workplace Rules: No Video-Watching. *Wall Street Journal (Eastern Edition), p. B.1*. Retrieved October 22, 2010, from ABI/INFORM Global. (Document ID: 1438774121).

Woodruffe, C. (2009). Generation Y? TrainingJournal.com, p. 31.

Wayne, T. (2010). Why Etiquette Schools are Thriving: The fact is, today's young professionals need to be told how to dress and act. *Bloomberg Business Week.* Retrieved February 5, 20101 from http://tiny.cc/ersdk

Wong, M., Gardiner, E., Lang, W., & Coulon. L. (2008). Generational differences in personality and motivation :Do they exist and what are the implications for the workplace?. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 23*(8), 878-890. Retrieved July 15, 2011, from ABI/INFORM Global. (Document ID: 1591442671).

Yeaton, K. (2008). Recruiting and Managing the 'Why?' Generation: Gen Y. The
   CPA. *The CPA Journal, 78(4),* p. 68.

Zemke, R., Raines, C. and Filipczak, B. (2000). Generations at Work: Managing the
   Clash of Veterans, Boomers, Xers, and Nexters in your Workplace. Amacom:
   New York, NY.

"ggwp"