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THE IMAGE OF AGING IN MEDIA AND MARKETING

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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THE IMAGE OF AGING IN MEDIA AND MARKETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2002

U.S. SENATE,
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:34 a.m., in room SD–628, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John Breaux (chairman of the Special Committee on Aging) presiding.

Present: Senators Breaux, Carper, Stabenow, and Craig.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN BREAUX, CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN. The Senate Committee on Aging will please come to order. Good morning, everyone. We are delighted that you all are attending our hearing this morning, the hearing on the image of aging in our media and our entertainment industries, dealing with image of aging, both in the media as an entertainment mode, as well as in the marketing of these entertainment programs.

I would like to thank all of our witnesses for being with us. I know a number have traveled a good distance to be here this morning. I want to especially thank Doris Roberts who we had the pleasure of meeting with last night. She is a special person who won an Emmy last year and has also been nominated for her second Emmy Award this year for her performances in the television series "Everybody Loves Raymond," which I will add I love as well, as do millions of Americans.

I also want to thank Senator Craig who will be joining us in just a moment to talk about the issue of ageism in the media. We have all sat through films in which a 60-something leading man is paired together with a 20-something leading lady. We have also seen older people mocked and younger people celebrated for the purposes of selling a product.

It is clear that entertainment, marketing and news industries value youth. What this hearing will address today is the fact that often the media's obsession with youth comes at the expense of older Americans. In fact, 75 percent of older consumers are dissatisfied with the marketing efforts that are directed at them, and often even avoid buying products whose ads are negative and stereotypical.

In the quest to target youth, the media and the marketing industries ignore the purchasing power and the preferences of millions of American baby boomers and seniors across our country, the pop-

ulation that incidentally controls about three-fourths of the wealth of our nation.

Statistics are disturbing from what our committee has learned. As an example, adults 65 and older comprise 13 percent of the U.S. population, but only 2 percent of the characters on prime time television. An example further is that 77 of the 122 prime time television series did not employ a single writer over the age of 50. Also, less than 10 percent of today's advertising in our media focuses on people over 50, although this is a group by the year 2040 will be 40 percent of the entire population of the United States of America.

Also, 50 and over adults buy 41 percent of all the new cars and 48 percent of all the luxury automobiles. Today 50-plus adults represent 80 percent of all luxury travel and spend 74 percent more on a typical vacation than Americans between the ages of 18 and 49. Older consumers, for example, are also spending three times the national average on health care products and services.

Many of the problems that older Americans face today are rooted in the fact that our society simply, I think, does not value older Americans as it should. As our witnesses will discuss today, negative images of aging in print, on television, and on the big screen affect how older Americans themselves prepare for their retirement, spend their money, maintain their physical health and interact with their family and their friends.

Just as it is wrong to stereotype and discriminate against people because of their race or their religion or their gender, so too is it wrong to stereotype and discriminate against people simply because they are older. Only through raising this awareness, this public awareness of the problem of ageism in the media, can we begin to address the greater societal implications of our aging population.

Now is the time to embrace aging and recognize the ways in which Americans of all ages are redefining aging and working to eliminate ageism and discrimination. I look forward to all of our witnesses commenting on these matters this morning.

We are delighted to welcome all of our panel of witnesses, and first, as I indicated, in referring to Ms. Doris Roberts, she is very familiar to us in her roles on television, in the media, on the big screen, Emmy Award winner, and I learned last night a very active person, not only on the screen, but also in this subject that we are talking about today. We thank her very much for taking the time right in the middle of shooting "Everybody Loves Raymond" to come all the way to this coast to share with us her thoughts, and Ms. Roberts, we welcome you and glad to hear from you.

STATEMENT OF DORIS ROBERTS, EMMY AWARD WINNING ACTRESS, "EVERYBODY LOVES RAYMOND," LOS ANGELES, CA

Ms. ROBERTS. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you very much for inviting me to talk with you about ageism. I am in my seventies, at the peak of my career, at the height of my earned income, and my tax contributions, I might add. When my grandchildren say that I rock, they are not talking about a chair.

Yet society considers me discardable. My peers and I are portrayed as dependent, helpless, unproductive and demanding rather than deserving. In reality, the majority of seniors are self-sufficient middle-class consumers with more assets than most young people and the time and talent to offer society.

This is not just a sad situation, Mr. Chairman. This is a crime. In the next 25 years, more than 115 million Americans will be 50 and over. They will become the largest older population in history. I am here to urge you to address the devastation, cost and loss that we as a nation suffer because of age discrimination.

Age discrimination negates the value of wisdom and experience, robs us of our dignity and denies us the chance to continue to grow, to flourish, and to become all that we are capable of being. We all know that medical advances have changed the length and the quality of our lives today, but we have not, however, changed our attitudes about aging or addressed the disabling myths that disempower us.

I would like the word "old" to be stricken from our vocabulary and replaced with the word "older." My contemporaries and I are denigrated as "old," old coots, old fogies, old codgers, old geezers, old hags, old timers and old farts.

In truth, the minute you are born, you are getting older, and the later years can be some of life's most productive and creative. For the last 100 years, the average age of the Nobel Prize winner is 65. Frank Gehry designed Seattle's hip new rock museum at the age of 70. Georgia O'Keefe was productive way into her eighties. Add to the list Hitchcock, Dickens, Bernstein, Fosse, Wright, Matisse, Picasso and Einstein, just to mention a few people who produced some of their best work when they would be considered over the hill by current standards.

The entertainment industry, these image makers, are the worst perpetrators of this bigotry. We must change the negative stereotypes of aging that exist in the media, and when I was a young woman, some of the most powerful and popular actresses were women way in their forties, women such as Joan Crawford, Bette Davis, Katherine Hepburn and Barbara Stanwyck, who continued to work, getting better and better in their craft as they got older, and many of my friends, talented actresses in the 40 to 60-year-old range, are forced to live on unemployment or welfare, because of the scarcity of roles for women in that age bracket.

A Screen Actor Guild's employment survey showed that there are three times as many roles for women under 40 as there are for women 40 years old and older, even though 42 percent of Americans are older than 40. This is why some of my spectacularly talented actress friends have been forced into humiliating positions of borrowing money to just meet their mortgage payments and health

insurance or begging me to see if there is a tiny part on "Everybody Loves Raymond."

It also explains why younger and younger actresses are visiting plastic surgeons; actresses in their 20's are getting Botox injections to prevent wrinkles from forming. Women start getting tummy tucks and face lifts in their thirties to forestall the day when the phone stops ringing.

When a woman hits the age of 40 in Hollywood, executives think she is too old. Well, I have got news for them. I have been fortunate to be one of a handful of actresses who has continued to work throughout my career, but it has not been easy. When I was in my forties, I heard of a great part on a new series called "Remington Steele." But I was not considered for it because I was thought to be too old, and because I was very persistent and knew the casting director, I read for it, and I got it.

The roles for women my age frequently show seniors in insulting and degrading ways. They make cartoons of the elderly. I recently turned down a role in a movie for me to play a horny grandmother who spewed foul language, exposed herself and chased after young boys. Well, I turned that one down. But I know someone who took that part.

There is a coalition to protect the way every other group is depicted in the media, but no one protects the image of the elderly. Hollywood clearly is clueless when it comes to understanding today's seniors. They are blind to the advances in medicine and self-care, and the increases in personal income have made us a force to be reckoned with and a market to be exploited.

I mean 20 years ago, it was accurate to show a senior coming in for a check-up dragging his oxygen tank. Today, he would be dragging his golf clubs. Twenty years ago, older experienced writers past the age of 50 were getting 60 percent of the jobs. Today, it has shrunk to 19 percent. Six months ago, I developed a project with an Emmy Award winning writer/producer. When it came time to pitch the project to the studios, he refused to come with me. When they see my gray hair, honey, we are finished, he said. Why do they think that a man in his fifties does not have anything to say about love or youth or relationships?

He has a lot to say if anyone would listen. A few years later, rather earlier I should say, I pitched a project to a network and got a very enthusiastic response. The executives wanted me to take it directly into development, which was very exciting, but once they found out that our producer/writer attached to the project was a woman in her fifties, they stopped returning my phone calls.

Yes, there is energy and excitement and enthusiasm in the young, but there is not any less among those in their senior years unless society is successful in its campaign to rob us of those qualities, to diminish us. We older people control 77 percent of the country's disposable income, yet the entertainment industry has made age something to be feared. It is a small comfort to know that those who have perpetrated ageism will soon face it themselves.

As General McArthur once wrote, "Youth is not a time of life; it is a state of mind. Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years. People grow old by deserting their ideals. Years wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul. Worry, doubt,

self-distrust, fear and despair, these are the long, long years that bow the head and turn the growing spirit back to dust. You are as young as your faith and as old as your doubt, as young as your self-confidence, as old as your fear."

Mr. Chairman, I address you today as a person young in spirit, full of life and energy, and eager to stay engaged in the world and fight ageism, the last bastion of bigotry. It is no different from sexism, racism or religious discrimination. It is a tyranny that suppresses us all at any stage and serves no one.

As my late husband, the writer William Goyen, said, when we see people who are infirmed, handicapped or older, we turn away from them, we shun them, and take away their light. Today, the image makers have taken away our light, and I am here to urge you bring it back. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Roberts follows:]

DORIS ROBERTS REMARKS

Senate Special Committee on Aging

Image of Aging in Media and Marketing

September 4, 2002

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for inviting me to speak with you today about ageism, a subject about which I have strong opinions and believe I'm highly qualified to speak. I'm in my seventies, at the peak of my career, at the height of my earned income and tax contribution. When my grandchildren say I rock, they're not talking about a rocking chair.

Yet society considers me discard-able: my opinions irrelevant, my needs comical and my tastes not worth attention in the marketplace. My peers and I are portrayed as dependent, helpless, unproductive and demanding rather than deserving. In reality the majority of seniors are self-sufficient, middle-class consumers with more assets than most young couples and substantial time and talent to offer society. This is not just a sad situation, Mr. Chairman. This is a crime. I'm here to urge you to address the devastation, cost and loss that we as a nation suffer because of age discrimination.

Age discrimination negates the value of wisdom and experience, robs us of our dignity and denies us the chance to continue to grow and to flourish. We all know that medical advances have changed the length and quality of life for us today. We have not, however, changed our attitudes about aging or addressed the disabling myths that dis-empower us. I would like to have the adjective old as it is currently used deleted from our vocabulary and replaced with the word older. My contemporaries and I are denigrated as "old:" old coots, old fogeys, old codgers, geezers, alta kakas, hags and old timers.

In truth, the minute you are born, you are getting older and the later years can be some of life's most productive and creative. The average age of winners of the Nobel Prize is sixty-five. Frank Gehry designed Seattle's hip new rock museum at age seventy. Georgia O'Keefe was productive well into her eighties. Add to the list Hitchcock, Dickens, Bernstein, Fosse, Wright, Matissse, Picasso, and Einstein, just to mention a few people who produced some of their best work when they would be considered over the hill by current standards.

My profession, the entertainment business, is one of the worst perpetrators of this bigotry, particularly when it comes to women. When I was a young woman some of the most powerful and popular actresses were women past the age of forty. Women such as Joan Crawford, Bette Davis and Barbara Stanwyck continued to work, getting better and better at their craft as they got older and capable of playing more complex female characters.

It can't be that executives are at a loss to find capable actresses. Many of my friends, talented actresses in the forty to sixty-year-old range, are forced to live on unemployment or welfare because of the scarcity of roles for women in that age bracket. A Screen Actor's Guild employment survey showed that there are three times as many roles for women under forty as there are for women forty years old and older even though forty-two percent of Americans are older than forty.

When a sixty-year-old actor portrays a married man his wife is likely to be young enough to be his daughter. Think of Michael Douglas paired with Gwenyth Paltrow in the remake of *Dial M for Murder* or Sean Connery married to Catherine Zeta-Jones. This is why some of my spectacularly talented actress friends in their forties and fifties have

been forced into the humiliating position of borrowing money from me to meet their mortgage payments and health insurance or begging me to see if there is even a tiny part for them on *Everybody Loves Raymond.*

It also explains why younger and younger actresses are visiting the plastic surgeon. Actresses in their twenties are getting Botox injections to prevent wrinkles from forming. Women start getting tummy tucks and facelifts in their thirties to forestall the day when the phone stops ringing. When a woman hits the age of forty Hollywood executives think she's too old.

I've been fortunate to be one of a handful of actresses who has continued to work throughout my career, but it has not been easy. When I was in my forties I heard of a great part on a new series called *Remington Steele*, but I wasn't considered for it because I was thought to be too old. I got a chance to read for it only because I was friendly with the casting director, and I was *very* persistent. I know many of my friends who have begged and pleaded for similar favors from producers they've worked with over the years and been turned away with that Hollywood euphemism: "We're looking for a different demographic." Even though the part is described as appropriate for a woman in her forties, the casting director really wants someone in her thirties or a bit younger.

The roles for women my age frequently show seniors in insulting and degrading ways, cartoons of the elderly. I recently turned down a movie role where I was supposed to play a horny grandmother who spewed foul language, exposed herself and chased after young boys. Although I turned down the job, I know someone took that part. We actors have let go of our responsibility to see that we are portrayed realistically because we are desperate for any part in any production. There is a coalition to protect the way every

other group is depicted in the media from Italians to Arabs to racial groups but no one protects the image of the elderly.

Hollywood clearly is clueless when it comes to understanding today's seniors, blind to the advances in medicine and self-care, and increases in personal income have made us a force to be reckoned with and a market to be exploited. Twenty years ago it was accurate to show a senior coming in for his check-up dragging his oxygen tank. Today it would be more appropriate to depict him carrying his tennis racket. But the youthful gatekeepers of the entertainment industry haven't caught up with these changes partially because they refuse to hire older writers who could craft story lines that reflect the reality of today's seniors.

Twenty years ago older, experienced writers past the age of fifty were the most sought after in the industry, getting sixty percent of the jobs. Now that percentage has shrunk to nineteen percent. Just six months ago I developed a project with an Emmy award winning writer/producer I knew from my days on *Remington Steele.* When it came time to pitch the project to the studio, he refused to come with me. "When they see my gray hair, we're finished," he said. Why do they think that a man in his fifties doesn't have anything to say about love or youth or relationships? I know he has a lot to say if anyone would listen.

I pitched a project to a cable network a few years back and got a very enthusiastic response. The executives wanted to take it directly into development. But once they found out that the director attached to the project was a woman in her fifties, they stopped returning my phone calls.

What these thirty-year-old executives don't realize is how impoverished their world is by focusing only on the limited perspective of youth. Yes there is energy and excitement and enthusiasm in the young, but there isn't any less among those in their senior years unless society is successful in its campaign to rob us of those qualities by diminishing us. We older people control seventy-seven percent of the country's disposable income yet the entertainment industry has made age something to be feared, even though we are all going to become seniors if we are lucky. It is small comfort to know that those who have perpetrated ageism will some day face it themselves.

As General Douglas McArthur once wrote: "Youth is not a time of life, it's a state of mind. Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years. People grow old by disserting their ideals. Years wrinkles the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul. Worry, doubt, self-distrust, fear and despair, these are the long, long years that bow the head and turn the growing spirit back to dust. You're as young as your faith, as old as your doubt, as young as your self-confidence, as old as your fear. So long as your heart receives messages of beauty, cheer, courage, grandeur and power from the earth, from man and from the infinite, so long you are young."

Mr. Chairman, I address you today as a person young in spirit, full of life and energy and eager to stay engaged in the world and fight ageism, the last bastion of bigotry. It's no different from sexism, racism or religious discrimination. It is a tyranny that suppresses us all at any stage and serves no one. As my late husband the writer William Goyen said, when we see infirm people, handicapped or older people turn away from them and we take away their light.

Popular culture has taken away our light. I'm here to urge you to bring it back. To quote General McArthur again: "Whether seventy or seventeen, there is in every being's heart the love of wonder, the undaunted challenge of events and the childlike appetite for what's next and the joy and the game of life."

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Roberts, thank you very, very much, for an outstanding statement. You certainly are full of life and your continued involvement in this subject really offers a great deal of hope to older Americans and really to all segments of our society who are aware of the problem, not just older Americans, but baby boomers as well, who need to realize the message you presented to the Congress today.

We want to welcome now—we will take testimony from our other witnesses—Dr. Robert Butler, who, of course, is President and CEO of International Longevity Center and also Professor of Geriatrics at Mount Sinai. Dr. Butler, glad to have you back.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT N. BUTLER, M.D., PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, INTERNATIONAL LONGEVITY CENTER—USA, NEW YORK, NY

Dr. BUTLER. Thank you. I am very glad to be back here. I am delighted that you have decided to hold such an important hearing on ageism, the stereotyping and discrimination against people simply because they are old, just as racism and sexism accomplishes this with skin color and gender.

What I would like to do is submit for the record my longer statement and just briefly comment upon first the extraordinary range of discriminatory practices that occur in housing, health care—that I have to say with great regret as a physician, that it happens in my own field—and other services, in employment, and in a topic you have addressed very effectively, elder abuse, which is so painful to see on the American scene.

I also would comment on the fact that you will hear about the effects of ageism directly on health itself from Dr. Becca Levy, a little bit later this morning. Of course, happily, you are addressing the issues of imagery, and I wanted to take a moment to point out that it does not have to be negative.

The chart on the right, a negative image of aging, is the "greedy geezers," which was the cover of a magazine, some years back, but not long ago, but on the left is an example of how one can portray older people, including older women, in very positive ways. This is Kitty Carlisle Hart, a very distinguished New Yorker, theatrical personality, who for many years was the head of the Humanities Council in the State of New York, and she is 92 years of age. This derives from the wonderful book, Wise Women, by a wonderful American photographer, Joyce Tenneson.

Now, I would like to turn directly and in a very practical way, to some of the things we can do to deal with ageism? First is certainly educating the public, and one of the things we can do in the public schools is address the issues of human development so that children see that life unfolds and that old age has its special dignity and purposes.

We can also acquaint journalists more effectively by immersion courses such as we have been fortunate to provide at the International Longevity Center with funding from the Knight Foundation, the New York Times Foundation, immersion meetings with journalists to help instruct them on some of the issues related to aging.

Second, if we could reduce the frailty and dementia, we would make a huge step forward, and that is why I strongly recommend the continuing support of the National Institutes of Health and the National Institute on Aging. It would be wonderful to make Alzheimer's disease a memory of the past, something that we would, in fact, conquer.

Third is we must improve lifestyles in this country. Unfortunately, we do not have as healthy a population as we should, and George Burns, the wonderful comedian at 100 years of age, said that people can actually carry out the old person's act, they can actually allow themselves to deteriorate, and this does not make an effective presentation to the world at large. We can teach children early to address greater lifestyle improvements.

As an effort in this direction, the International Longevity Center brings together some of our nation's finest scientists to address health issues. For example, maintaining healthy lifestyles. We can all initiate healthy lifestyles everyday, but how do we maintain them? Also we held a comparable workshop on achieving cognitive vitality. What can we do in the way of activities and actions which can help us maintain our own intellectual functioning?

We not only publish these, but they also appear in mainstream journals such as the Proceedings of the Mayo Clinic, which, for instance, reaches over 150,000 physicians to help them better understand how to advise their patients.

Fourth is the economic approach, not only in the ways in which Ms. Roberts beautifully demonstrated in terms of productive, responsible, active aging, of holding on to jobs or volunteering, but also the realization she also commented upon that finally older persons are becoming more attractive to business. In fact, the Japanese refer to the "silver industries"—life insurance, health, pharmaceuticals, various other industries that do a great deal of business with older people.

Fifth, and this is very painful for me, we must change the medical culture of ageism. This is how I first became interested and first came to introduce the term. As a medical student, to my shock older professors and others referred to older people as "crocks," and there are many other terms which are in my testimony which I will not repeat here. We clearly need to have Congress address the creation of a cadre of teachers in every one of our 145 medical schools so that we can have properly and effectively teaching physicians. There is such a program called the Geriatric Academic Career Award which should be expanded.

Sixth is we must support longitudinal studies of healthy aging.

Seventh, we must enforce the Age Discrimination in Employment Act.

Eighth, we must ask the question, will Madison Avenue grow up before it grows old or will it grow old before it grows up?

Finally, we really must address the entire culture's attitude. We must see a transformation of the way in which we regard the stages of life including late life. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Butler follows:]

INTERNATIONAL LONGEVITY CENTER · USA

Written Testimony of

Robert N. Butler, M.D.
President and CEO, International Longevity Center – USA
60 East 86th Street
New York, NY 10028

and
Professor of Geriatrics, Mount Sinai School of Medicine

Before the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging

Washington D.C.

September 4th 2002

Thank you Senator Breaux for the opportunity to appear at this hearing about the image of aging to discuss the problem of ageism. The term "ageism" was introduced in 1968 and is now a part of the English language. Ageism can be defined as a systematic stereotyping of and discrimination against people simply because they are old, just as racism and sexism accomplish this with skin color and gender.

I originally coined the term ageism in 1968 as chairman of the Washington D.C. Advisory Committee on Aging. During an interview with the Washington Post, I used the term to describe the stormy opposition to the purchasing of public housing for older people in Northwest Washington D.C. The causes of the neighborhood's negativism could have been mixed, for many of the future tenants were old, but also black and poor. But in this instance, I thought it was more a function of ageism than racism, since similar opposition to housing had arisen on other occasions in which race and socioeconomic status were not factors. Indeed, neighbors spoke openly and negatively about old people cluttering the streets and stores. The best way to describe this reaction was ageism.

The underlying basis of ageism is the dread and fear of growing older, becoming ill and dependent, and approaching death. This leads to denial and ambivalence. The young dread aging and the old may envy youth. Behind ageism is a corrosive narcissism, the inability to accept our fate. Ageism is manifested in a wide range of phenomena, on both individual and institutional levels – stereotypes and myths, outright disdain and dislike, simple subtle avoidance of contact, discriminatory practices in housing, employment, and services of all kinds, and of course elder abuse.

I understand this hearing is focused in particular on images of aging in media and marketing, in which ageism certainly exists. Older persons are often stereotyped in print and on television as feeble, ineffective, helpless, and irrelevant. They are robbed of dignity by the words and cartoons used to portray them. It is time to change the language and imagery of old age in the media. We must challenge the advertising, news, and entertainment industries to end ageist stereotypes and alter the climate toward older persons in a positive manner. My organization the International Longevity Center is

working to combat ageism by speaking out against negative images of older persons, such as the "greedy geezer." I have enclosed with my testimony some images of aging in various forms of media, both negative and positive. The negative images are just examples of some of the ways in which older people are viewed. The positive images represent how older people can be just as dynamic and glamorous as younger people. In addition, the ILC conducts seminars with journalists, called Age Boom Academies, intended to deepen their understanding of the longevity revolution and to dispel the negative myths associated with aging and older people. Our society needs to change the erroneous and hurtful images such as 'geezer' to truer images of older people who are active, flexible, relevant, culturally involved, and an increasingly important segment of our society.

Ageism should be considered a psycho-social disease, one that can be addressed. As we all know, it is increasingly within our power to intervene directly in the physical realm of older persons (i.e. age-related disorders) with prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation. However, it is *also* within our power to intervene in the social, cultural, economic, and political realms influencing the lives of older persons. If, however, we fail to alter negative imagery, language, stereotypes, myths, and distortions concerning aging and the aged in society, our ability to exercise these new possibilities will remain sharply curtailed. Fortunately, we can treat the psychosocial disease called "ageism" - those ambivalent and negative attitudes and practices that lead to hatred, discrimination, abuse, and even murder of the aged - by working to transform our cultural sensibility and through legislative initiatives. But until we effectively do so, ageism will remain, despite the fact that prejudice against age is basically a prejudice against everyone. We all chance to become its ultimate victims as longevity increases.

In order to treat this societal and personal disease, we first need to realize what is really true about older persons: The antidote to ageism is knowledge.

One myth is that all old people are senile and debilitated. But senility is not inevitable with age; rather, it is a function of a variety of brain diseases, most notably Alzheimer's

disease and multi-infarct or vascular dementia. There is a clear distinction between aging and diseases that occur in old age. Unfortunately, there may always be some residual ageism resulting from discomfort and distaste for age and its disabilities. Some profound and common disorders of old age - mobility problems, dementia, and incontinence - are unattractive and provoke disgust and fear.

There is also the myth that old people are affluent. An examination of income data, however, reveals that our nation's older people are not a particularly wealthy segment of the population. Although there are pockets of wealth, about 70 percent of older households have an annual income below $35,000 and almost 30 percent have an income of between $10,000 and $20,000. In addition, older women and minorities have very high rates of poverty, around 20 percent. It should be noted that the Census Bureau uses a different income threshold to calculate poverty among older people, with the result being that older people must be poorer to be officially counted as poor. This too is ageist, in that it assumes older people can and should get by on less.

If we are to fight ageism, older persons themselves need to be productive and develop a philosophy of responsible aging. For many of us retirement must be marked by a new kind of responsible aging. Through paid and unpaid work, people must continue to contribute to society, and they must be encouraged to do so. A strong enforcement of the laws to ban age discrimination in employment will help in this regard. The simple ability of older people to have some control over their own lives helps dispel myths that the older population is unproductive, depressed, disengaged, inflexible, sexless and senile. This is also beneficial to their own health and well-being, as highlighted by one of today's other witnesses, Dr. Levy. Of course, given the recent events involving individual retirement accounts, the need to protect and promote older workers is important for reasons of financial security as well.

Another key intervention against ageism follows the recognition that older people themselves are a market, an economic power. Japan has the most rapidly growing population of older persons in the world, as well as the highest life expectancy. As a

result, it has created a new industry of goods and services geared towards older persons called the silver industries. There is a lot of "gold in geriatrics," as *The Wall Street Journal* once wrote, when one considers capitalism as a vital connection between producers and consumers. Thus, the so-called high cost of health and social services produces jobs and consumption. Looked at another way, the health care industry is the second largest producer of jobs and makes a significant contribution to the gross domestic product.

A continued heavy investment in biomedical, behavioral, and social research is another important intervention to address the roots of ageism. Through research on the biological processes associated with aging, as well as on diseases commonly associated with older people like Alzheimer's disease, we can gain freedom from senility and enhanced independence, which will combat negative perceptions of aging.

It is also important to address the ageism that is rooted in medical schools and pervades the medical system. In fact, it is there that a medical student may first became conscious of the medical profession's prejudice toward age, where he or she may first hear the term "crock" - originally applied to patients with no apparent organic basis for disease and thought to be hypochondriacal. The epithet is predominantly applied to middle-aged women and older people. Other terms in this cruel lexicon exist as well and may be applied to other unwelcome patients: "gomer" ("get out of my emergency room"); gork ("God only really knows" the basis of this person's many symptoms), "vegetable," and "geek." Worst of all are "dirt ball" and SPOS ("semi-human or sub-human piece of s***").

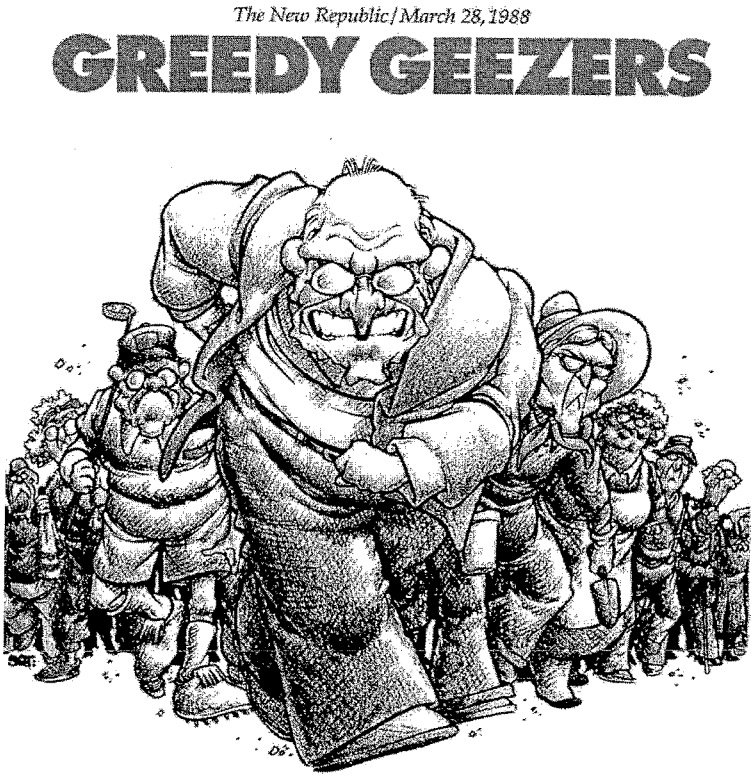
Medical ageism also includes a not-so-benign neglect, such as declarations by physicians like "what do you expect at your age" or such injunctions as "take it easy" – which is generally bad advice. Between 1955 and 1966, Morris Rocklin, a volunteer in the NIMH Human Aging Study, was studied until he was 101 years of age. Rocklin complained about his painful right knee to his physician who said, "What do you expect at your age?" To this typical statement by a physician, Rocklin replied indignantly, "So why doesn't

my left leg hurt?" These common occurrences can be addressed by ensuring that all medical students receive appropriate education and training in geriatrics, so that they better understand the diverse health needs of older people and how to relate to them.

Most difficult of all, our nation must alter our deep-seated fear, our shunned responsibility, and harmful avoidance and denial of age. Our conscience should be burdened by our obligations to those who have gone before us. Strict legislation and enforcement against age discrimination and elder abuse are essential but insufficient. We must change how we think, feel and behave about late life. We must help people deal with their fears of aging, dependency and death. We must have a sense of the life course as a whole. Our family life, our educational system and our media must help transform our sensibility, and moral values held by each of us must drive this transformation of the culture and experience of aging in America, and beyond. We are in the midst of a wonderful new world of longevity. It is in our power to make it a celebration.

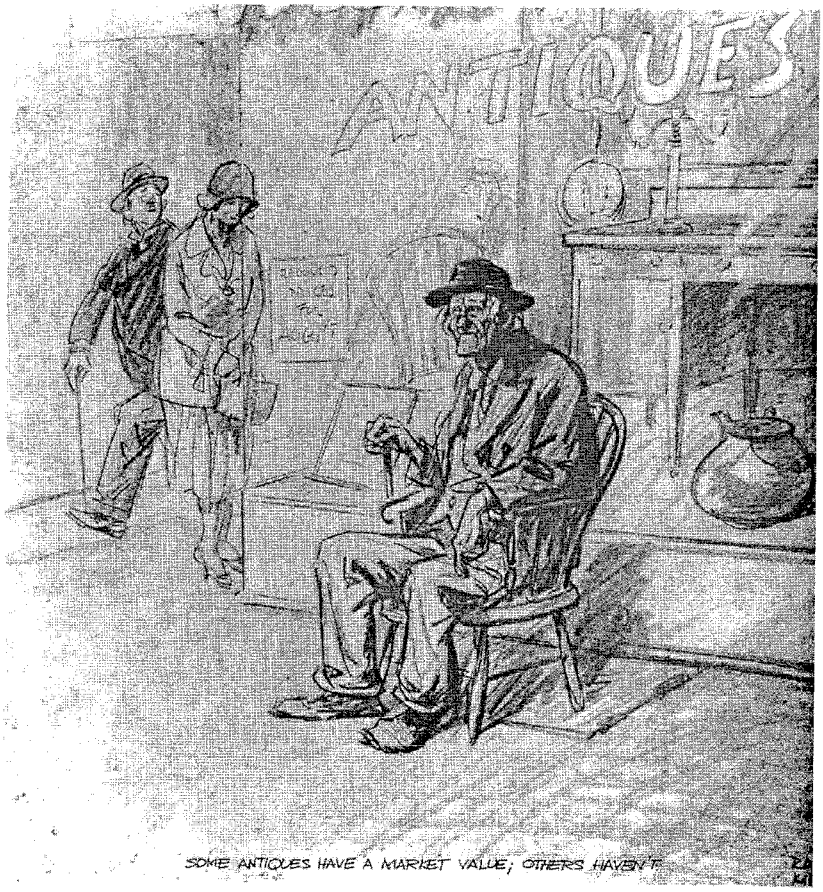
Thank you very much. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Negative Image of Aging in the Media



This magazine cover is a classic negative depiction of older people. When this 1988 cover article appeared, criticizing American society for pampering the "affluent" older population, the "greedy geezer," the virus of ageism erupted again. The article began: "Thirty percent of the annual federal budget now goes to expenditures on people over the age of 65. Forty years from now, if the present array of programs and benefits is maintained, almost two-thirds of the budget will go to supporting and cosseting the old. Something is wrong with a society that is willing to drain itself to foster such an unproductive section of its population, one that does not even promise (as children do) one day to be productive."

Negative Depiction of Aging

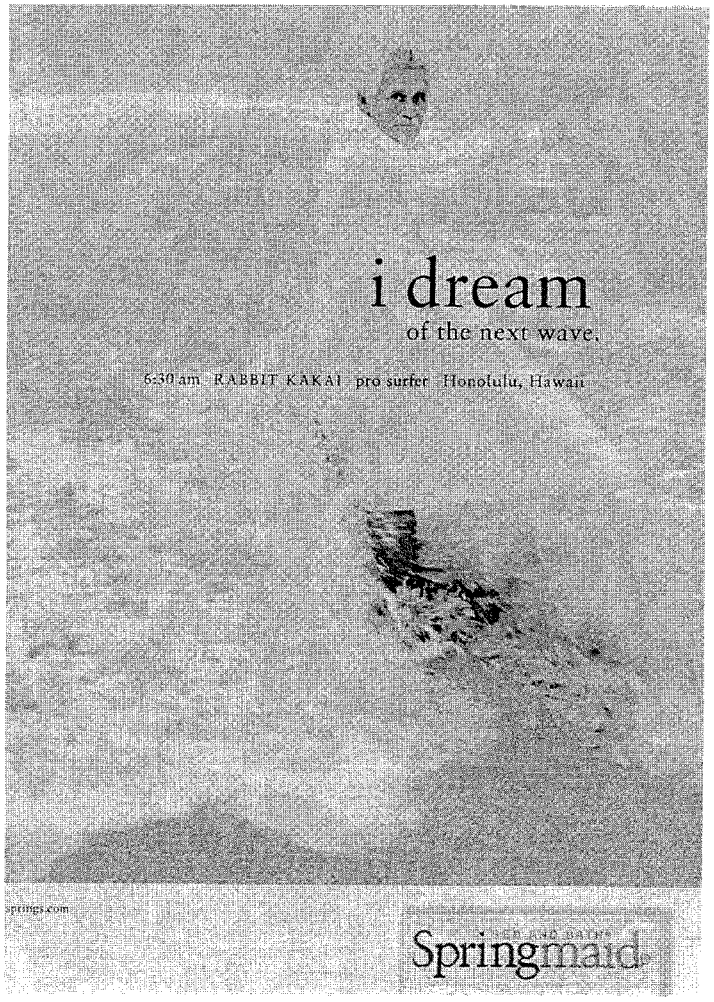


Ageism is not a new problem. This cartoon is from 1929, when the radical changes to American society brought about a focus on older people as a population. Unfortunately, one result was an increasing perception of old people as useless and obsolete.

Positive Image of Aging

This photo of Kitty Carlisle Hart at age 90 depicts the beauty and grace that can accompany old age. The photo is from a new book entitled "Wise Women," by Joyce Tenneson. The book contains photographs and statements about the experiences of aging from women between the ages of 65 and 100 in the United States, highlighting their power and wisdom.

Positive Image of Aging in Advertising



This ad depicts an older individual as active and vibrant, a person who still has hopes and dreams. Rabbit Kakai is one of the founding fathers of modern surfing and was recently featured in a critically acclaimed documentary "Surfing For Life." He began surfing in 1925 at the age of five and continues to surf into his 80s. He says that his eyes "still light up" when his wife says "Go Surfing."

The CHAIRMAN. Once again, thank you, Dr. Butler, for being with us and for your contribution. Next, we would like to hear from Mr. Robert Snyder, who has come to us from Dallas, who is a senior partner at the J. Walter Thompson Specialized Communications with the Mature Market Group in Dallas, and Mr. Snyder, we are pleased to have your statement.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT SNYDER, SENIOR PARTNER, J. WALTER THOMPSON SPECIALIZED COMMUNICATIONS, MATURE MARKET GROUP, DALLAS, TX

Mr. SNYDER. Thank you very much, Senator. Before I begin my testimony, I would like to direct your attention to the video I would like to play to show you firsthand some good and some bad of ads that are happening in this country as we speak.

The CHAIRMAN. Tell me again what is this?

Mr. SNYDER. This video represents some commercials that are being produced in this country by the media and advertising that you will first see ads that are negative ageism or filled with ageism, and then finally you will see some ads that are really positive. So we wanted to show both sides of the story, so if we could roll the tape.

The CHAIRMAN. OK.

[Video presentation.]

The CHAIRMAN. OK. Mr. Snyder, what does this show us?

Mr. SNYDER. Well, first of all, it shows us that ageism is the last socially condoned bigotry in our country. Awareness about the problem is growing, but for the most part, our awareness of this problem is in its infancy. The Mature Market Group, a part of J. Walter Thompson Worldwide, sees many advertisers and their agencies overlooking the largest, wealthiest consumer group in a collective worshipful attitude toward youth. Stereotyping older Americans is tolerated by many industries in ways that would never be allowed for any other group in our country.

The videotape provides a snapshot of how older adults are portrayed in advertising today. While humor is a wonderful sales tool, the Coke, Midas and Conseco ads over here used humor to sell a product at the expense of a segment of our population. Dignity and respect for elders in advertising is limited. Artists and writers with limited life experiences meet deadlines by creating ads that contain caricatures and stereotypes.

Consequently, stereotypes are perpetuated. This was clearly shown in the Butterfinger, Midas and Caprisun commercials. The image of a diminished older body is also a significant part of the stereotype portrayed for older Americans. However, we know healthy lifestyle choices and better health care provide for a healthier body at any age. The Lipitor and Martex ads which are over here are a testament to this notion.

Finally, much of current advertising has viewers believing that fun and enjoyment of life is limited to those under 40, as was communicated by the Zima ad. While seniors often appear in pharmaceutical, insurance and financial advertising, the absence of seniors from other categories is significant. Ads that create the full context of seniors' lives do resonate with all generations as shown in the Allstate and Publix ads.

Since the founding of J. Walter Thompson in 1864, advertisers have been looking for effective ways to communicate with the target market. The discovery by advertisers that consumers could be understood better through the use of demographics and thus more accurately targeted by advertising communications would prove to be the key to all advertising in the final 50 years of the 20th century.

I would propose, however, that years of advertising and marketing based on demographics has created stereotypical images of this segment of the population, which are so ingrained into our thinking that it is difficult to see that the problem of ageism even exists.

The resulting status of marketing and advertising in the United States can be summarized as follows: we have all been placed into buckets according to age, income and generation. The advertising world is dominated by youth, and companies with products to sell are in general mesmerized by the need to capture the youth market.

Those over the age of 50 are, for the most part, labeled as spillover according to media buyers. The topic of aging is durably encapsulated in a layer in myths in our society and includes a confusing blend of truth and fancy. These single phrase assertions usually have some link to reality, but are always in significant conflict with recent scientific data:

You get old; you get sick. You get old; you lose interest in intimacy. You get old; you can't understand technology. You get old; you have no social life. The list goes on.

If we accept these myths and others like them, that act itself becomes ageism in practice. It is our belief that the public in general and advertising people in particular are programmed to think that aging is a bad thing, and that once you are past 40, you are over the hill and out of the game.

The Mature Market Group and Seniors Research Group conducted a study of adults 62-plus to determine how a person's life experiences shape their core values. Looking at human behavior through values-based research is not only logical but it is also statistically accurate. The key difference between this segmentation and others based on life stage or demographics is that values do not shift, while life stage and demographics do.

Finally, the potential of values-based research is such that marketers can truly begin marketing to an ageless market. Why? Because values cut across all age groups. Values are indeed age blind.

Future advertising must stem from a foundation that is timeless and ageless. As individuals, we need to refuse to stereotype the mature audience. As a society, we need to appreciate the experience, wisdom and contributions they have made. Let us harness this power and let that energy help sell our products.

Let us begin with a national public service campaign to raise awareness of ageism and help the generations appreciate one another. I would like to conclude by expressing the sentiment of many seniors with whom I have spoken, and is demonstrated by this poster over here: What you are, I was. What I am, you will be. Assume nothing. Expect anything. Listen, learn; then we can talk.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Snyder and related materials follow:]

Ageism in American Advertising: A Matter of Awareness

Ageism is the last socially condoned bigotry. Unlike so many cultures where age is honored and elders of society revered, older Americans endure ugly, misguided stereotypes and must fight for a place at a table they themselves worked to build. It's completely shortsighted. Unlike other targets of bigotry, we will all – if we're blessed with a long life – join the ranks of this group someday.

Kim Miller, Vice President, Sales and Marketing
Willow Valley Retirement Community
Willow Valley, PA

Testimony prepared by Mature Market Group, part of J. Walter Thompson Worldwide
Robert Snyder, Senior Partner
September 4, 2002

Ageless Marketing

When I was first approached about the possibility of testifying before this committee I hesitated for a moment before accepting this privilege and responsibility. Why the hesitation? Simply put, I pondered the potential outcomes of such a hearing. Could it actually make a difference? I came here today with the belief that our leadership does indeed not only have the responsibility but also the moral obligation to help rid our nation of injustice of all kinds. Progress has been made on many such fronts in the United States, yet the feelings and emotions that revolve around the aging process have yet to be addressed at the highest levels. Thoughts must be followed by action if change is to take place. And change must take place if we are to evolve our society to a higher level of mutual respect and appreciation for one another.

As those who have testified before me have shared this morning, Ageism is alive in our country. Awareness about the problem is growing, but for the most part our awareness of this problem is in its infancy. This report is designed to raise awareness of a persistent problem in the failure of marketers to address the needs of 50-plus Americans. The Mature Market Group, part of J. Walter Thompson Worldwide, sees many advertisers and their agencies overlooking the largest, wealthiest consumer group in a collective worshipful attitude toward youth. Just missing the older segments would be unwise in most marketing plans. Laughing at and stereotyping older Americans appears to be tolerated by many industries in ways that would never be allowed for any other group in our country. We believe it's time to raise awareness of ageism in advertising and work toward its demise. My sincerest hope is that this hearing can be a springboard for change – change that will have one of the most uniquely positive impacts on life in America and throughout the globe in the century ahead of us.

How Did We Get Here?

Since the founding of J. Walter Thompson in 1864, those attempting to advertise or promote a product have been looking for ways to communicate with a "target" market. Mass marketing became highly successful following World War II. Although advertisers have given themselves far too much credit for the impact of messaging developed for various products, no one can deny the

tremendous success that many companies and products have garnered as a result of these marketing and advertising efforts. During the 1950's everyone needed a house and a car. Everyone wanted the electric washing machine and the convenience of prepackaged foods was irresistible to young couples. The simple mix of new products offering time-saving convenience with individuals who longed to enjoy new families and experiences is a phenomenon not likely to repeat itself again during our lifetime. The discovery by researchers and marketers that consumers could be understood through the use of demographics (mostly related to age and income) and more accurately targeted by advertising communications would prove to be the key to all marketing communication in the final 50 years of the 20th century.

Results of 50 Years of Demographically Based Marketing

Books have been written about the various generations. Research has been conducted with regard to the various life stages, which many of us over the age of 50 have faced or will face during our remaining years. Yet, these additional insights have not really changed the way we think about consumers. I would propose that years of research and marketing based on demographics has created stereotypical images of various segments of the population which are so ingrained into our way of thinking that it is difficult to see that the problem of ageism even exists.

As researchers have become more sophisticated in their approaches to and understanding of human behavior, one would think that new methods of marketing and creating advertising communications would have evolved over the past 50 years. While strides have been made, when all the bells and whistles are stripped away, the strategies of today's advertisers are similar to those used in the 1950's.

For the past few years, companies that advertise consistently are reporting that marketing costs are rising and the return on investment is down. Yet, even with this evidence, the industry continues to "do the same things and expect better results." Customer Relationship Marketing efforts, once considered the panacea for increasing sales and capturing lifelong relationships with the customer have been yielding less than satisfactory results. With this as the backdrop for entrance into the new millennium, it would seem logical that the marketing world would open its collective mind to new and far-reaching ideas that would turn the marketing world upside down as the Internet has done on the technology side of our world. The Internet has literally forced a fundamental change in

strategies in technology and companies are scrambling to be connected at lightning speed. It has happened quickly and without regard to size or depth of brand equity held by any company. The Internet is brand blind. The Internet is age blind. Yet, the shift in thought with regard to human behavior, motivating underlying values and brain science has not really even started. This shift in thought needs to be as dramatic as the technological shift; however, because changes in social thought occur slowly over time, it will take a concerted and sustained effort to create lasting change in the way in which we view the chronologically older portion of our population. I look forward to the day when marketers are age blind.

Ad Industry Numbers and Trends

The resulting status of marketing and advertising in the United States can be summarized as follows:

- *We have all been placed into buckets according to age, income and generation.*
- *It is generally assumed that because we are a certain age, read a certain magazine or are a part of a generational label (GI's, Boomers, GenXers), we are very much alike others within that same generation.*
- *The advertising world is dominated by youth. Companies with products to sell are, in general, mesmerized by the "need" to capture the youth market. The reasoning goes like this. "In order to preserve our market share for the future, we must capture them while they are young." Research supports the notion that this is nonsense and yet companies and advertisers continue to do as they have always done.*
- *Those over the age of 50 are, for the most part, labeled as "spill over" according to those who place media buys for major advertisers.*

"Media buyers estimate 55 percent of the $8 billion in advertising spent in TV's upfront and scatter market last year was directed to the 18-49 age group. Remainder went to kids under 18 and adults 25 to 54." (Ad Age, 5/13/02)

Less than 10 percent of today's advertising focuses on people over 50. Up from one to two percent a decade ago. (Age Wave, 2002)

With the exception of pharmaceutical advertising, most of the images seen in advertising featuring seniors mocks them with bad humor or stereotypes.

"For a lot of brands we work with, it's sexier to advertise to the younger consumers who are trendier, much more fashion-forward, very social and very much in the public eye. With marketing dollars so limited and precious, you want to bet ... on the future." (Melissa Pordy, SVP of print at Zenith Media)

"There's a certain illogical standard today when baby boomers ... are moving into their 50s and taking a predominate amount of spending with them. Nielsen Media Research now tracks 35- to 64-year-olds, proof that some advertisers look at this demographic as more representative of where the core consumer is." (David Poltrack, EVP, research and planning at CBS)

The tug of war between CBS and ABC over "The Late Show with David Letterman" was fought mainly because the younger-skewing "Letterman" brings in $100 million in advertising. That's more than ABC's "Nightline" and that very fact reinforces the notion that finite marketing dollars are better spent on fledgling consumers. (Ad Age, 2002)

Myths of Aging – Spurious Correlations

The topic of aging is durably encapsulated in a layer of myths in our society. And, like most myths, the ones about aging include a confusing blend of truth and fancy. We have compressed a few of the most familiar of the aging myths into single sentence assertions – frequently heard, usually with some link to reality, but always (thankfully) in significant conflict with recent scientific data.

Myth #1:	You get old; you get sick
Myth #2:	You get old; you lose interest in intimacy
Myth #3:	You get old; you are unwilling to try anything new
Myth #4:	You get old; you lose control of bodily functions
Myth #5:	You get old; you can't function in the work place
Myth #6:	You get old; you can't understand technology
Myth #7:	You get old; you have no social life
Myth #8:	You get old; you cannot fully participate or pull you own weight
Myth #9:	You get old; you need help to make decisions

It is our belief that the public in general and advertising people in particular are programmed to think that aging is a BAD thing that once you're past 40, you're over the hill and out of the game. However, if you talk with most healthy, older people, you'll learn there are many positive things about aging. In fact, Rowe and Khan speak to "Successful aging (as) dependent upon individual choices and behaviors ... attained through individual choice and effort."

We find that many advertising people: copywriters, art directors, account executives and media buyers subscribe to these myths and perpetuate ageism within our industry by being unaware of the realities of marketing to the matures. It may be easier for young staffers to go with what they know and understand ... what appeals to them personally. Often the thought is, "we'll pick up the older consumer anyway."

The hard fact is that over the course of the next 15 years, the sheer numbers of Baby Boomers will change everything. The advertising agency that understands this and acts to stamp out ageism in advertising will survive.

New Customer Majority

Over 12 years ago, my friend and colleague David B. Wolfe, author of the book "Serving the Ageless Market" documented and wrote about the next step in the evolution of understanding human behavior as it relates to marketing. As is true with many explorers, inventors and scientists, David's understanding of the fact that a person's chronological age is nearly a *nonsequitur*, has for the most part fallen on deaf ears. The study of the brain has led to some rather astonishing conclusions, which fly in the face of traditional marketing strategy. According to David, people become more *introspective*, *individuated* and *autonomous* at midlife.

> The *introspective* midlife mind is a more subjective mind that offers greater resistance to objective analysis than the more objectively biased minds of the young. Older consumers think in a more nuanced manner, and see more shades of gray where young consumers perceive the world in black and white. This is a big reason why consumer research has become less dependable as the consumer population has aged.
>
> The more *individuated* midlife mind is less tolerant of marketing when its individuality is denied in marketing communications and when transaction processes depersonalize the customer experience. This is why customer loyalty has fallen as the customer population has aged.
>
> The *autonomous* midlife mind is more resistant to attempts by others to bend it to their wills. This is why "argument" styled advertising that hard sells product features, functional benefits and economic value has lost much of its effectiveness as the customer population has aged.

My work with J. Walter Thompson focuses solely on this "new" majority. As I do speaking throughout the North America with regard to our Value Portraits® research I am amazed by the positive response to the material. No one individual in any audience has been able to tell me how the demographic differences between the "leading edge" boomers and the so-called "silent" generation affect their messages or marketing strategy. They can spout streams of data, but they cannot apply the information they do have so that it positively impacts the bottom line. Marketers

everywhere know something is wrong, but they don't know how to use the traditional age-related demographic information they possess to improve results.

Until enough "noise" is made about the need to embrace a fundamental shift toward viewing this new customer majority as an "ageless market," no change in marketing efforts (that currently skew toward ageism) will take place. Simply put, advertisers and marketers continue doing what they have always done because it is easier than taking a new path, even if this new path will lead to better communication with potential customers and ultimately grow revenues.

Finally, one of my favorite examples as to why using chronological age and life stage events (research from the past 50 years) will ultimately fail when used as a basis for marketing communication is this. The world has changed to a global economy. This fact cannot be changed. It cannot be reversed. Marketing strategies that proved to be successful in North America in the past will simply not work in a multicultural world filled with ethnic diversity. Just think for one moment about all those young MBAs who are being educated today. How do we expect them to understand Chinese markets? Through age? Through generational experiences? The current system is destined for communications failure. The foundation upon which future marketing communication is to take place must be timeless and ageless.

Educating the Marketers to a New Advertising Strategy

> "This is a highly heterogeneous marketplace. This is not a one-size-fits all. If there's a hallmark for this audience, it's change - biological and social. (Rick Adler, The Senior Network, Inc.)

> "Advertisers will need to understand the change in sophistication of today's over 50 population. Boomers want to see people their own age represented in ads for products they buy rather than the 70-plus stereotypes or the advertising that uses 20- and 30-year-olds." (Les Harris in Quirk's Marketing Research Review 2000)

The 50-plus market holds more than $1.6 trillion in buying power ... even with this kind of cash, 'corporate America is leery,' an ad exec says. ...Marketers should directly target (this) group, which by 2020, will include one in three Americans. (Ad Age, 2000)

Value Portraits®

A new approach toward appealing to seniors

Traditionally, companies have relied on attitudes, opinions and demographics and even life stages to predict consumer behavior, but these can and do change over time due to life events and circumstances. Although members of any generation are linked by the shared life experiences of their formative years, it is not the experiences and events that have meaning, it is the attitudes, beliefs and values that have been created as a result of these events that is important. The key to capturing the mature audience lies in understanding their key values.

A misunderstanding of the target market's core beliefs and underlying key values will result in stereotypical communications based on the creator's personal beliefs and values. Misunderstanding occurs because as individuals we each view the world (including its material contents, interactions with others and observations of others behaviors) through our own frame of references or "values eyeglasses." While the goal is to create effective communications, the result is often communication that misses the mark and even borders on ageism because we look at others through our own values eyeglasses.

Values do not change

Values are developed over time as a result of beliefs and attitudes. Once developed, values are not likely to change. Beliefs and attitudes are shaped by three important factors:

- *Personal experience*
- *Social proof* or confirmation by others either validates or invalidates our beliefs.
- Finally, and most dangerously, our *imagination* plays a part in defining our beliefs.

Beliefs themselves exist in levels of intensity. Opinions are beliefs we all possess, but we have little psychological attachment to opinions. From there we move into those beliefs that become the constant measure of how we run our day-to-day lives. They become our guiding rules. Mostly, they just operate in the background, helping us make decisions. We generally don't think about our routine daily decisions, but rather respond to any communication or event using these deeply rooted beliefs and values without hesitation.

Finally, those values that have become such a part of us that they indeed make up our identity are called convictions. These are the unchangeable values that have become a deep part of our psyche. We don't question them. We have satisfied ourselves through life's tests and experiences that these are the values that lead to the best decisions and quality of life. It is these last two groups of beliefs that form the "values eye glasses" through which we make daily judgments. They, in fact, become the nearly unconscious "traffic cop" of our every move and choice.

Values are not held distinctly or separately, but as part of an integrated belief system, according to Shalom Schwartz and Wolfgang Bilsky in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. Values guide actions and judgments across situations; attitudes and opinions, on the other hand, are "domain-specific" (beliefs about a particular object within a particular context). Although attitudes and opinions affect behavior, they are likely to change throughout one's lifetime. Values, on the other hand, are deeply engrained, remarkably stable, and change slowly, if at all, over the course of life. Moreover, values constructs are relatively few in number and are largely universal. *Values* can be defined as (a) relatively stable thoughts or beliefs, (b) about desirable behaviors or ways of living, (c) that transcend situations, (d) guide decision making, and (e) are ordered by relative importance.

Eight distinct groups of seniors

What does vary from one individual to the next, rather, is the relative importance one places on different values, depending on one's background and life circumstances. Value Portraits classify mature Americans with similar belief systems into eight distinct groups. Members of each group share a mindset that reinforces a predisposition to behave in a certain way and underlies specific attitudes (for example, purchasing certain products or healthcare services).

The Mature Market Group and Seniors Resource Group conducted a study of adults 62-plus to determine if a person's life events, situations and generational experiences shape their core values, and determined that they can be categorized into eight distinct segments to help predict their marketplace behavior.

Woeful Worriers (5 percent) never recovered their fiscal confidence after the depression, but they retained their faith in authority. They are comfortable with order and routine and shy away from excitement and risk – even if they are dissatisfied.

Liberal Loners (9 percent) find it difficult to become a part of the human family. They appear to fit a bleeding heart stereotype, but they focus on their own independence, concerns and needs, leaving little energy for family or friends.

Fiscal Conservatives (15 percent) are aware that they are admired for their accomplishments and for their possessions. They shop for quality over value, but manage to find the bargains. Wary of change, they focus on tradition and family pride.

Active Achievers (10 percent) have enjoyed all aspects of their lives. They don't see themselves as "old" and don't plan to join the older ranks, regardless of their chronological age. They are well educated, socially involved and usually well to do. Nonconformists, they enjoy excitement. They are often divorced and may lose touch with their families.

True Blue Believers (20 percent) are often the moderates. They are religious but not zealous, compassionate but not overindulgent, happy not giddy, smart not brilliant, conservative not inflexible. They are fulfilled by families and friends and satisfied with themselves.

In-charge Intellectuals (7 percent) are lifelong readers and thinkers who keep up with change and are secure in their abilities and opinions and perceptions. Their personal relationships may be casual. They expect more of themselves than others.

Intense Individualists (14 percent) see the world as unforgiving and a tough place to be. They have a pioneer's resourcefulness and self-reliance. They assume a leadership role in their families and communities. They are unsentimental and uncompromising.

Hearth and Homemakers (20 percent) keep their family and friends at the center of their lives. Their religious congregation is the center of their community. Often caretakers and volunteers, they're happy and see their lives as rewarding.

This segmentation serves to match those with the strongest need or desire for certain products or services with those particular categories. Creative and media can be matched to the segments to provide different approaches to match differing needs, lifestyles and lifestages.

Age Blind, Value Clear

Looking at human behavior through values-based segmentation research is not only logical but it is also statistically accurate. The key difference between this segmentation and others based on life stage or demographics is that values don't shift--while life stage and demographics do. Even attitudes shift. Values on the other hand are virtually constant in the guidance they provide for each of us.

In fact, if one were to view each segment, as a different solar system, then each would have a different combination of values at the center representing its sun. Around these values revolve not planets, but words, phrases and images that work for that segment. There are also negative values or values that *repel* each segment. These might be considered the black holes of this little universe. If the creative images and words or even communications tactics used are the wrong ones, then the system repels those words and images akin to the like poles of a magnet. In other words, marketing pieces may get tossed into the black hole, not necessarily due to poor product features or benefits, but because the words and phrases used were repelled by that person's universe of values.

Likewise, the impact of a values-based segmentation on media planning can and will be felt. Knowing the media habits of the 62+ population is important. By determining the media habits of the *Active Achievers* or the *Intense Individualists,* for example, media placement and tactics can be more targeted and thus cost effective.

The values-based segmentation has a huge potential to help those individuals who market to seniors. It can help them achieve a greater insight as to which words and phrases to use and which to avoid generally, and in each universe. Finally, the potential of values-based research is that one can truly begin the process of marketing to an "ageless" market. For instance, *Active Achievers* and *Intense Individualists* place a very high value on thrills and excitement. This explains some of those "odd" seniors that don't fit into the stereotypical view of this population. These market segments are the

ones skydiving and trekking off to some reclusive place on earth to visit a hidden temple. Interestingly enough, we know there are younger individuals doing the same thing. Why? Because values cut across all age groups. If a 45-year old and a 65-year old aspire toward the same value, then messages based on that value will communicate with both.

As the leading-edge boomers begin to age chronologically, every company in America is trying to scramble to grab this market. There are so many numbers, so many life stages and so many different types of boomers that trying to make sense of it all can be confusing, costly and fruitless.

One of the key functions of research based on Value Portraits is that it provides an unchanging baseline against which all known demographic information can be categorized and evaluated. Now marketers can take the known information and look at it through the "values eyeglasses" of their target market instead of filtering the information through their own biased eyes.

"We've entered a new age of old age." (James Firman, President, National Council on Aging)

Marketers who worry about their product being labeled as an "old folks' brand" need to educate their 30-year-old brand managers to walk in the shoes of someone twice their age. Help them to know that those who may be of "retirement age" don't necessarily retire – they often redirect, refocus and reinvent themselves.

Studies show that someone over 60 views themselves as 15 years younger. "Whereas your typical 30-year-old copywriter, if you ask them to pick a 60-year-old out of a group of seniors, they'll pick someone who is 75-years old." (Kathy Curry formerly of Sandcastle Group in American Demographics 2000)

"Older Americans are spending a lot more than advertisers give them credit for. We are a youth culture. We value youth above all else, but some advertisers can see through the gloss … and go for the sale." (Stacey Lynn Koerner, SVP of broadcast research, Initiative Media)

"Sixty-year-olds don't think like they did in the last generation. Sixty-year-olds in the last generation wore plaid pants." (Richard Kinsler, president of SLG Advertising and former publisher of Playboy and Mademoiselle)

50-PLUS NUMBERS AND FACTOIDS

Fifty-plus adults now comprise 38 percent of the U.S. population and this number jumps to 47 percent by 2020. (Census Bureau)

Fifty-plus adults account for approximately 80 percent of personal wealth in U.S. banks and financial institutions, and have 50 percent of all discretionary income. (Age Wave Report, 2001)

A Baby Boomer turns 50 every seven seconds.

Approximately 6,000 Americans each day celebrate their 65th birthday. (Selling to Seniors, 2001)

A person who turned 65 in 1998 can expect to live an additional 17.8 years. (Research Alert, 2001)

Of those persons 55-plus in the civilian labor force in 2000, 97 percent were employed, including 96.8 percent of men and 97.2 percent of women. [These numbers may have fluctuated during the latest economic turmoil.] (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000)

An analysis by the U.S. Bureau of Labor says 17.5 percent of men 65-plus were still in the workforce in 2000 (up from 16.4 percent in 1990), as were 9.4 percent of women 65 plus (up from 8.7 percent in 1990).

Median household net worth in 1999, according to age of household head: 55-64, $145,000; 65-74, $190,000; 75 plus, $132,900. (Administration on Aging, 2001)

Distribution of sources of income for Americans 65-plus based on a study in 2000 by the Employee Benefit Research Institute: Social Security, 41 percent; earnings from work, 20 percent; asset income, 18 percent; pensions and annuities, 19 percent; other, 2 percent.

Percentage who owned their own homes in 1999: 50-54, 77.8 percent; 55-59, 80.7 percent; 60-64, 81.3 percent.

Fifty-plus adults own almost 50 percent of the credit cards in the U.S. (Age Wave Report, 2001)

Spending

Consumers over 50 spend an average of $75.24 per week on groceries. (International Dairy-Deli-Bakery Association, 2001)

According to a survey by the Cotton Incorporated Lifestyle Monitor, the amount of money spent on clothes in the past month (June 2002) by women 50-55: none, 20 percent; $1-$50, 30 percent; $51-$100, 14 percent; $101-$200, 20 percent; over $200, 17 percent.

Fifty-plus adults buy 41 percent of all new cars, and 48 percent of all luxury automobiles. Consumers in the 60-69 age bracket have more than doubled their new-vehicle purchases since the early 1970s. (Age Wave Report, 2001)

Today's 50-plus adults represent 80 percent of all luxury travel, and spend 74 percent more on a typical vacation than 18-49-year-olds. According to an Age Wave report in 2001, they spend 40 percent more time vacationing in their 50s than they did in their 40s.

Favorite activities enjoyed by mature vacationers: shopping, 29 percent; visiting historical places or museums, 15 percent; attending cultural events or festivals, 12 percent; gambling, 11 percent; outdoor activities, 11 percent; visiting national or state parks, 8 percent; going to the beach, 7 percent; golf/tennis/skiing, 3 percent. (Travel Industry Association of America, 2001)

Drugs and Health Care

Of the 50 drugs used most frequently by seniors, the average annual cost per prescription as of early 2001 was $956. (AARP) The average number of prescriptions per older American increased from 19.6 in 1992 to 28.5 in 2000. (Families USA, 2000)

Consumers 50-plus purchase 77 percent of all prescription drugs and 61 percent of over-the counter drugs. (Advertising Age, 2000)

Seniors spend anywhere from 12 percent to 19 percent of their income on out-of-pocket health expenses. (AARP, 2001)

Technology

Half of 50-plus consumers have personal computers at home, and 70 percent of this group has Internet access. (Advertising Age, 2000)

Ninety-two percent of those computer owners age 55-plus have shopped online, and 78 percent have made purchases. (Age Light Institute, 2000)

Most popular on-line activities for senior Internet users according to a Pew Research Center study in 2000: e-mail, 93 percent; search for health info, 53 percent; get financial information, 44 percent; read political news, 36 percent; play a game, 32 percent; buy/sell stocks, 12 percent.

Examples of Ageism in Advertising

Ageism (n.) didn't enter the vocabulary until 1969. It is defined as prejudice or discrimination against a particular age group, especially the elderly.
Elderly (adj., noun) entered our vocabulary in 1611. Webster's describes elderly as "rather old, especially beyond middle age."
Please see our videotape and handout for recent examples of Ageism and Ageless Advertising in the U.S.

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Gratitude is given to Anita Landis, Consultant with the Mature Market Group for her effort in helping to create this document.

A Matter of Values:

Value Portraits[SM]

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Introduction

Today we are witnessing a dramatic shift in the demographics of aging. As a result of the Baby Boom and increases in average life expectancy, mature Americans comprise the single fastest growing segment of the U.S. population. Politicians, health care organizations, financial institutions, as well as the leisure and housing industries are among the many groups who want the attention of seniors. Yet to really understand seniors, it is necessary to understand their values and how they affect real life choices.

Values have been defined as (a) relatively stable thoughts or beliefs (b) about desirable behaviors or ways of living (c) that transcend specific situations, (d) guide decision making, and (e) are ordered by relative importance[1]. Values are not held distinctly or separately, but as part of an integrated belief system.

Values guide actions and judgments across situations; attitudes and opinions, on the other hand, are "domain-specific" (beliefs about a particular object within a particular context). Although attitudes and opinions affect behavior, they are likely to change throughout one's lifetime. Values, on the other hand, are deeply engrained, remarkably stable, and change slowly if at all over the life course. Moreover, values constructs (such as security and self-respect) are relatively few in number and are largely universal.

What does vary from one individual to the next, rather, is the relative importance one places on different values, depending on one's background and life circumstances. **Value Portraits**[SM] classifies mature Americans with similar belief systems into eight distinct groups. Members of each group share a mindset that reinforces a predisposition to behave in a certain way (e.g. buy product X) and underlies specific attitudes (e.g. dislike brand Y).

For these reasons, values offer a robust approach to market segmentation. Value Portraits[SM] informs marketing strategy in order to:

- Identify market segments with the strongest affinity to product and service offerings;
- Develop more effective programs by underscoring the important values of consumers in each target segment;
- Effectively position products and services by emphasizing attributes that are linked to the values of a particular segment; and
- Identify new product opportunities and/or modify existing products to be consistent with consumer value profiles and emerging trends.

[1] Schwartz, S.H. & Bilsky, W. (1990). Toward a theory of universal content and structure of values: Extensions and cross-cultural replications. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 58, 878-891.

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Methodology

The study design included three primary phases of research conducted among Americans age 62 or older. Each phase built upon and informed subsequent phases of research.

Phase One: Development and Pretest of Values Instrument

The first phase of research focused on the development of a measurement tool to assess seniors' values. To begin, a comprehensive list of potentially significant values was culled from the academic research literature on values, including existing measurement and segmentation schemes. The measurement of values typically involves asking respondents to rate and/or rank the importance of several values. To circumvent the tendency of respondents to consider all values "important," we developed multiple *indicator statements* for each of the value dimensions in our theoretical framework. Existing scales drawn from the literature were utilized whenever feasible.

To assess the reliability and validity of the value indicator statements, a pretest was conducted via mail survey. A nationally representative sample of 600 Americans, 62 years and older, was drawn from the Seniors Research Group's (SRG) proprietary research panel. The Seniors Research Panel comprises a diverse group of nearly 20,000 mature adults who have agreed to participate in research studies. Participation in the Seniors Research Panel is voluntary and members are not compensated financially for joining. Although the panel does not represent a true probability sample, our sampling design matched panel members to the general population based upon key demographic characteristics.

Phase Two: Industry-Specific Questionnaires

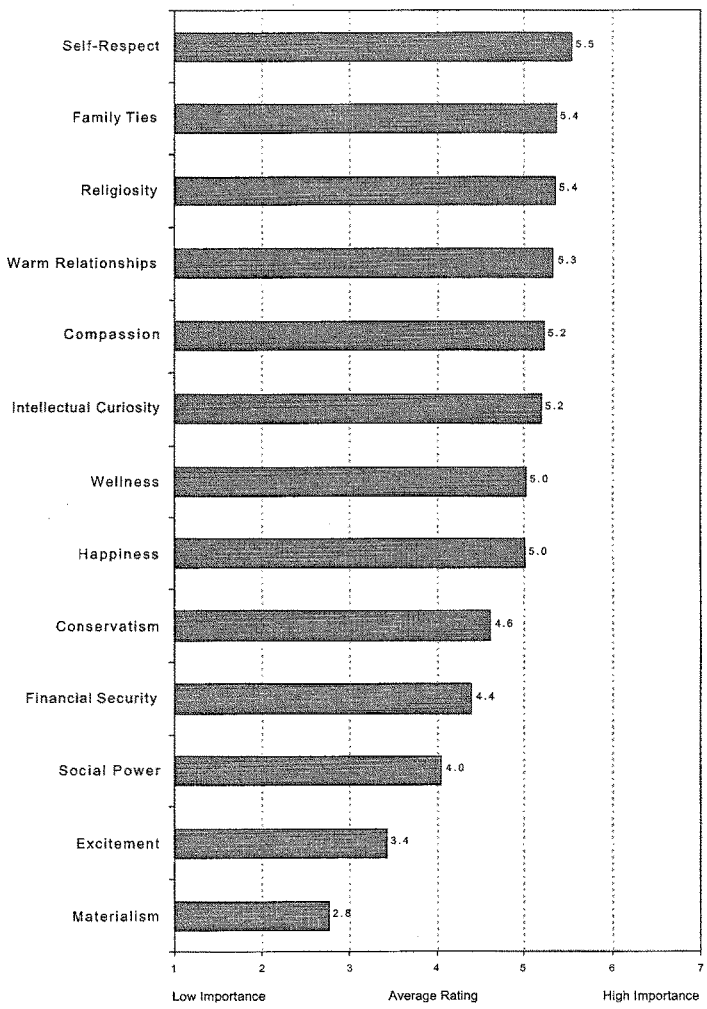
The second phase of research focused on the collection and analysis of quantitative data. The primary objective of this phase was to identify and profile unique segments within the mature market defined on the basis of similar belief systems. In addition, in order to assess the capacity of values as a predictor of consumer behaviors within specific business contexts, theoretical models were developed and tested within two key industries: health care and housing. For each of these industries, a comprehensive questionnaire was developed to gather data on personal values as well as domain-specific attitudes and behaviors. A total of 2,920 (response rate = 73%) Seniors Research Panel members completed the Social Values Survey (1,424 completed the Social Values Survey with Health Care Supplement and an additional 1,496 panel members completed the Social Values Survey with Housing Supplement).

Preliminary values-based segments were created using data derived from the Health Care Supplement survey, and validated with the Housing Supplement data. Each sample consistently produced eight distinct segments with similar value profiles.

Phase Three: Cognitive Interviews

Upon completion of the quantitative phase, SRG conducted qualitative research in order to obtain rich, highly descriptive data regarding the cognitive and psychological "profile" of each of these values-based segments. In-depth telephone interviews were conducted with six members of each segment who have values that most closely reflect the core of each segment. The moderator probed the "cognitive structure" of participants' values-system using a qualitative interviewing technique known as *laddering*. This technique was developed to gain an understanding of how consumers think about a product or service, while uncovering the hierarchical structure of attitudes and values that drive their preferences. The qualitative data collected in this phase of the study both validates and augments the quantitative phase, providing even greater insight into what truly motivates these diverse segments.

Values Held by Older Americans



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Values Held by Older Americans

Dozens of attitudinal questions were asked in order to gauge the importance of more than 30 different values to seniors. For the sake of clarity, these distinct values were summarized in 13 dimensions, ranked from most to least important (facing page). For example, seniors consider materialism least important, with an average rating of only 2.8 out of 7 points.

Self-respect is of utmost importance to mature Americans. They believe in integrity and perseverance. Self-respecting seniors also tend to value self-sufficiency and independence.

Family ties are also very important to seniors. Seniors with strong family ties consider their family a top priority. They are genuinely interested in the welfare of the family and each of its members, wherever they may reside, or how frequently they may see them and are willing to make sacrifices.

Faith and religion, expressed as a spiritual connection to God and the community of believers, is virtually as important to mature Americans as their family ties. Many are guided by religious principles taking comfort in their religion and the sense of a divine purpose in life.

Warm relationships are highly valued by mature Americans. They are emotionally supportive and loyal and consider friendship a top priority.

Kindness and compassion are values that go a step beyond warm relationships. Compassionate seniors value forgiveness and honesty and emphasize helping others. They believe in social justice and equality for all people.

There is a segment of the aging population that exhibits a high degree of **intellectual curiosity**. These seniors pursue knowledge, paying attention to changes taking place around them. They enjoy mental challenges and look to understand rather than accept what it is they are investigating.

Health and well-being are important values, but not on the top of the list as one might expect. Wellness-minded seniors are likely to lead a healthy lifestyle by diet, exercise and avoiding health risks. Seniors that value health and well-being strive for inner harmony and tend to have a positive outlook on life.

Seniors value **fun and happiness** similar to wellness. Seniors who value happiness maintain positive outlooks on life. They enjoy variety and tend to lead active lives.

As might be expected, many seniors are **conservative** in their approach to living. They are respectful of tradition and authority, rules and social institutions. Conservative seniors also value politeness and civility.

Many seniors also value **financial security**, as one might expect. They are concerned about having enough money to sustain their current lifestyle and take care of unforeseeable circumstances.

Some seniors value **power and recognition**. They prefer to take the lead rather than follow orders and seek the praise and accolades from others.

The rush of **excitement** does not just belong to the young. There are seniors who crave thrills and adventure. They tend to be spontaneous and rebellious.

Material possessions are important to some seniors. They value owning status symbols. Materialistic seniors are conscious of brand image and how others perceive them.

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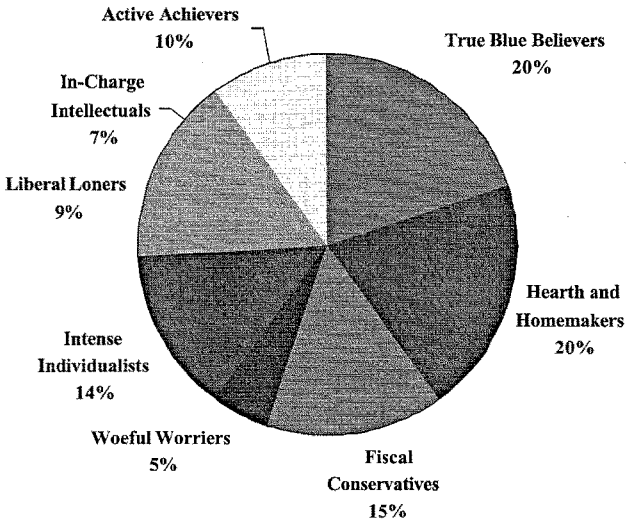
Value Portraits[SM]

Value Portraits[SM] classifies mature Americans into one of eight distinct groups. Members of each group share similar belief systems.

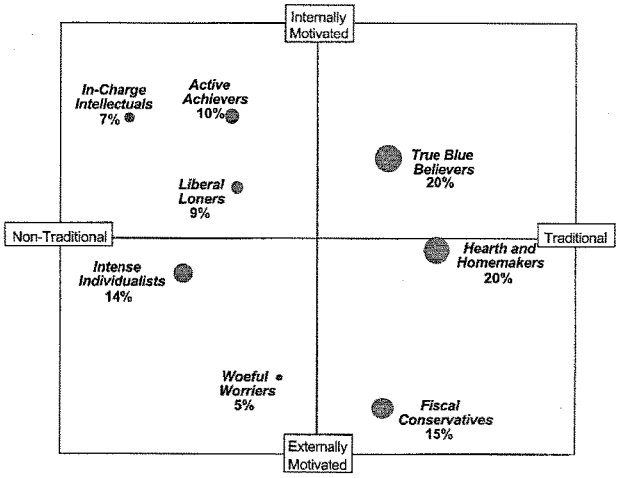
True Blue Believers and *Hearth and Homemakers* are relatively large groups, comprising approximately 20% of the 62+ market each. *Woeful Worriers*, on the other hand, make up approximately 5% of this market.



Value Portraits[SM]

As the map below illustrates, some values profiles are more similar than others. The thirteen values dimensions reflect two major themes: **"Traditionalism"** (the degree to which one embraces traditional, family values) and **"Motivation"** (the degree to which one is motivated by external or material rewards).

Map of Values-Based Segments on "Traditionalism" and "Motivation" Themes

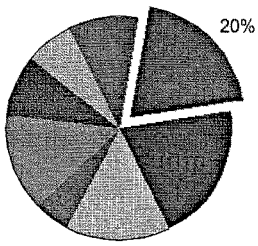


Note: Circle size indicates relative segment size

Here we show the "Traditionalism" theme on the East/West axis and the "Motivation" theme on the North/South axis. The location of a particular segment within a quadrant indicates its relationship to these two themes. For example, the *Hearth and Homemaker* segment can be interpreted as highly "traditional" and slightly "externally motivated" whereas *In-Charge Intellectuals* tend to be "non-traditional" and "internally motivated."

True Blue Believers

Approximately 1 in 5 seniors belong to this group



Compared to other mature Americans, True Blue Believers consider...

- **Kindness and compassion**
- **Fun and enjoyment of life**
- **Faith and religion**

} **More Important**

- **Thrills and excitement**
- **Material possessions**
- **Power and recognition**

} **Less Important**

Demographic Summary

Characteristic	True Blue Believers	Average
	%	%
Male	30	42
Married	61	57
Widowed	27	26
Retired	68	65
College Graduate	14	13
Professional/Managerial	31	32
Reside in Single Family Home	72	71
Own Primary Residence	81	81
Invested Assets above $30,000	63	63
Median Income Range	$30–40,000	$30-40,000

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True Blue Believers

True Blue Believers have found the "sweet spot" of living and have remained there. They tend to be religious but not zealous; compassionate but not overly indulgent; happy but not giddy; intellectually curious but not academic; enjoy strong family ties but are not dependent; conservative but not inflexible; value warm relationships but take care of business, too.

They tend to be holistic in their view of life; they know who they are and accept their limitations in life while enjoying their gifts. They react to life situations as they arise and are not worried about the unforeseeable future. They are quick to reach out to other people that need assistance and do not hesitate in offering support. These seniors do not seek undue attention and are not thrilled by rewards.

> *"I have a guardian angel who watches over me wherever I go. I thank God for everything that happens in my life. I always try to help people. I'm directed to them and offer whatever kindness I can."*

> *"I look for a doctor who is truthful – honest and open, who will listen to me and make me feel part of my care. After all, it's my health and I want to be treated like a partner."*

Health

- True Blue Believers are in remarkably good health. Compared to other seniors, they are significantly less likely to have experienced depression, insomnia, arthritis and other bone or joint diseases. This group of seniors tends to rate their health status as "good" or "excellent." More than a third of the seniors in this group report having complete control over their own health care decisions and almost half are "very satisfied" with their overall health care.

Finances and Purchasing Behavior

- The income levels of True Blue Believers are consistent with other seniors. Relatively few fall into either the lowest (9% less than $10,000) or highest (5% $80,000 or more) income category. These seniors are likely to live in their own home, mobile home, apartment, or with relatives and almost four in ten households have only one automobile.

- Compared to the other senior value groups, True Blue Believers are the most cost-conscious. A significantly higher proportion of seniors in this group shops around for the best price. They are not turned off by mass merchandisers (such as Kmart or Wal-Mart) and are not likely to purchase an item they feel is too costly.

Lifestyles

- Compared to others, seniors in this group are more likely to read for pleasure, attend religious services, garden and volunteer in their community regularly. Their travel habits are consistent with other seniors – consisting of short weekend or week-long vacations, hotel stays and airplane travel. This group of seniors is slightly less likely than the average senior to stay at a timeshare or travel by motor home or camper.

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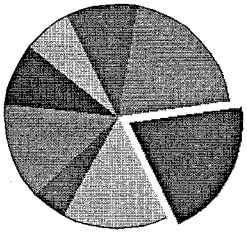
Hearth and Homemakers

Approximately 1 in 5 seniors belong to this group



20%

Compared to other mature Americans, Hearth and Homemakers consider...

- Family ties
- Warm relationships
- Tradition and authority

} More Important

- Intellectual curiosity
- Financial security
- Thrills and excitement

} Less Important

Demographic Summary

Characteristic	Hearth and Homemakers	Average
	%	%
Male	38	42
Married	60	57
Widowed	28	26
Retired	68	65
College Graduate	13	13
Professional/Managerial	25	32
Reside in Single Family Home	77	71
Own Primary Residence	85	81
Invested Assets above $30,000	62	63
Median Income Range	$20–30,000	$30-40,000

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Hearth and Homemakers

Hearth and Homemaker seniors are the "salt of the earth." Family and friends are the center of attention for this group. They are attuned to people around them and actively support friends and family in their travails. They are quick to forgive slights and look beyond others' imperfections, while at the same time practicing honesty and compassion.

Regardless of health status, they strive to stay involved in their churches, social and community groups. Life's memories are positive for these seniors. They remember cherished relationships, and are grateful for the things they have done in their lives. Hearth and Homemakers do not worry much about their future. Financial security is not a great motivator; they will just get by on what they have.

Hearth and Homemakers stay the course. They set their minds to what they want; they do whatever is necessary to maintain the faith and relationships that are so important to them.

> *"Out of all the important things in life, family is most important. I never had children but my life is full of family, friends and church. I work hard to be well so that I can continue to enjoy them."*
>
> *"I am blessed with many friends. They call me all the time and we are always going out to lunch or dinner. They take me wherever I have to go. It really makes life worthwhile."*
>
> *"Our life more or less revolves around our church. We're there several times a week. That's where all our friends are."*

Health

- Hearth and Homemakers tend to be in good health. They are likely to rate their own health status as "good" or "very good" and are generally satisfied with their overall health care. These seniors feel they have complete to moderate control over their own health care decisions.

Finances and Purchasing Behavior

- Seniors in this group tend to have relatively modest annual household incomes – more than half have an annual income of $30,000 or less. Although most Hearth and Homemakers own or rent their primary residence, approximately 10% have some other arrangement.

- This group, like other seniors, tends to be cost-conscious. Significantly higher proportions of seniors in this group agree that they only try new products with a coupon or discount and are repeat brand purchasers. Interestingly, four out of ten Hearth and Homemakers state they purchase some items despite their cost.

Lifestyles

- Hearth and Homemakers prefer structured social activities such as attending religious services, participating in organized activities for seniors and attending senior centers. Their travel habits are consistent with other seniors, although they are more likely than the average senior to go on an organized travel tour.

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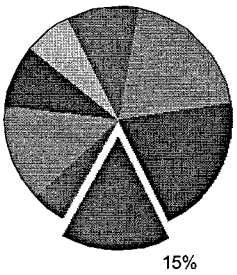
Fiscal Conservatives

Approximately 15% of seniors belong to this group



Compared to other mature Americans, Fiscal Conservatives consider...

- **Material possessions**
- **Financial security**
- **Health and well-being**

} **More Important**

- **Intellectual curiosity**
- **Fun and enjoyment of life**
- **Kindness and compassion**

} **Less Important**

Demographic Summary

Characteristic	Fiscal Conservatives	Average
	%	%
Male	50	42
Married	54	57
Widowed	27	26
Retired	67	65
College Graduate	9	13
Professional/Managerial	24	32
Reside in Single Family Home	72	71
Own Primary Residence	81	81
Invested Assets above $30,000	55	63
Median Income Range	$20–30,000	$30-40,000

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Fiscal Conservatives

This group knows it has achieved the "good life" when they are admired for what they have in possessions and for their accomplishments in life. Financial security is important; it is their key to affluence. They may use their accumulated resources to leverage better treatment or favor from others.

Fiscal Conservatives worry a great deal about their lives; they are concerned about their health, security, home maintenance, transportation, companionship and social activities. They depend on affirmations from outside themselves to confirm that they are "doing just fine."

Fiscal Conservatives pride themselves on their self-sufficiency. They have persevered through life, meeting every challenge. They know they can, and do, take care of themselves, and they are proud of that fact. Carving out a niche where they can claim self-respect, this group of seniors utilizes their achievements and accomplishments, regardless of how limited or complete they may be. They may not be well-read, but claim success in their work. They may not be world travelers, but have made a good life for themselves. They may not be social butterflies, but have earned the respect of the people who count.

> *"I live plain. My house needs a lot of fixing up. But, I'm very frugal. People think I have money, but I just shop well."*

> *"My daughter wants me to sign over a piece of land I own. I figured out that if I keep the land, she'll take good care of me, so I don't have to sell it to go into a nursing home."*

Health

- Fiscal Conservatives are twice as likely than the average senior to rate their health status as being poor. Compared to others, a significantly higher proportion of seniors in this group report having experienced depression. They tend not to be totally satisfied with their overall health care although they feel they have control over their own health care decisions.

Finances and Purchasing Behavior

- This group of seniors tends to have less financial resources compared to seniors with other values. They tend to hold their assets in traditional bank savings accounts and Certificates of Deposits rather than the riskier stock and bond markets. The majority of Fiscal Conservatives own their primary residence.

- Fiscal Conservatives are more likely than the average senior to only try new products with some kind of incentive, only purchase brands they have purchased before, and avoid mass merchandisers.

Lifestyles

- Seniors in this group are generally less likely to engage in leisure activities – including physical exercise, volunteering, and participating in recreational sports. They tend to travel less than the average senior – travel consists of short weekend or week-long vacations, hotel stays, airplane travel and motor home or camper trips.

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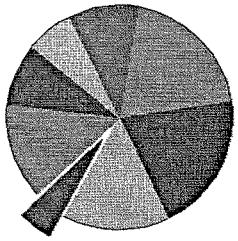
Woeful Worriers

Approximately 1 in 20 seniors belong to this group



5%

Compared to other mature Americans, Woeful Worriers consider...

- Financial security
- Faith and religion
- Family ties

} More Important

- Fun and enjoyment of life
- Self-respect
- Health and well-being

} Less Important

Demographic Summary

Characteristic	Woeful Worriers	Average
	%	%
Male	29	42
Married	52	57
Widowed	26	26
Retired	59	65
College Graduate	7	13
Professional/Managerial	24	32
Reside in Single Family Home	63	71
Own Primary Residence	73	81
Invested Assets above $30,000	54	63
Median Income Range	$20–30,000	$30-40,000

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Woeful Worriers

This group feels generally unappreciated; life has dealt them a bad hand and they deserve more out of life than what they got. They feel the need to take care of themselves because no one else will. They are much more concerned than other seniors about their health, home, lack of companionship and social activities.

Financial security is very important to the Woeful Worriers. Some of these seniors work hard at not thinking about the future. *"If I think about it, I worry about it, and I just don't know where the money is going to come from."* Seniors in this group with health insurance and modest retirement income still worry that catastrophic illness will eat up their resources.

Some turn to religion for solace and support. They want acknowledgement that life is difficult and need to know that their devotion is appreciated. Faith is following the rules and honoring the beliefs they have been taught. For right now, they take comfort in the routine, even if unsatisfying - they call it old age.

> *"I live in the house my father built when I was eight. I lived here with my sister until she died. Now my nephew owns the house and he is allowing me to stay. I'm a nostalgic person. The past is my real life."*

> *"I don't want to think about long-term care. I'm not looking forward to it. I don't want a nursing home, but probably cannot afford anything else. You know, you can't plan for the future all the time."*

Health

- Woeful Worriers are twice as likely than the average senior to rate their overall health status as "fair" or "poor." Seniors in this group are more likely to report having experienced depression, high blood pressure or hypertension. They tend to be dissatisfied with their overall health care and feel they have only moderate control over their own health care decisions.

Finances and Purchasing Behavior

- Compared to seniors with other values, Woeful Worriers tend to have fewer financial resources. Fewer seniors in this group have bank savings accounts or Certificates of Deposits, stocks or bonds, or money market accounts. Compared to other seniors, a higher proportion of Woeful Worriers rent rather than own their primary residence – they are more likely than the average senior to live in an apartment or with relatives.

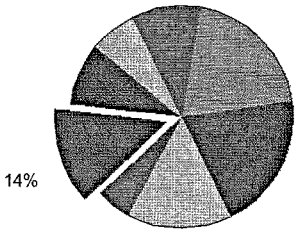
- Woeful Worriers like most seniors are cost-conscious. Their purchasing behavior is consistent with other seniors.

Lifestyles

- Woeful Worriers appear to be less involved in leisure activities when compared to seniors with other values – less likely to participate in physical activities such as gardening, shopping, exercising, volunteering or in recreational sports. Seniors in this group are much less likely than the average senior to travel on a yearly basis.

Intense Individualists

Approximately 14% of seniors belong to this group



Compared to other mature Americans, Intense Individualists consider...

- Material possessions
- Thrills and excitement
- Power and recognition

} More Important

- Kindness and compassion
- Family ties
- Warm relationships

} Less Important

Demographic Summary

Characteristic	Intense Individualists	Average
	%	%
Male	62	42
Married	56	57
Widowed	23	26
Retired	64	65
College Graduate	16	13
Professional/Managerial	34	32
Reside in Single Family Home	72	71
Own Primary Residence	81	81
Invested Assets above $30,000	63	63
Median Income Range	$30–40,000	$30-40,000

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Intense Individualists

The focus of this group is to establish and maintain their independence. Their planning and spending patterns are focused on living life the way they want to, without someone else doing it for them. Affluent Intense Individualists are likely to stockpile goods and camouflage their resources to protect themselves. Their houses are typically well maintained and their vehicles receive regular maintenance.

These seniors set their priorities to protect themselves and actively seek new or different ways to exercise and assure their independence. They are not concerned with about conventional wisdom or traditional ways of doing things. They like to be different because it demonstrates their independence and being in control is very important to maintaining that independence. They view the world as tough and unforgiving and intend to do what they can in order to live the way they want.

"I'm my own man. No one ever gave me anything and I direct my own life."

"I am a leader and expect to be followed. I never had a problem with this and got along well with people. I always look for a clear, right choice and push for it."

"We live on six acres on a lake, take care of our place, do our duty, stay out of trouble and keep a low profile. That's best for us."

Health

- In general, seniors in this group are healthy and tend to rate their health status as "very good" or "excellent." The majority of Intense Individualists report having control over their own health care decisions and are slightly more likely than the average senior to be dissatisfied with the overall health care they receive.

Finances and Purchasing Behavior

- Approximately half the seniors in this group have an annual household income of $30,000 or more and their total invested assets are consistent with other seniors. This group is more likely than the average senior to invest in stocks, bonds, and mutual funds and a lower proportion hold their assets in traditional bank savings accounts, Certificates of Deposits and money market accounts. The majority of Intense Individualists own their primary residence and are likely to live in a single-family home, duplex or condominium.

- The purchase attitudes and behaviors of Intense Individualists do not differ significantly from other seniors.

Lifestyles

- Seniors in this group tend to partake in do-it-yourself activities such as gardening, recreational sports and home improvement projects. They are less likely than the average senior to attend religious services, volunteer in the community, partake in organized senior activities or work on arts and crafts projects. Seniors in this group tend to travel more frequently than other seniors, particularly by recreational vehicle or camper.

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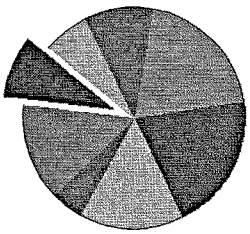
Liberal Loners

Approximately 9% of seniors belong to this group

9%



Compared to other mature Americans, Liberal Loners consider...

- **Intellectual curiosity**
- **Kindness and compassion**
- **Financial security**

} **More Important**

- **Family ties**
- **Tradition and authority**
- **Warm relationships**

} **Less Important**

Demographic Summary

Characteristic	Liberal Loners	Average
	%	%
Male	30	42
Married	42	57
Widowed	33	26
Retired	58	65
College Graduate	10	13
Professional/Managerial	31	32
Reside in Single Family Home	58	71
Own Primary Residence	75	81
Invested Assets above $30,000	59	63
Median Income Range	$20–30,000	$30-40,000

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Liberal Loners

Liberal Loners search for stimulating ideas and information that might help them make sense of their lives. They have a strong sense of purpose and strive for independence from government, financial restraints, health care institutions, friends and family. They value honesty and social equality – everyone should get their fair share. However, Liberal Loners tend not to act on their social compassion.

Liberal Loners are so involved with solving their own inequities and assuring their own independence that they do not have time or energy to actively crusade for the rights of others. They regret not having strong and long-lasting emotional ties with their families. Compassion fills their minds and hearts but does not readily translate to action.

> *"I live by myself in a modular home in a mobile home court and intend to stay here as long as possible. I treasure my privacy and surely would not want to live with one of my children. Wherever I go, I do not want gloom. I want somewhere I can paint, write and have a little dog."*

> *"I'm the oldest of eight children and I raised my siblings. I never had anyone in my whole life to take care of me. I took care of everything myself, but I made it through."*

> *"I really try not to be negative and try to be objective and fair about things. So many people are dirty, dishonest, always breaking the rules. It really makes me angry. We all should receive our fair share, according to our needs."*

Health

- Liberal Loners are generally healthy and are slightly more likely than the average senior to rate their health status as "good," "very good" or "excellent." They feel they have control over their own health care decisions although they are not overly satisfied with the health care they receive.

Finances and Purchasing Behavior

- Seniors in this group are more likely to fall into lower income categories. More than half the Liberal Loners have total invested assets of $30,000 or more – a slightly higher proportion hold traditional bank savings accounts and money market accounts. Although the majority own their primary residence, Liberal Loners are significantly less likely to live in a single-family home. They tend to live in apartments, mobile homes, condominiums or duplexes.

- The purchase attitudes of this group do not differ significantly from other seniors.

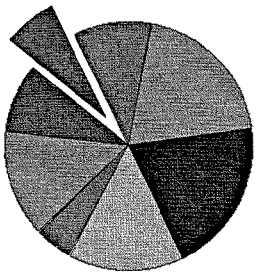
Lifestyles

- Liberal Loners are generally more likely to engage in social activities such as volunteering, doing arts and crafts and attending senior centers. They are significantly less likely than the average senior to garden, do yard work, car repair and other do-it-yourself projects around the house. This group is less likely to travel, particularly by recreational vehicle or camper.

In-Charge Intellectuals

Approximately 7% of seniors belong to this group

7%



Compared to other mature Americans, In-Charge Intellectuals consider...

- Intellectual curiosity
- Power and recognition
- Fun and enjoyment of life

} More Important

- Faith and religion
- Tradition and authority
- Health and well-being

} Less Important

Demographic Summary

Characteristic	In-Charge Intellectuals	Average
	%	%
Male	55	42
Married	61	57
Widowed	19	26
Retired	65	65
College Graduate	22	13
Professional/Managerial	50	32
Reside in Single Family Home	70	71
Own Primary Residence	83	81
Invested Assets above $30,000	80	63
Median Income Range	$40-50,000	$30-40,000

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In-Charge Intellectuals

In some ways, this group represents the elitists of our society. They trust their intellectual prowess and their ability to be in charge. They strive to keep up with change; whether professionally, in areas of interest, or the latest in technology.

The pursuit is important to this group of seniors - pushing their own limits, within the confines of safety and calculated risk, is exciting for them. The rewards they seek may not be conventional – for some, self-sufficiency, for example, may be the utmost reward. In-Charge Intellectuals are not typically religious – they do not look much beyond themselves and their capacities to find answers to life's big questions.

> *"Reading makes me more aware than others. My mind is always searching. There's a lot out there to take advantage of and I'm smarter than the 'average bear.' Slow people really frustrate me. They don't have what they need to know. Being quick mentally is something that defines me."*

> *"We have no intention of living in one of those facilities. We have enough resources to be taken care of at home where we can maintain control over our own lives."*

> *"There are a lot of contradictory issues out there. It is important that we enforce human rights laws in every country. But, the world is getting too many people who can't be helped. People should have to pay their keep or not have children."*

Health

- Seniors in this group are typically in good health. This group is significantly more likely than the average senior to report their health status as "excellent." The majority report having "complete" or "a lot" of control over their own health care decisions, and are generally satisfied with the overall health care they receive.

Finances and Purchasing Behavior

- In-Charge Intellectuals are more affluent than the average senior – a significantly higher proportion falls within the $50,000-$80,000 income category. Slightly more than half have total invested assets of $100,000 or more. Seniors in this group are much more likely to own, rather than rent, their primary residence – most live in their own single-family home.

- The majority admit that they will shop around for the best price, although compared to the average senior, they are not as brand loyal and are more willing to try new products without an incentive. This group is significantly more likely to purchase an item, no matter the price.

Lifestyles

- Seniors in this group are more likely to participate in social and physical activities, such as exercising, partaking in recreational sports, and attending the theatre, movies or concerts regularly. Compared to others, In-Charge Intellectuals are significantly less likely to attend religious services. Seniors in this group travel frequently, particularly on longer vacations and by airplane.

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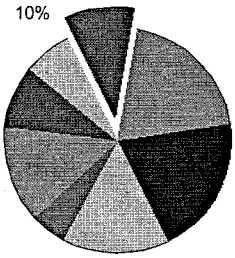
Active Achievers

Approximately 1 in 10 seniors belong to this group



Compared to other mature Americans, Active Achievers consider...

- Thrills and excitement
- Power and recognition
- Intellectual curiosity

} More Important

- Tradition and authority
- Family ties
- Health and well-being

} Less Important

Demographic Summary

Characteristic	Active Achievers	Average
	%	%
Male	37	42
Married	56	57
Widowed	20	26
Retired	58	65
College Graduate	13	13
Professional/Managerial	45	32
Reside in Single Family Home	68	71
Own Primary Residence	84	81
Invested Assets above $30,000	70	63
Median Income Range	$30–40,000	$30-40,000

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Active Achievers

Active Achievers look for excitement. They are curious about things they have never tried and are spontaneous in deciding to do fun or interesting things. Well educated, socially involved and successful, these seniors have decided not to be old. Active Achievers are more comfortable with computers and electronic communications. They are more mobile than many other seniors, traveling often. Independence is very important to these seniors.

Social expectations, their children's image of them, health, and age limitations are not going to deter them from doing what they want. *"I'm my own person. No one tells me what to do. It's a matter of pride and self-respect. I'd be devastated if I lost my independence. You're no longer useful if you can't do as you please."* Seniors in this group defend what they believe and work for causes they consider important. They do not stand on ceremony and when confronted with formal behavior expectations are likely to be non-conforming.

> *"I still get up at 4:30 every morning and get ready for whatever the day may bring. I'm always ready for whatever may come. My friends think I'm daring and impulsive, but I'm just ready."*
>
> *"My car is very important to me. It is my independence. When I want to go somewhere, it's there waiting for me. If I get bored, I just jump into the car and take off for awhile."*
>
> *"I'm still excited about politics. People I vote for don't get elected, but I work hard for them anyway. I'm an independent and I work for the ones I like."*
>
> *"My daughter is wonderful, but she doesn't have what it takes to take me in and do all for me that I did for my mother. I'm too independent, I'm my own person and don't want to lean on anyone."*

Health

- Generally in good health, Active Achievers are likely to rate their health status as "good" or "very good." They are satisfied with their overall health care and feel they have "a lot" to "complete" control over their own health care decisions.

Finances and Purchasing Behavior

- Most seniors in this group are affluent - a third have incomes of $50,000 or more, and they are nearly twice as likely than the average senior to fall into the highest income category of $80,000 or more. Most have more than $30,000 in invested assets -- approximately four in ten have $100,000 or more in total invested assets. Most own their primary residence and are likely to live in a single-family home, duplex or townhouse.

- The purchase attitudes of Active Achievers do not differ much from the average senior, with one notable exception – they are willing to try brands they have not previously purchased.

Lifestyles

- These seniors are active, preferring activities that involve some degree of self-satisfaction, such as reading, gardening, participating in recreational sports or aerobic exercise, arts and crafts, volunteering, and home improvements. They are frequent travelers, particularly extended vacations, airplane travel and timeshare stays.

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The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Snyder. We are going to have some questions about those ads, I know. I want to just recognize for the record, we have been joined by our senior ranking Republican member of the committee, Senator Larry Craig, and by our good friend and colleague, Senator Debbie Stabenow. I am glad to have them here.

Mr. Paul Kleyman, we are anxious to hear your testimony, with the American Society on Aging in San Francisco. Thank you for being with us.

STATEMENT OF PAUL KLEYMAN, EDITOR, AGING TODAY, AMERICAN SOCIETY ON AGING, SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Mr. KLEYMAN. Well, first, let me thank you, Senators Breaux and Craig and members of the Special Committee on Aging, and especially your terrific staff, for shining a spotlight on this issue. I do want to make clear that my comments this morning are strictly my own views and not representative of the American Society on Aging or the Journalist Exchange on Aging for which I am national coordinator.

I believe that ageism is one of the last remaining "ism's" that can be openly expressed in our society. Whether they are meant to be playful or pointed, a headline that declares "Geezer Nation," or an editor's reference to older people as "prune faces" have no place in the news or in news rooms.

Nowhere is ageism more evident than in the business coverage of the media itself. Newspapers repeatedly state that a television network's bottom line is most heavily damaged when its programs attract older audiences. In fact, the term "old audience" appeared and highlighted part of an article that ran in the New York Times only about 2 years ago, or should I say low-lighted the article?

Not long after that, The Wall Street Journal stressed in an article, "In the past 3 years the median age of NBC's audience has risen to 45 from 41, a bad omen for advertising revenues."

This March, an Associated Press article ran across the country about how ABC was wooing David Letterman to replace Ted Koppel's "Nightline." The article noted that Letterman had "long been unhappy with CBS' older prime time audience." All of these jokes and denigrating comments have their roots in the fact that television advertisers pay far less for every 1,000 older viewers that a program attracts than those in the coveted 18–35 age group. That is a program can win its rating's war but still be considered a loser because its audience is older. It will make less money.

Let me ask you to consider the phrase "old audience" for a moment. If a newspaper ran an article today that said CBS had to recover from having a black audience or a woman's audience, this nation would be in an uproar. It is not long ago in the history of racism that real estate interests discouraged home sales to African Americans in certain areas, because they said doing so would bring down the property values.

Well, that was a terrible self-perpetuating myth, and I believe that the continued devaluing of older people is tantamount to media redlining by age. Now, news organizations are set on attracting younger audiences, and there is nothing wrong with that, ex-

cept that these efforts often come with an irrational bias against both older readers and older journalists.

Let me give you two examples, one of each. One reporter at a national news organization told me that until a couple of years ago, he dealt with an editor who wanted to minimize photos of older people in stories. This editor thought it a big joke to call older citizens prune faces, and the news staff referred to this as the editor's "no prune-face rule."

Another example: a prominent study of economic forces in the news commended news executives who "unceremoniously ax the old warhorses to make way for something new." At least sometimes, though, experience does count, such as after the terrorist attacks of last September 11. A former producer at ABC news noted in a recent article that "the only time older people are given their due respect is when it is time for experts, experts, experts."

She said that such a moment for older experts came after 9/11. At that time of national crisis, Americans wanted to hear from those with knowledge, seasoned by wisdom and experience.

What about at newspapers? A study titled "Age and the Press" that was released this year by Harvard University's Shorenstein Center on The Press Politics and Public Policy stated that "in their market strategies, newspapers are paying nearly no interest to readers in the upper middle ages, in spite of the fact that this is the fastest increasing group of readers." That means the aging baby boomers are being dismissed by newspaper marketers.

Now, I do not want to suggest that the financial issues facing the newspaper industry are uncomplicated. However, the scapegoating of older people is bad business, and it is poor journalism, and it is wrong.

Before closing, I want to emphasize that there is some good news in many American news rooms. I coordinate a group called the Journalist Exchange on Aging which was formed about 10 years ago. In the last 10 years, I have seen a slow but steady growth in the number of reporters devoted to the coverage of issues in aging, including, by the way, reporters at The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal. There is some fine work being done there.

As news organizations aim to secure their economic growth, I believe it is also critical for them to look for ways not to stunt the growth of their coverage about major social developments, especially about the longevity revolution. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Kleyman, and finally, but not least, Ms. Becca Levy. Dr. Levy.

STATEMENT OF DR. BECCA LEVY, PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF EPIDEMIOLOGY AND PUBLIC HEALTH, YALE UNIVERSITY, NEW HAVEN, CT

Dr. LEVY. Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Special Committee on Aging, I appreciate your inviting me to testify on a pressing issue, image of aging in media and marketing.

My research has focused on how the health of older adults is affected by negative images of aging that are promoted in part by the media and marketing. The particular study I will describe to you today found that negative images of aging may have an adverse ef-

fect on the survival of older adults. Before describing the study in more detail, I would like to give a brief background to it.

In a series of earlier experiments, in which older individuals were subliminally exposed to aging images in the form of stereotypes, we found that compared to those exposed to positive stereotypes of aging, those exposed to negative stereotypes of aging tended to function worse on a number of mental and physical outcomes, such as memory performance and on their cardiovascular response to stress.

Elderly individuals may be particularly vulnerable to the effects of negative stereotypes of aging. First, the stereotypes are largely acquired before old age, starting in childhood when they are not yet directly relevant to the individuals exposed to them: as a result, they tend to be uncritically accepted.

By the time old age is reached, the negative stereotypes are in place. They have been internalized and reinforced over a number of decades, thereby making it difficult to mount a psychological defense against them.

The second reason elderly individuals may be sensitive to the effects of negative stereotypes of aging is that as we have found in our research, they can operate without awareness, thus making it difficult for elders to monitor them.

Which brings us to our recent finding that I would like to share with you. This study funded by the National Institute on Aging and the Brookdale Foundation was just published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.

In 1975, when the Ohio Longitudinal Study of Aging and Retirement began, most of the residents age 50 and older of Oxford, OH were asked whether they agree or disagree with questions that measure their images of aging. These self-perceptions of aging questions included: Do you agree or disagree that as you get older, you are less useful?

Participants were interviewed six times over the 20 years of the project. The 660 individuals included in our analyses were matched to survival information that we acquired from the National Death Index.

As can be seen in the chart, we found that those who expressed a more positive self-perception of aging tended to have a survival advantage of 7.5 years over those who expressed more negative self-perception of aging.

That is, when we look at the amount of time it took half of the people in each group to die, the difference between the two groups was 7½ years.

The strength of our finding is demonstrated by those in the more positive self-perception of aging group having better survival than those in the more negative self-perception of aging group, among men as well as women, among those with better as well as worse functional health, and among those with lower as well as higher education.

When we adjusted for a number of variables at baseline, including age and functional health, we found that those in the positive self-perception of aging group still tended to have a significant survival advantage over those in the negative self-perception of aging group.

We also examined a mechanism by which this process occurred. More negative self-perceptions of aging predicted reduced will to live, which in turn tended to contribute to a shorter lifespan. In other words, those with more negative self-perceptions of aging were more likely to consider their lives to be "worthless," "empty," and "hopeless," whereas those with more positive self-perceptions of aging were more likely to select the opposite terms of "worthy", "full," and "hopeful."

In closing, I should note that although the prevalence of negative images of aging is not entirely due to the media and marketing, they seem to be the sources that are the most persuasive, identifiable, systematic and profit driven. Extolling youthfulness while demeaning the old helps to generate images that, as our research suggests, may have devastating consequences.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Levy follows:]

Testimony of Becca R. Levy, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Epidemiology, Yale University

Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Special Committee on Aging, I appreciate your inviting me to testify on the pressing issue: "Image of Aging in Media and Marketing."

My research has focused on how the health of older adults is affected by negative images of aging that are promoted, in part, by the media and marketing. The particular study I will describe to you today found that negative images of aging may have an adverse effect on the survival of older adults.

Before describing the study in more detail, I would like to give a brief background to it. In a series of earlier experiments, in which older individuals were subliminally exposed to aging images in the form of stereotypes, we found that compared to those exposed to positive stereotypes of aging, those exposed to negative stereotypes of aging tended to function worse on a number of mental and physical outcomes, such as memory performance and on their cardiovascular response to stress.

Elderly individuals may be particularly vulnerable to the effects of negative stereotypes of aging. First, the stereotypes are largely acquired before old age, starting in childhood, when they are not yet directly relevant to the individuals exposed to them: as a result, they tend to be uncritically accepted. By the time old age is reached, the negative stereotypes are in place--they have been internalized and reinforced over a number of decades, thereby making it difficult to mount a psychological defense against them. The second reason that elderly individuals may be sensitive to the effects of negative stereotypes of aging is that, as we have found in our research, they can operate without awareness, thus making it difficult for elders to monitor them.

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older, you are less useful? Participants were interviewed six times over the 20 years of the project. The 660 individuals included in our analyses were matched to survival information that we acquired from the National Death Index.

As can be seen in the chart, we found that those who expressed a more positive self-perception of aging had a mean survival advantage of 7.5 years over those who expressed a more negative self-perception of aging. That is, when we looked at the amount of time it took half of the people in each group to die, the difference between the two groups was seven-and-a-half years.

The strength of our finding is demonstrated by those in the more positive self-perception of aging group having better survival than those in the more negative self-perception of aging group among men as well as women, among those with better as well as worse functional health, and among those with lower as well as higher education.

When we adjusted for a number of variables at baseline, including age and functional health, we found that those in the positive self-perception of aging group still tended to have a significant survival advantage over those in the negative self-perception of aging group.

We also examined a mechanism by which this process occurred. More negative self-perceptions of aging predicted reduced will to live, which, in turn tended to contribute to a shorter life span. In other words, those with more negative self-perceptions of aging were more likely to consider their lives to be "worthless," "empty," and "hopeless." Whereas those with more positive self-perceptions of aging were more likely to select the opposite terms of "worthy," "full," and "hopeful."

In closing, I should note that although the prevalence of negative images of aging is not entirely due to the media and marketing, they seem to be the sources that are the most pervasive, identifiable, systematic, and profit-driven. Extolling youthfulness while demeaning the old helps to generate images that, as our research suggests, may have devastating consequences.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Dr. Levy, and thank all the members of the panel, and I just have one or two questions and I want my colleagues to have time to ask questions.

Ms. Roberts, thank you for a very powerful statement. I mean one of the things that you said was that the entertainment business is one of the worst perpetrators of this bigotry in being biased against older Americans, especially women. I mean I guess in order to solve the problem, you have to understand why the problem exists. So I guess my question to you would be why do you think that there is this attitude in Hollywood in the entertainment business that somehow having older Americans in more prominent roles is bad, I guess, for the bottom line?

I mean is it because only young people are making those decisions and do not understand? I mean I guess the question is why do you think it is like that? I mean it was not like that always; was it?

Ms. ROBERTS. No, not at all. I think you have to address the advertising world. I think Madison Avenue, the image maker, tells you not only what to watch but what size you should be, like a size zero or minus, all of which is so negative on every possible level.

The CHAIRMAN. Do they think that is what the general public wants to see? I mean I quite frankly see some of the ads of some of the size women that you are speaking to, and I think they all look sick, but I mean apparently they must be selling something that way.

Ms. ROBERTS. There is no photograph in any magazine that I can think of other than AARP that shows a woman over the age of 45 unless she is selling Depends or Viagra. [Laughter.]

Am I not correct about that?

Mr. SNYDER. Correct. That is correct.

Ms. ROBERTS. I think it starts there. They determine what shows they would like to see on television, and the networks make their money in advertising, and so it comes down to their pocketbooks.

The CHAIRMAN. You mentioned friends and colleagues of yours, like Joan Crawford and Barbara Stanwyck, and real outstanding women actors, who are seen in very positive roles, you know, well into their careers. But it seems like that has changed; has it not?

Ms. ROBERTS. Totally. I mean in the movies that I can think of where Michael Douglas is married to Gwenyth Paltrow or Sean Connery is married to Catherine Jones, who is Michael Douglas' wife actually, it is wrong. I mean a 65- year old man does not have to have a 30-year old wife, although they might prefer it, only because they have been taught to think that way. I am at the peak of my life, and I am in my seventies. It is so wrong to dismiss us, to discard us. I mean they like to airbrush us out of existence.

The CHAIRMAN. You know one of the things that I pointed out in the opening statement, I say to my colleagues, you know, it may be because of the writers. I mean the people who produce the stuff, I mean stuff meaning in a very fine sense of the word. Seventy-seven out of the 122 prime time TV series did not employ a single writer over the age of 50. So if you have the writers who are all younger than we are, you know, it is kind of an understandable reason why they are producing stuff that does not incorporate older Americans in those roles.

Well, Doris, thank you so very much.

Ms. ROBERTS. I can tell you that if you were in my business, you would be out of a job. [Laughter.]

Would that not be terrible?

The CHAIRMAN. No job security there or here probably. [Laughter.]

Senator Craig, questions.

Senator CRAIG. Well, he has more hair, Doris, and it is darker. So I would have been out of a job earlier.

Ms. ROBERTS. Absolutely.

Senator CRAIG. Either that or I would have had a little tucking.

Ms. ROBERTS. A little tuck.

Senator CRAIG. Little dye.

Ms. ROBERTS. Of course.

Senator CRAIG. Little planning.

Ms. ROBERTS. Is that not shocking that people, young women in their twenties and thirties, men as well, are having Botox put all over their faces and facelifts because they are afraid of getting older at that tender age. That is——

Senator CRAIG. Well, what they do not understand and what they are missing in this whole communications effort is something that I did last Monday that no 20-year-old or 30-year-old is going to get a chance to do. I picked up a granddaughter from her first day in kindergarten and took her to McDonald's for lunch, and that was the most rejuvenating youthful experience I have had in a long time. Somehow we need to communicate to the American people that you are at the prime of your life, Doris, and there is this phenomenal abundance in life that can come at all ages.

Ms. ROBERTS. That is right.

Senator CRAIG. Certainly, Mr. Chairman, I thank you for holding this hearing today. Let me ask unanimous consent that my statement be a part of the record. I thank you all for being here to testify today.

We are grabbed up in the myth of Madison Avenue that somehow youth is the only thing that sells. Yet it is the senior community of America that has the largest chunk of disposable income today. Somehow I do not think they get the picture very well, or at least they get a picture that only they want to project, and I hope that we can adjust and change that some, at least by our bully pulpits and certainly you by yours.

It would be very helpful, I think, to all of us to understand those kinds of balances. Dr. Butler, you had mentioned in your testimony that it is a myth that older Americans are affluent. About 70 percent of older American households have an annual income of less than 35,000. Have you done any forecasting of what the future household for baby boomers would be, at least what the future holds as it relates to income? Because while I have talked about general affluency and fixed incomes and those that do have spending capability, statistics do bear out a fact, and those that you have stated.

Dr. BUTLER. Our center has not yet addressed it, but, as you know, with the declining economy and the problems in the stock market and 401(k)s, many of the baby boomers are feeling quite frightened and unprepared, and that means that the oldest, now

56, is just 9 years away from turning 65. So I think it is a topic, as you correctly imply, that must be addressed: the fear of growing older and the fear of growing older poor.

Senator CRAIG. Well, we have seen a dramatic—let me put it this way. We are seeing a shift now in those that are older who are now choosing to work longer or work part-time to supplement their incomes, and while some might view that as negative, many who do it, while they first thought it was a negative experience, in my visits with them have found it a rejuvenating experience, that it kind of fills their life again. It gives them a kind of energy that they had experienced in maybe the peak of their career or the career they retired from earlier, and that, you know, if their health holds obviously, and many now it does, it is a new dynamic that we clearly need to think about and in that there is a frustration of bias also.

Dr. BUTLER. Absolutely.

Senator CRAIG. The question of working in the marketplace.

Dr. BUTLER. If you imagine it were 1900, and the average life expectancy was 47, we might be discussing the prejudices against 50-year-olds and 55-year-olds and whether they can work or not. In truth, it is hard to imagine 69 million baby boomers with all that skill, all that experience and knowledge, sitting by idly, collecting Social Security, using Medicare, without continuing to contribute, and we are beginning to see a slight shift of people staying in the workforce longer, and living longer, they probably should, for their own best interest and the country's, indeed work longer.

But we do find in our studies that only 20 percent of adult Americans know that Social Security phase-in to full eligibility has now been moved to 67. So many of them are operating on the assumption that they will get their retirement at 65. So we do have to have an educational effort here to try to address the issue of working longer and, of course, part of that will actually promote health. We know that being involved, having a purpose, does improve health.

Senator CRAIG. Mr. Chairman, one last question, if I could, of Dr. Levy. How did you decide to do research on how the health of older adults is affected by negative images? What brought you to that?

Dr. LEVY. Initially, I became very interested in the topic when I spent some time in Japan. I noticed how differently it seemed like the elders were being treated in Japan. I started thinking, this country has the longest life span in the world; could there be some connection? So I think that is actually how I started becoming interested in this line of research.

Senator CRAIG. OK. How are you using or how do you plan to use that kind of research?

Dr. LEVY. Well, I hope to continue to look at what is the mechanism, but also I think it is important to start thinking about how to actually change images of aging. I think that a good next step if, this kind of research continues to yield similar results, is to think about how we can actually promote the positive images of aging and teach skills for people to monitor the negative stereotypes.

Senator CRAIG. Well, I have had the good fortune to spend some time in the Orient and I know that age is revered. Thank you all very much. Ms. Roberts, I too love Raymond. [Laughter.]

[The prepared statement of Senator Craig follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR LARRY CRAIG

Good Morning. I want to thank Senator Breaux for holding this important hearing on the image of aging in the media and the marketing industry. It's important that we raise awareness of the problem of societal bias aging and old age in the country.

Seniors are one of our greatest resources. We need to recognize the benefits that we all gain from our seniors' wisdom and experience.

The unrealistic images of aging the media tends to portray are a negative influence on our aging population. We often see the stereotypical picture of the feeble, helpless senior in many commercials and ads. In fact, only 4.25 percent of seniors 65 and older live in nursing homes. This statistic shows that the overwhelming majority of our seniors are living independently.

It's so important to our aging population to have accurate representation in the media. Realistic messages targeted to seniors that actually show what its like to be a senior today—strong, vital, contributing members of society will help to encourage seniors to take better care of themselves.

The media and marketing industry are basing decisions that concern seniors on outdated consumer research. We need to do all we can to encourage these industries to devote more resources into studying demographics. It's vitally important that all industries accurately reflect changes in aging demographics, social demands and culture. With 77 million baby boomers approaching retirement age, this group is too important to ignore.

More importantly, we need to broaden the definition of what it means to grow older in America. Its time we stop thinking of aging as the end of life, but as a continuation of living. Most of us are living longer, healthier, active and productive lives and its time the media and marketing industry start accurately reflecting how our seniors are living today.

Again, I'd like to thank the Chairman for holding this important hearing and I look forward to hearing the testimony of our witnesses.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Stabenow, any questions?

Senator STABENOW. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you first for holding this committee hearing. This is a very important topic and I appreciate your doing this. Thank you to everyone, and, Doris, I have thoroughly enjoyed your many roles over the years.

Ms. ROBERTS. Thank you.

Senator STABENOW. It is wonderful to have you here. Just a couple of observations, and I welcome any comments related to them. I find it very contradictory when we look at this situation. I agree with everything that has been said in terms of media portrayals, but we are also in a world where we go to constituents for support, and the majority of people who vote are older Americans, which I find interesting in the context of this discussion.

There is great power in older Americans from the standpoint of voting and participating and putting people into office who make decisions that are very important regarding resources and whether we go to war and so on. It seems to me somehow we need to bring that power to bear in addressing some of the issues that you are talking about in a different kind of way.

I was also thinking about the whole debate of what is elderly now? I look at my mother who is 76 and in two golf leagues, and uses a computer very effectively and watches C–SPAN and debates me on every issue, and she does a wonderful job of being aware, and I do not consider her elderly in any sense of the word. She is a very vivacious woman.

So I think our whole concept of what is elderly is changing, because we are talking about living longer, being healthier, and are

viewing age 60, age 70, age 80 in a different light as we get older and are still very active and involved.

When the Older Women's League did a study on Medicare, they talked about the fact that when we look at Social Security, and particularly Medicare, particularly for those over age 85, it is women, we see. So I know and I appreciate the comments today, because I think we are particularly looking at stereotypes of women, of older women, not in every case, but in many cases. Doris, you were talking about the really outrageous position that somehow a man in his sixties or seventies or even eighties ought to be married to a 20-year-old or 30-year-old. I hope he has got a lot of Viagra.

But I guess I find it—I want to just say for the record—that I really do believe that this is very much an issue for women, for older women, as a result of what the media is doing, and is something that women of all ages, I think, need to be concerned about.

I think there is one exception, though, in advertising, that while we see advertising and the push for younger people in television and so on, that the fastest growing part of advertising is prescription drugs which is geared to older adults. I would just say as someone involved heavily in the issue of prescription drugs that I am concerned that we now see about two-and-a-half times more being spent by the pharmaceutical industry in advertising than on research. It is a very sales-focused industry now, very much focused on sales targeted to seniors for example, the purple pill.

I think in some way this advertising feeds into image of aging in terms of medicine and the need to be younger and the need to take medicine and prescription drugs and all of these kinds of things, even though obviously there are many prescription drugs that are critical and lifesaving.

But I believe very strongly that we need to be concerned about the sales and marketing end in the pharmaceutical industry now as it relates to prescription drugs, because this is an industry that understands where their target is, and are, I believe, driving up the prices of medicine as a result of heavily advertising and spending more on advertising. So I would welcome any comments there.

I would just simply ask what you believe other than holding hearings, which are so significant in terms of the bully pulpit, are there other recommendations that you have for us that we should be focused on in order to address what I believe is going to continue to be a growing challenge and issue?

The CHAIRMAN. Anybody have a comment on Senator Stabenow's statement?

Mr. KLEYMAN. I could add a couple of notes. Thank you for asking that question. In terms of the news business, I mean, first, I think there needs to be more public attention to this issue, and the Special Committee on Aging has just made a great start on that. It needs to be followed up by advocates for older people across the country, and people individually have to begin to stand up and say they are mad as hell and will not take it anymore. But also, they have to begin to challenge the defensive economic arguments from the news industry.

A second point I would like to make is that the news business itself in terms of ageism in the news needs to invest in more re-

search to reassess their very skewed view of the numbers they are coming up with.

For example, an article published by the Newspaper Association of America about a year ago reported that while only 40 percent of young adults in the United States read a newspaper everyday, the figure is much higher in other countries. For example, in Canada, it is 82 percent. Is that not interesting?

One financial expert—let me add a note on that—the reason is that in other countries, they are finding that where the percentage of younger daily newspaper readers is higher, they found that newspapers are used much more in the family on a daily basis and in the schools than happens in the United States. So there is a solution to reaching younger viewers without denigrating older viewers.

One financial expert in that article stated that "newspapers abroad do far more research to understand reader consumer behavior than publishers in the United States." In fact, they said it is as low as two cents per reader in the U.S. with some newspapers.

A third point is that schools of journalism and mass communication really need to weigh in on aging and other cross-cutting social issues that are under-covered in American journalism like sexism and the women's issues that are coming up.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Butler. Let me get Dr. Butler in.

Dr. BUTLER. I would like briefly to support Senator Stabenow's point that the issues of age are very much the issues of women. They may live now 5.4 years longer, but they pay a price of more chronic illness, more poverty, more elder abuse, and 80 percent of the individuals in nursing homes are women. So many of the negative attitudes toward age really focus very intensely upon women, and I think that is very important to emphasize that.

The CHAIRMAN. I want to follow up on a point that Debbie Stabenow made with regard to it seems that with regard to the Congress and politicians who get elected by the masses, that we pay a great deal of attention to older Americans, and Debbie pointed out very correctly, because they vote.

I mean that is the highest participatory segment of our population are older Americans. Younger Americans unfortunately do not vote. Therefore, Congress tends to pay a great deal of attention to older Americans for the very pragmatic reason as well as the esoteric correct reasons, but because they vote, and if you do not pay attention to them, they are not going to vote for you. You are not going to have a job.

So it is a very pragmatic connection which you made with regard to elected officials, but it seems like there is a disconnect when it comes to the entertainment business and media and advertising, who do not pay attention to elderly, and what motivates them I would suggest is economics, and I think they have the false impression that we are going to target a segment of our population who spends the most money, and that is 18 to whatever. 18–35 category they seem to target. If you look at all the sitcoms with the possible exception of Doris Roberts, "Everybody Loves Raymond," I mean almost all of those in prime time are basically young people in that category, and I think it is because of the economic ties.

Let me ask somebody just for a little bit of a discussion on the ads that we saw. I mean before people spend millions of dollars, before Coca-Cola spends hundreds of millions of dollars running those ads, which you all rated as a very ageism negative ad toward how it portrayed older people, and the Midas commercial which was deplorable, they have had to test market those ads. They do not spend hundreds of millions of dollars without saying the ad is going to work.

So the question is what do they find when they test market these ads that we find today as being very discomforting and not humorous and depicting seniors in a very negative way? Did they not test market those ads?

Mr. SNYDER. One would think that they would test market all their ads and, in fact, sometimes ads are test marketed, but they may not be test marketed to the right segment of the population. They are not test marketed against those who might be offended.

The CHAIRMAN. So they test market in the Coca-Cola ad to the group of people they think drink coke and the people who buy mufflers.

Mr. SNYDER. One of the things that we are finding that is a problem with focus groups and research such as this is that people tend to give you the answers you want to hear when you are in that particular focus group. In fact, there is research now to support that when you are doing focus groups, people will respond positively toward what you are trying to get them to talk about, but when they actually are in the privacy of their own home, it is a different story.

So the coke ad is funny because in this audience this morning, I know that a lot of people wanted to laugh, and they did not. Every time I play that ad in an audience, everybody breaks out laughing, and I tell them what is funny in a group setting is not funny in the privacy of your own home or in the privacy of your own mind, and it may be offensive to you, but because it is almost in a comedic situation, almost like it is a comedian standing up in front of the audience, where we have permission to laugh at ourselves, then it is OK.

The CHAIRMAN. If you test marketed that ad or got a reaction from older Americans, what type of reaction would you expect from them?

Mr. SNYDER. Actually we have done some research on some of those ads, limited research, and we have gotten mixed reactions. It depends on where a person's values are. I will come back to that point. If the values do not allow them to be offended by it, then they will think it is a fine ad. What we find interesting is that the younger audiences are the ones who are offended by them the most.

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, really.

Mr. SNYDER. Yes. That tends to be part of what we have seen. Some of the younger boomers and GenXers, they see that coke ad and they say that is offensive to older people. We have mixed reactions from older people, older individuals, about that particular ad. When it comes to the Zima ad and the other ads that we showed, clearly they are offensive to older individuals, and you wonder to yourself, I wonder, how did that ever get past the president of an organization, how did that get past the marketing director of that

company? I will come back to this one very simple fact: we are the product of what we see on our airwaves everyday.

We are so inundated with information that we receive continually, that we subliminally accept it somehow, and eventually it contributes to a lack of awareness. We have to raise awareness. It is not that younger people want to create ads that offend anybody. That is a fact, but we have to raise the awareness of a younger copy writer, a younger creative design person, so they have some sense of actually walking in that person's shoes as compared to making up a creation that is based on a story "I heard in college."

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Stabenow.

Senator STABENOW. Well, Mr. Chairman, when you were speaking about the economics, and I am sure the decisions are being made for economic reasons, but I find it still strange, because when I think of my 22-year-old daughter, I spend a whole lot more money than she does. I mean the idea that they are marketing to 18-year-olds or 22-year-olds because they have more disposable income is not rational. I am not sure. I find this whole thing very perplexing, even though I am sure that is what they are thinking. I mean it has to be economics.

The other point, just a fact I just want raise, because I want to go back to the advertising on prescription drugs. More was spent last year on advertising Vioxx than on Pepsi, Coke or Budweiser beer.

Mr. SNYDER. Yes.

Senator STABENOW. Did you want to comment?

Mr. SNYDER. I did want to say, and I have forgotten what I was going to say. So that is fine.

Senator STABENOW. Well, we were talking about the 18 to 22-year-olds.

Mr. SNYDER. Oh. Companies are for whatever reason, and there has been research conducted overseas as well that supports this same notion, that companies are mesmerized by capturing the youth market, because they feel that if they do not grab the youth market now, they will lose market share in the future, and they assume, companies have assumed that people over the age of 50 are theirs for life.

In other words, I really do not have to market to that person because we are going to get you anyway. You are set in your ways—stereotype—you are not going to change, you are always going to buy a product. We also have research—there is research that shows that that is not the case, that people over 50 are very willing to change products given the right information.

Senator STABENOW. Interesting.

The CHAIRMAN. One of the networks just said, and they were contacted on this whole question of ageism, and they reported asking AARP about their thoughts about the ageism problem that we are talking about here today, and their response apparently was that ageism is not that big of a problem.

Do you all agree with them on that? I mean are we just doing this and we should not be doing it? If AARP tells me it is not a problem, should we just shut this hearing down and go somewhere else?

Mr. SNYDER. I will address that, and let the rest of the panel address it as well. I am not sure who they spoke with at AARP, but I cannot imagine that AARP would take that position. So I would ask them to check their source and go back and find out.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Butler, do you have any thoughts on it?

Dr. BUTLER. I have a very similar reaction. I think that I would call Bill Novelli, who is the head of AARP, and ask him directly. I doubt very much if they would take that position.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Roberts, what about your thoughts about AARP on that? Do you have any?

Ms. ROBERTS. Well, I question this. If there were laws protecting discrimination against sexism and racism and religious freedom, why is there not a law to protect the, you know, the horror of the way we are described in every magazine and newspapers and on television and movies? Why cannot that exist? Why cannot we start there? Because it is a powerful thing that we are dealing with. I mean it is insane.

The CHAIRMAN. I mean there are laws against age discrimination, but I mean apparently on the ways that entertainment business and all of this handles these things, it does not run contrary to the laws on the books. Anybody have any thoughts about this with regard to the existing laws on the book with regard to age discrimination? They are there, but apparently we are seeing a lot of factual discrimination.

Dr. BUTLER. Even in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations—it goes back to 1948—age was left out. For various reasons, it has been reintroduced recently, particularly by the former president of Ireland, Mrs. Robinson, who introduced the concept of looking at age discrimination and age imagery within the world family. So I think there are beginning to be some people that are beginning to address this.

The CHAIRMAN. I would point out, too, my staff has just provided me with information that pointed out in Los Angeles, Ms. Roberts, that AARP has joined as co-counsel in 23 class action age bias lawsuits that have been filed in California state court by television writers age 40 and over against television networks and studios and talent agencies alleging workplace age discrimination. I mean these are writers 40 years of age having to go to court to fight age discrimination which shows you the extent of the problem.

So I mean they are active in that. I mean they have asked the court to dismantle the alleged discriminatory hiring system and asking for more than $200 million in damages.

Well, I think that this has been a very important hearing in my perspective. I think that we have heard some excellent testimony. I mean, Dr. Levy, your point really being, I think, a positive attitude is a very positive contributing factor to how long we live, and people who have that attitude, in fact, are living longer despite some of the images that they may have portrayed to them, and everybody's testimony has been so very helpful.

Ms. Roberts, again, you have access to the bully pulpit and thank you for taking of your own personal time to talk to us about something you believe in very strongly. Sometimes it is very easy if you are comfortable to just remain comfortable and not rock the boat, but as your grandchildren said, you are a rocker.

Ms. ROBERTS. I am and I am glad to know that I have more than 7 years of my life to look forward to.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Well, with that, this committee will be adjourned and thank our witnesses for being with us.

[Whereupon, at 10:50 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]